

‘DON’T JUDGE ME’: FACT OR FABLE; ARE WE TO JUDGE OR NOT?

Abstract

Believers judging other Believers is often a misunderstood application of Scripture. This has led to spurious errors of interpretation plaguing the Church. The principal reasons for this are the lack of understanding of first, not recognizing what the boundaries are and, second, not knowing where these boundaries lie. This article will attempt to resolve this issue. Whilst it is true that the Bible does provide clear instructions not to judge; we also need to realize there are obvious exceptions to the general rule. As Born Again Believers, we have a duty to judge, as faithful stewards before God, on behalf of God’s People, and for God’s people. By properly studying the Scriptures through “rightly dividing the word of truth,” and comparing Scripture with Scripture, we will identify what the judging distinctions are. True judgment enables us to discern and evaluate what we must not judge, compared to what we must judge. The discussion headings to resolve the study question are: (i)(a) what judging is, and (b) the criteria for judging; (c) the areas that cannot be judged, with exceptions; (ii)(a) what the basis for judging is; (b) what we are supposed to be judging; (c) what judging righteously looks like, and what it is not; (iii)(a) the ways judgment can be manipulated; (b) how to recognise bad judgment; (c) how to prevent bad judgment from being accepted; and the answer to the overarching question: (iv) are we to judge unbelievers, false teachers, and known heretics?

Keywords: Berean, Watchman, Prophet; Judgment; Punishment, correction; Condemn, Reprove, Rebuke; Sentence; Try or Weigh Up; Call Into Question; Decide (mentally or judicially); Pick Out, Select, Choose/Prefer; Discernment (Assessing Between Right, Wrong, Truth and Error); Make a determination for/ against; Contend for, Defend against; Examine Case at Trial.

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I am a Born Again Christian professional researcher, writer and illustrator.

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Introduction

Framing the problem. The exhortation that ‘we should not judge’, whilst the statement is true, it is not exactly the whole truth, but a half-truth. **Hosea 4:1** says that God had a controversy or a contention with the nation, “. . . *because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.*” It was for this reason that God said, “*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge . . .*”

This half-truth has a cumulative effect: (i) it starts with a lack of knowledge, the lack of education, or an inadequate amount of knowledge, (ii) this leads

to incorrect assertions, and the inaccurate expression of knowledge concepts and principles, and (iii) it will manifest wrong in outward conduct. The lack of good *A posteriori* knowledge and understanding of what judging is, is just the beginning. The point being, the potential to condemn/judge another because of one’s misapprehension, increases exponentially.

Just as successful lawyers, accountants, medical practitioners, etc., must possess a full understanding of the theory prior to practice. In the same way, Born Again Believers must seek to become conversant with the theory, in what the Bible says about the God-allocated duty to judge is, before teaching others. With

the possession of a good quality of knowledge, and the ability to apply the principles, one will recognise where the boundaries lie, to appreciate what type of judging is sin.

It is not the objective of this paper to present a one-sided interpretation in order to justify the act of judging. Rather, the intention is to correct, and resolve the confusion. The present state is not reversible, as the church has been trampled under foot. However, this article is for (i) those minority Believers seeking clarity on the issue, and (ii) to redeem right doctrine within the Church. Nothing is accomplished if one skews the truth to present a prejudiced and unbalanced discussion. In so doing, what would be the point of being Born Again? The Lord Jesus said, "... *I am the way, the truth, and the life* . . ." See [John 14:6](#). The heart and soul of the Born Again life is to abide in truth, and walk in truth before God. The point being, truth is objective, eternal, and inseparable from God's character. Thus, it is all about establishing truth. See also [John 15:4-7](#); [1 John 2:6,14-29](#); [2 John 1:4-6](#); [3 John 1:3-8](#). The command not to judge other Believers does not mean all actions are equally moral or that truth is relative to how one wishes to interpret and apply it. It is this same "*truth*" with which we are to discern (judging) between what is right and wrong. Rather, this writer's intent is to establish the truth by presenting a full, rounded explanation. The objective is to deliver a right appraisal of the Scriptures with a view to show readers what God's mindset is pertaining to this matter.

PART A. THE PRESENT SITUATION WHAT CAN BE JUDGED, WITH EXCEPTIONS

1. The Present Dilemma

Consider the exhortation of the Lord Jesus in [Matthew 7:1](#), "*Judge not, that ye be not judged*," and the verses that follow. These are the most sobering commands in the Bible. Consequently, those that do judge, Jesus states that, with what judgment a person judges, the same shall be measured unto that person. The Lord calls this form of judging hypocrisy. Luke's rendition is—

[Luke 6:37](#) KJV Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.

Thus, it puts the fear of God and dread within the Believer; who would even undertake the task? The inference from reading these verses, without further explanation, is that a Believer will develop an inherent avoidance of judging for fear of being sent to hell. For this reason, the right and wrong type of judging are both the most misunderstood, abused and misinterpreted application of Scripture in Christian public conduct.

What is the opposing rebuttal to the conventional interpretation of [Matthew 7:1](#)? Several verses later, Jesus said, "*Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine* . . ." See [Matthew 7:6](#). In the same sermon, later on, in the same chapter, Jesus said, "*Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing . . . Ye shall know them by their fruits*." See [Matthew 7:15-16](#). How are we to discern who the "*dogs*" and "*pigs*" are, and how are we supposed to know who the "*false prophets*" are, unless we have the ability to discern what their bad doctrines and deeds are? The Lord Jesus is instructing us to tell right from wrong.

Biblical judging is not easy. For this reason, and many others, Believers that choose not to judge, or shy away from judging. Other reasons may include: not least, fear of disobeying the misinterpreted command of the Lord Jesus, a timidity to speak, speech impediments, or just not called to do it, etc. Remember Jonah when he tried to run away from the Lord because he did not want to judge? Surprisingly, today, God is looking for people who are willing to do the job. Just prior to God's judgment of Jerusalem at the first exile, God said to Jeremiah to—

[Jeremiah 5:1](#) Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it.

Absolutely no person was found who was seeking truth and willing to judge in Jeremiah's day: to exhort God's people to keep the law and to receive correction for error. This is current for today, in 2023. This is analogous to Jeremiah's day—the dilemma of unchecked error has so permeated the church, it is analogous with an advanced stage of cancer—it is irreversible and death is eminent. Just as the Lord Jesus said—

Matthew 5:13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

The western Church is in decline because it has lost its "savour" by not judging error, and as a consequence, the church is not effective, but is trampled under foot.

2. Biblical definitions of judging, criteria, and examples

This heading examines what Judging is; what the Lord's criteria is to determine what can be judged, and what cannot be judged. Finally, examples are provided to assist to distinguish between the two.

A2.1 The remit of judging and examples

What is the Biblical definition of judging? Webster's 1828 Dictionary states—

The act of judging; the act or process of the mind in comparing its ideas, to find their agreement or disagreement, and to ascertain truth; or the process of examining facts and arguments, to ascertain propriety and justice; or the process of examining the relations between one proposition and another.^[1]

¹ It additionally means, "[a] remarkable punishment; an extraordinary calamity inflicted by God on sinners." This topic heading is not within the scope of discussion for this article.

The underlined words are really the essence of what true judging consists of, and this is the area of focus for this paper. The process is the same system as the modern-day judicial system. In both civil and criminal proceedings, two parties or more in a dispute, a judge will oversee the proceedings to seek to ascertain the truth, and pronounce judgment/justice upon hearing all of the facts and arguments. One side can be both the prosecution and victim—the accuser, and the opposing side—the defence, can comprise both the victim and perpetrator. In spiritual terms, this is a mirror application of how to properly judge any situation or circumstance. In both civil or criminal proceeding, the person that loses, as a result of the judgment that has been issued—has been condemned—no matter how minor the loss is, it is still a condemnation. Generally, the party that wins the lawsuit receives a commendation. This is what the Lord Jesus will issue at the Judgment Seat of Christ, when He will say, "*Well done, thou good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy lord.*" See **Matthew 25:21**. The kind of judging that the Bible forbids, is the unrighteous type. In one sentence, simply put, this is judging on appearance, as against judging on all of the available facts. Judging has a wide remit (right and wrong types) can be classified either as a verbal or written rebuke that brings condemnation/judgment against another, whether it was justly deserved or not. The commands in **Matthew 7:1-2** and **Romans 2:1-3** illustrate the wrong type of judging, which means not to avenge or condemn someone to damnation—

Matthew 7:1-2 Judge not, that ye be not judged. 2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

Romans 2:1-3 Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. 2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. 3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

Therefore, the connection between the act of judging and condemning a person, virtually amounts to the same conduct. When you compare this with what the Apostle Paul said, the [Romans 2:1-3](#) verses interpret what the Lord Jesus meant in Matthew 7 and Luke 6. Paul said that judging another: “*is inexcusable*,” and second, this type brings condemnation upon oneself. The linkage is born out of [Romans 5:18](#). God’s position towards us for the offence of our sin, prior to salvation, God’s judgment was upon us, we were condemned to hell.

Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

We can now summarise a description of what the sinful type of judgment is, but not all—

- Hypocritical judgment. See [Matthew 7:1-2](#) and [Romans 2:1-3](#)
- Self-righteous judgment. See [James 4:6](#)
- Superficial judgment. See [John 7:24](#)
- Untrue judgment (bearing false witness). See [Proverbs 19:5](#).

Thus, these verses serve to illustrate that the Lord’s commandment in [Matthew 7:1-2](#), is not a broadbrush rule that encompasses all judging. In particular, the right and wrong forms of judging. Otherwise this would contradict His commandment in [John 7:2](#)—

Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

The Lord’s exhortation is to judge, but just ensure it is the right form. Further, if the Lord’s commandment was all-encompassing, then this would additionally negate what Paul taught in [1 Corinthians 2:15](#), which states that “*. . . he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man*.” What kind of judging is this then? This is a reference to a mature Christian in the Faith. (See also [How to reach the ‘judge righteously’ standard?](#), p.19). It is describing

a person who is conversant with Bible doctrines, and knows how to rightly divide the word of God. This is a Believer who is able to discern the scriptures plainly and easily, to ascertain whether someone is telling the truth of God or not. Under the hypocrisy bullet point above, the [Romans 2:1-3](#) verses interpret what the Lord Jesus meant by, “*. . . first cast out the beam out of thine own eye . . .*” Surprisingly, this has the same meaning as the popular adage—‘*pot calling kettle black*.’ The meaning being, a person that judges (“*accuser*”), is doing the same things that one is condemning the other for. Thus, bringing condemnation upon oneself.

The traditional argument against judging generally, including the right type, is that we are all sinners, therefore, we should not judge, because it is ‘*pot calling kettle black*.’ This thought however, is not entirely correct. If this was the case, how would we correct error within the church? This renders a church as “*salt then has lost its savour*”—good for nothing. See [Matthew 5:13](#). What would be the purpose of apologetics? What if someone within the local church was teaching that Jesus had not been resurrected from the dead? How do we warn people about false teachers? To take any action against any person for teaching such error, means we have just judged that person. We are saved sinners. Therefore, God has called every one of us to serve the body of Christ—by making a contribution to keep the church pure, and to follow right teaching. The problem arises when a Believer is required by God to judge some belief or conduct, but the same person is caught up in hypocrisy, for the same belief or conduct as the recipient. This was the experience of King David in [Psalm 38:14](#)—

Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs.

To put the whole Psalm into context: David was groaning in adversity and was plagued with sin. As a result, there were no reproofs in his mouth, because he would have been demonstrating hypocrisy, and bringing condemnation upon himself. Therefore, his condition prevented him from giving out any reproof.

A2.2 The criteria to evaluate what can be judged

The criteria to determine what can be judged and what cannot be judged, is the test that the Lord Jesus gave in [Matthew 23:24](#), when he was accused the Pharisees of unjust judgment—

Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

Note, the Lord Jesus did not say that one should not judge. Rather, just ensure you are straining at the right causes, not the wrong ones. A gnat is classified as an insignificant, trivial, minuscule matter; whilst a camel issue is of paramount importance. The point that the Lord is making is this—forget the gnat issues: they are not worth barking about—bury them, and strain and contend at the camels. Here are the distinctions—

- i. The Lord was emphasising how Believers were being judged/condemned for gnat issues which were so minuscule in nature. Further, they were making the camel issues into gnat issues;
- ii. Conversely, they were making the gnat issues out to be a major concern; placing the trivial over and above the pivotal causes. As the popular saying goes, *'making a mountain out of a molehill'*.

The Believer must evaluate whether the emerging problem is a gnat or a camel type of issue. Is it a major doctrinal issue? Then it is a camel. If we follow the Lord's guidance, we will not muddy the waters and judge the wrong matters, or not judge at all, when we should. The Lord's criteria is not an arbitrary scale. The Lord Jesus gave us guidance how to identify what the 'camel' issues are, that matter to the Lord, and what the gnats are, by reading through the word of God.

A2.3 Examples of Camel and Gnat Issues

In the epistle of John series, God went to great pains to emphasise to deny that the Lord Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, and that Jesus is the Son of God, etc., it is a pretty big deal; so much so, holding such a belief is to the detriment of a person's salvation. Here

are some other Biblical belief oriented examples to help make the distinctions of what are 'camel' causes—serious matters that should be addressed, (doctrine based issues) include, but not all—

- Idolatry: Receiving/gathering relics, idols
- Having unity, fellowship or agreement with false religions or unbelievers, e.g. Roman Catholicism. See [2 Corinthians 6:14-17](#)
- Incorporation of false doctrines into one's belief system from cults, e.g. Jehovah's Witnesses', Roman Catholicism
- Anti-Semitism, Replacement theology
- Prophecy: Amillennialism, Post-Tribulation rapture, Post Millennialism
- Disbelief that the Lord Jesus is going to return to earth
- Disbelief in the Godhead
- Disbelief in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ
- Disbelief that Jesus is the Jewish Messiah for the Jewish people
- Disbelief in the resurrection
- Teaching Believers that they are required to keep the law/feasts, etc. See Acts 15
- Endorsement of, and acceptance of Calvinistic doctrine (depends on what extreme of Calvinism).

With that said, the Lord may desire for certain "gnat," small matters to be judged, taking into consideration [1 Corinthians 6:2](#)—

Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

Remember, the Lord was stating the general rule, namely, bury gnat issues. According to [1 Corinthians 6:2](#) then, the principle is, if small matters are to be judged, they are to be decided on a case-by-case basis, as the Lord leads. Furthermore, whilst examples of gnat causes do not effect a person's salvation, but, depending on the nature of the issue, they can escalate or snowball quickly into a major

issue, because of the extent of the belief. For example, ‘once saved always saved.’ The subliminal attitude that develops has a permeating effect upon all of one’s theology, specifically: abuse of grace; we can do what we want; no necessity for evangelism; becoming complacent (which is pride based, not humbleness of mind based); and not having an urgency for, or regard for the immanency of the Lord’s return, etc.

The procedure established by God for the judges in Deuteronomy was similar to the ‘gnat’ and ‘camel’ system on how to judge matters properly; whether great or small, simple or complex causes. Judges were allocated to judge from simple causes to extremely difficult. It was a hierarchical judging system. For the less difficult causes, there were captains over fifties, over hundreds, over thousands, etc. (See [Deuteronomy 1:13-17](#); [Deuteronomy 17:8](#)).

For the gnat causes, generally, one should let them go. Whether it is a gnat or camel issue, on a sliding scale, one needs to recognise what tone and pitch is required appropriate to the situation, on a case-by-case basis. (See also discussion at [The fruit of the Spirit, p.13](#)). Here are some ‘gnat’ examples—

- Baptism is not essential for salvation to enter into heaven. If a person got saved, Born Again, and died that same night, would that person go to heaven? Of course. The thief on the cross he received salvation or forgiveness of sin—but was not baptised
- Once saved always saved (subject to how far one takes the doctrine)
- Mid-tribulation rapture belief

3. Categories of judging and examples of what is not permitted to be judged

This section explores how the word of God devolves authority upon Believers by commanding them to judge. We next discuss the gray areas: when it is not clear what the Believer’s conduct should be, which creates liberty that cannot be judged, with a few exceptions. Lastly, the most common, popular examples are provided. This involves practical living issues that illustrate what cannot be judged, which also has some exceptions.

The following are categories of judging: (i) empowered to judge, by deriving authority from commandment and/or doctrine in the Bible. This type must be supported by evidence, by Scripture, and be founded upon a just and righteous cause, and (ii) there is no Biblical guidance or commandment with which to judge. This creates a liberty (“*libertarian*”) and the libertarian has freedom to choose. We discuss each below—

A3.1 Derive authority from the Bible to judge

The first mode of judging (See also [Part C. What is the basis for judging?, p.22](#)), if belief and conduct are controlled by commandments/doctrine in the Bible, viz. fornication, adultery or disbelief in the attributes of the Lord Jesus Christ, then that can be judged, to keep the church pure. See [Romans 1:28-32](#); [1 Corinthians 5:8-13](#) and [Titus 2:12-15](#).

A3.2 Liberty that cannot be judged

If belief and conduct of an individual is not controlled by commandment/doctrine, then the Believer is at liberty to decide what to do, and how they choose to proceed. How the libertarian exercises this liberty is at their discretion and they should not be judged or condemned for it. However, this is subject to a few Biblical guidelines outlined by the Apostle Paul—

- i. The libertarian needs to evaluate if one’s discretion and liberty will become a stumbling block to them that are weak, and the weak will sin as a result. The libertarian must respect the weaker Believer, and refrain from exercising one’s liberty. See [1 Corinthians 8:9-13](#); [Romans 14:1-23](#).
- ii. For the weak, generally speaking, the weaker Believer must reciprocate the same to the person at liberty. The weaker Believer should not enforce one’s weak status upon the stronger, to judge/undermine the libertarian for pursuing one’s liberty. However, if the weaker has no genuine basis/background for being weak, other than it is just mere preference, than the libertarian is free to choose. The circumstances have no limit. For example, eating meat as

against being a vegetarian; drinking alcohol in moderation, as against being tea-total; keeping Saturday as a rest day, as against Sunday as a rest day. Read [Romans 14:1-23](#).

- iii. One's liberty should not plunge the libertarian into commission of sin. For example, one is at liberty to drink alcohol, but drinking to excess is drunkenness; liberty to eat, but eating to excess is classed as surfeiting (gluttony) in the New Testament; liberty to choose one's day of rest, but if one's belief follows Judaism; this is going back under the law. One has fallen from grace.

The general rule then for both the libertarian and for the potential accuser, is not to judge one another. In the Apostle Paul's conclusion to his liberty discussion, he prescribes a commandment for either party, not to judge one another—

Romans 14:13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

In accordance with point (ii) above, if the weaker Believer has no genuine basis, it is perhaps best for the libertarian, for conscience sake, not to pursue one's liberty. [Romans 14:19](#), says—

Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

In other words, it is better to exhibit kindness by seeking or keeping peace than to pursue one's liberty, which then causes enormous problems and hostility. Remember, is it a gnat or a camel problem. If it is a gnat, it is not worth losing one's peace over the matter.

A3.3 Summary of common examples with their exceptions

This list is by no means definitive; but does serve to illustrate where some of the boundaries lie—

- Church/Bible Study Attendance—

- ☛ Asking if having difficulty attending and if one needs any help
- ☛ Asking if there is a genuine problem with the church, and this is the reason why not attending. If so, would you like to share it

- What one should speak/not speak, except—

- ☛ The person's speech is profane, crude or inappropriate for the circumstances

- What clothes to wear and should not wear to church or outside church (not over-dressed), but reasonable for that circumstance), except—

- ☛ Not modest and causes another to stumble (e.g. women in skimpy apparel)
- ☛ Clothes smell or have a bad body odour
- ☛ Cross-dressing, e.g. gender inappropriate dressing

- Drinking, whether one should drink alcohol or not, except—

- ☛ Person is a drunk
- ☛ Turning up to Church drunk
- ☛ Making trouble for other Believers
- ☛ If Believer has a drinking problem, asking to offer any practical assistance (prayer, financial aid to be paid to an institution get help)

- Sabbath Keeping and which day

- Tithing

- Employment. Not to judge about being unemployed, even though doing everything to look for work, except—

- ☛ Asking if one has work, and if they need help
- ☛ If one is working for the Lord, genuinely asking what the background is. If not would the person like to?
- ☛ Disability, medical, or other abnormality prevents from working

- ☛ If neither above, an exhortation to work
- Food to eat or not to eat
- Bible Reading, not reading the Bible or lack of reading/study, except for—
 - ☛ Speaks unbiblical opinions to other Believers,
 - ☛ Provides another unbiblical counsel,
 - ☛ Asking the person if needs help to know what to read and/or how to study.
- Questioning believers on follow-up counsel/advice given whether acted on it or not (it depends on the severity of issue being advised on).
- Travelling to Muslim countries for a vacation, except—
 - ☛ General query: why are you going to a Islamic country, and similar follow-up questions during discussion
 - ☛ Is the person support supporting Islam?
 - ☛ Are they terrorists supporting Jihad?
 - ☛ What do they think about Israel, and do they love Jewish people?

4. Example of causes we are permitted to Judge?

Under this heading we address the issue of when a leader becomes a financial burden to the church by sponging off the congregation to fund their lifestyle? Second, we explain the nuances between the different types of judging processes, and distinguish each of their outcomes. Lastly, we explain why it is necessary for judges to be appointed within the church.

A4.1 Becoming a financial burden to the church

In addition to the aforementioned exceptions and definitions, a person can be judged when one holds a ministry leadership role e.g. worship leader, pastor, etc. Paul the Apostle laid down the precedent in [2 Corinthians 12:14, 16](#), when he stated that he did not want to be a burden unto the church. Paul then

went on to say: “. . . *for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.*” Paul developed this doctrine further in [2 Thessalonians 3:8](#), as ministers of Christ: “*Neither did we eat any man’s bread for nought . . .*” This indicates, that the plurality of leaders at that time, had employment to pay for their food, so that they (apostles) “. . . *might not be chargeable to any of you . . .*” In other words, signifying they were not sponging off, begging from them, or being dependent upon God’s people to supply money/food to meet their needs.

When a Believer is living a certain lifestyle, to the extent it is being funding by tithes, or by other means, this is sponging off God’s people. This is unjust. This is the general rule, and there are always exceptions. Prominent examples include Benny Hinn, who has private jets, million dollar plus properties, and Joyce Meyers, who also has the same.

However, a person that has a well-paid secular employment, e.g. doctor, lawyer. etc., and has a part-time ministry or is retired, and is serving in a leadership role on a voluntary basis, without payment from the church, then that person should not be judged—the Church is not being burdened.

A4.2 Must judge false teaching, sin, and false teachers

This heading discussion will serve as an introduction for the excerpt quote at [Part C. What is the basis for judging?, p.22](#)). Christians are often accused of ‘judging’—showing intolerance by speaking out against sin. When the Lord Jesus said not to judge others in [Matthew 7:1](#), He was not inferring that He was removing all mechanisms for dealing with sinful belief and conduct. The common parlance for a person who has a ministry in judging, is typically called a Berean, or more popularly known as a watchman, or prophet. A watchman is a derivative of the office of a prophet. Paul said in [Acts 20:28-30](#), that he knew grievous wolves (false teachers/pastors) would enter into God’s congregation; speaking “*perverse things*” to subvert them and draw them away from the truth. See also [2 Peter 2:1-2](#). This type of judging is against leaders, and it tends to be pleasant at first, then escalates, if correction is rejected; then it becomes severe—because they are teachers, and they ought to know better. See also [2 John](#) and [3 John](#).

As a general rule, all Believers are called to oppose sin. However, some circumstances may be difficult to discern what the sin is and how to correct it. Such situations generally, not always, are reserved for those of “*full age*” to correct. See [Hebrews 5:14](#). But for any capable Believer to loosely hold the standard of righteousness, the pendulum now swings in the opposite direction against the Believer for NOT judging. This is what is defined as unrighteousness, given that one has chosen sin over godliness. John the Baptist incurred the anger of Herodias when he spoke out against her adultery with Herod ([Mark 6:18–19](#)). She eventually silenced John, but she could not silence the truth ([Isaiah 40:8](#)).

The general rule is that if one has a grievance against another Believer, in accordance with the [Matthew 18:15–17](#) process, the accuser, the grieved party, should first speak to the instigator. Second, if the instigator declines to resolve it, the matter proceeds to the church leaders with two or three witnesses and/or through mediation. If the second admonition fails, then the instigator is counted as a sinner by that church; but the Scripture does not say specifically, that the person has lost his/her salvation.

For leaders the process is very similar. An accusation can be brought against an elder or leader within the church, but there must also be two or three witnesses to attest to it. See [Titus 3:10–11](#). The difference between the two, according to what is written, the general rule approach does not say that the instigator has fallen away from the Faith; however, the Titus 3 process against a leader is final. The result for rejecting correction, brings the outcome of being ‘judged’; he is “*condemned*” of himself—fallen away from the faith. See [Titus 3:11](#). (See [Part C. What is the basis for judging?, p.22](#), for a full detailed explanation). In 1 John, chapter 2 and [1 John 4:1–3](#), God has provided us with two-prong criterion to “*test*,” and weigh up whether a person is of God or not—

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. [2] Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

The very act of testing or trying, is a judging process by which we make a decision one way or another, whether a person’s profession of faith matches up with what the Bible teaches. The resulting censure is, we reject them. There are also a few exceptions to this.

In [2 Thessalonians 3:14–15](#), if any Believer, the instigator, does not obey the word of God, other Believers are instructed to admonish the instigator. The outcome of this judgment is that other Believers are commanded not to have company with, or associate with the instigator. For instance, Paul judged Alexander the coppersmith for his evil works, but he refused to listen. See [2 Timothy 4:14–17](#). In [Titus 1:10–13](#), a Believer is instructed to judge the sin in the form of “*rebuke them sharply*” against those deceiving and those teaching corrupt doctrine, so that, “. . . *they may be sound in the faith.*”

Where certain error/sin requires the accuser to speak to the wrongdoer privately, this judging approach does not apply. According to [1 Timothy 5:20](#), there is a circumstance where sin must be judged publicly, and in the presence of the whole congregation—

Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

The severity of this type of error/sin must be so dreadful, a camel matter, when compared to other areas of error/sin that are not so serious, that this kind warrants a stern public rebuke. The Berean needs to be conversant with all the forms of error, to discern whether a rebuke needs to be administered privately or publicly. Remember the camel and gnat criteria? The rebuke of this nature would be a camel issue. In accordance with the two witnesses requirement (evidence), if the teaching platform was mainstream media, viz. YouTube, then the world is watching, and one’s own mouth is on record as corroboration and evidence.

A4.3 Watchmen/Judges are necessary for correcting error

For any church to function properly, for God to be apart of it, there must be purity of doctrine, right solid teaching, godly unity in the faith, and Believers

walking in truth. In [1 Corinthians 5:12-13](#), the Apostle Paul rebuked the Corinthian Church for judging those outside of the Church, when they should have been more concerned with purity within the church. Paul said in verse 12, “*For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?*” The point that Paul was making is that they were neglecting to judge within the church, winking at sin, when they should have made judgment against sin. Paul concluded his exhortation in verse 13, that their failure to judge is “*wicked[ness]*.” (See also [Are we to judge unbelievers](#), p.37).

There are circumstances that the enemy will seek to undermine the church: to destroy the church from within; to attack their unity, and compromise the purity of doctrine, etc. This is the reason why God has put Biblical mechanisms in place: to prevent error from creeping into the church, amongst God’s people. For this reason, it is God’s will that Bereans/ Watchmen be appointed within the body of Christ to judge between brethren. This principle is based upon [1 Corinthians 6:1-7](#). The saints were going to the secular law courts to settle disputes, when they should have been judged by believers—

[1] Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? ... [5] I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?

According to [Philippians 1:7,17](#), the general rule is: Believers are required to be in “*defence*” of the gospel. The synonyms for defence are to contend, judge, guard against, and protect. These are action verbs, not passive ones. It involves speaking against error when the gospel message is being preached, and not only preaching, but also against bad doctrine. When you compare these verses with [Jude 1:3-4](#) and others, where it states that Believers are to “*contend for the faith*,” it is the foundation for judging; because ungodly men are creeping into the church, teaching bad doctrine and bringing “*damnable heresies*”—diseases into the body of Christ. See [2 Peter 2:1-2](#). Furthermore, judging error can bring a blessing. In

[James 5:2](#), it emphasises that judging which then causes the wrongdoer to turn from error, has saved a soul from death, providing it was a ‘*camel*’ issue that was being judged.

Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

See also [Malachi 2:6](#). The reference to “*sinner*” is dual usage to refer to an unbeliever, and also to a Believer that has embraced bad beliefs. If Believers do not arise out of slumber to judge, however unpleasant that is, left unchecked, God then will judge it, and nobody wants this. If one has a terrible physical sickness, you go to a qualified physician for a diagnosis, in order to obtain the best treatment for it. Refusing the recommendation, and continuing to leave it untreated, will have fatal consequences—the condition obviously gets progressively worse—in the worse case, death. It is the same application spiritually. The ‘great physician’, ([Mark 2:17](#)) the Lord Jesus, will instruct godly Believers, that are competent spiritually and suitably qualified to judge or diagnose what the spiritual disease is. If they, the church or an individual, refuse the life-saving treatment of the medicine of repentance, left unchecked, the Lord will allow it to get very ugly for that church/individual. Their sores and wounds will just get worse and worse.

Currently, the state and condition of the Western, conservative churches (not apostate Christian churches or false movements, etc), one will observe dreadful sores, wounds and diseases—the cancer of bad doctrine, pseudo evangelism or no evangelism, watered down basic teaching, or happy-clappy type services—they have replaced good teaching altogether. When parents have neglected child discipline consistently, to get away with wrongdoing; after a while, it is almost impossible to correct the error, when the child had already received an endorsement on numerous occasions, that such conduct was acceptable. Parents need to judge it instantly, before it reaches this stage. It is the same principle at play within the Church. As a result of the ‘body’ not being judged/ corrected, the body is riddled with unchecked error, and ‘body’ weaknesses/ailments to which they cannot

receive correction or treatment. Right now, the church is at a transition stage—departure from Romans 13 rule of law within western society, and the increase of the workers of iniquity, all are the prelude for Jacob's Trouble. Thus, God is not going to save the church—Jacob's Trouble is coming.

Those Churches and Believers that God cares for, are judged, chastised and corrected on a regular basis—a sign of a good parent. This is a sign of a good church. Those that refuse correction, God labels them to be bastards, and not sons or children. See [Hebrews 12:8](#). God our Father is a good parent. ■

PART B. WHAT JUDGING RIGHTEOUSLY LOOKS LIKE, AND WHAT IT IS NOT

1. Summary of skills, abilities, and qualities

Before we start with a full analysis, this is a summary of the personality traits we will be discussing in this section heading—

- Communicate professionally and soberly
- Godly living and practicing the faith
- Appreciation of the wrong, tempered with the right persona to show compassion, as needs require
- Displaying the fruit of the Spirit without compromising to dispense right judgement and equity
- The skill to conduct an investigation to establish if the wrong is true
- Don't make assumptions, or jump to conclusions, or stereotype Believers based on one's own assumptions or biases
- Not given to ulterior motives and relying on false evidence or unsubstantiated, questionable sources
- Establish if the cause to be judged is connected to traditions or commandments of men
- Ensure judging is not influenced by incentives
- The persona of a good Berean

2. When we do judge, what righteous judgment looks like

This heading is about the outward man—public behaviour. This consists of qualities of character in conduct, faith, and practice. Next, we discuss how the fruit of the Spirit are lived out, how it is demonstrated in the judging process, and how it balanced with equity. Lastly, we discuss the actual judging process, when a problem is suspected, how the process devolves, in practical terms.

B2.1 Must be godly living and practice

To judge properly, it is not a type of attitude that says: 'that is error' and 'I am right to dispense judgment.' It is much more than that. In [James 1:22](#) it says, "*But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*" Thus, the Berean must be practicing the faith—living out the Christian life that Jesus has set before us, before judging others.

The bottom line is, the Believer's approach and conduct must glorify the Lord Jesus. In other words, you don't '*crack a nut with a sledge-hammer.*' In some cases the Berean needs to be diplomatic; gentle as a mother with her child. See [1 Thessalonians 2:7](#). Other cases, may require sharpness. See [2 Corinthians 13:10](#). People are not robots—everything must be done prayerfully, looking for God's leading; and to ascertain what approach needs to be taken. One cannot take back what has been said, when it was not undertaken properly. That said, in the judging process one can also make wrong decisions and choose the wrong approach. No believer is the perfect judge.

In terms of communication, the standard is the same as you would expect from any professional. The golden rule is the 'do unto others' rule: "*. . . all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them . . .*" See [Matthew 7:12](#). Judging involves serious issues, and therefore can be somewhat sobering. The [Titus 2:7-8](#) verses put this thought into perspective about sound speech—

In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, [8] Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

One should communicate in a serious, professional, sane, sound-minded manner. As representatives or "*ambassadors for Christ,*" this glorifies the Lord Jesus. See [2 Corinthians 5:20](#). Furthermore, the recipients deserve to be spoken to professionally, as they are Believers too.

Right outward conduct is the precursor before engaging in Berean duties. One vital scripture to apply is [Psalm 24:4](#)—

He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

First, the 'hands' is referring to outward conduct. The use of hands is the practical manifestation of what is on the inside—the mind and heart, whether it be good or bad. Thus, *clean hands* means that only the party that has done nothing wrong can bring an accusation. Second, the 'heart' refers to the innermost thoughts and belief systems.

Remember the Pharisees in John 8? They had caught a woman in adultery, in the very act. Applying these principles then: did the Pharisees have clean hands and a clean heart? The Pharisees were perfectly justified and right under God's law to stone her to death for breaking God's commandments. However, Jesus said to them, "*. . . He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.*" See [John 8:7](#). In other words, because they all walked away from judging her, the Lord Jesus demonstrated that their outward-conduct was not in good standing before God, the Most High. They were guilty too. Their hands were dirty when they broke the commandments of God by upholding their traditions and commandments of men above the word of God. Thus, for this, they too should have been stoned to death.

In modern law, there is a maxim of equity (originally derived from the Bible), that states that "*one who comes into equity must come with clean hands.*" This means that the accuser is prevented from receiving any relief or benefit, when the accuser's hands are dirty in outward conduct. Put another way, they too are culpable for acting unethically, by engaging in some other improper conduct.

The Pharisees did not have a pure heart, rather they had ulterior motives for wanting to stone her. They adhered to a purely 'black-letter law' outlook—the black and white print letter of law—just seeing the law that it has been broken without really seeing the spirit of the law. The companion psalm to Psalm 24 is [Psalm 15:1-2](#). It posited a similar situated question

of, “. . . *who shall dwell in thy holy hill?*” One of the answers was, “*He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness . . .*” The Pharisees’ motive and reasoning was not borne out of walking uprightly and performing righteousness through the desire to obey the law of God. Rather, the Pharisees’ swore deceitfully and gave themselves over to vanity. Their real motive for stoning the woman was to entrap the Lord Jesus and kill him. They tempted him with the question of whether they should stone her or not; so that they could accuse the Lord Jesus of breaking the law of God, for not allowing them to administer the judgment as written in the law. See [John 8:5-6](#).

B2.2 The fruit of the Spirit displayed when dispensing Judgment

In accordance with the fruit of Spirit, [Galatians 5:22-23](#) states—

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, [23] Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

The Lord Jesus said in [Matthew 7:16, 20](#)—

Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? ... [20] Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

A Believer belongs to the Lord Jesus when this fruit is evident within the Believer’s life. Without fruit, [Matthew 7:19](#) concludes that the person does not belong to the Lord. Further, as already explained, the act of judging is not legalistic judging—black-letter law. Adherents only see that the law has been breached, and only perceive that a punitive sentence must be imposed, accordingly, as the law requires. However, the heart of God is not just about legalities, but about equity as well. Black-letter law must be balanced out with equity. In [Proverbs 2:9](#) we observe these three elements of righteousness, and judgment, and equity. They all are integrated together, and are

not independent of each other when it comes to judging causes.

We should not confuse God’s equity with modern-day liberalism—one can breach God’s New Testament law many times—anything goes, because the liberal can avail themselves of God’s abounding grace and forgiveness. See Romans 6. The reasoning goes that God is a God of love, therefore, He does not judge today as He did in the Old Testament. By showing God’s mercy and compassion, this does not mean that God is now a walk-over, and neither does it mean we should be either. We should not misconstrue the Scriptures to improperly apply the mercies of God to sweep a serious issue under the carpet or to overlook it. According to [Psalm 82:2](#), such conduct is wicked—

How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.

To deal fairly and equitably, is to properly apply the compassion of Jesus. See also sub-heading, [Examples of Camel and Gnat Issues, p.5](#). Indeed, many Psalms highlight this delicate balance. [Psalm 98:9](#) states—

Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.

Equity means to do justice, to be fair, to do that which is right, to properly weigh all the issues, good and bad. This is what God required from his people—to ensure that their agricultural produce was properly weighed, measured, and correctly balanced—no favouritism, no bias and no injustice—

[Leviticus 19:35-36](#) Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure. [36] Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have: I [am] the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt.

In other words, the judging process must be impartial. See also [Exodus 23:1-8](#); [1 Timothy 5:19-21](#).

God is justice, equity and judgment. Therefore, so too, the judging process involves demonstrating mercy and compassion—

Psalm 89:14 Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.

Psalm 99:4 The king's strength also loveth judgment; thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob.

The woman caught in adultery, according to the law, she should have been stoned to death. Judging is not only about the delivery of a harsh judgment, like the two witnesses will be doing in the time of Jacob's Trouble. See **Revelation 11** and **Zechariah 4**. The Lord Jesus' treatment of her teaches us that it is all about having the right demeanour, the right attitude, to be adept at articulating the right tone and pitch, and being able to adapt it, accordingly. The overarching rule, like the Lord's attitude to the woman, is faith and practice in action—showing compassion and mercy. It runs like a thread throughout the Berean's mindset and conduct. This is God's character. God required the same from His people back then, and God expects the same from Believers today. As just explained, judging must comprise a balance of qualities displaying justice, judgment, and compassion. **Zechariah 7:9** really brings it all together, the judging process combines all of these qualities, tempered with judgment—

Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother:

Again, **Micah 6:8** demonstrates that true judgment can be performed without compromising, which involves, “... to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” Whilst we are judging another, we demonstrate mercy with “a lowliness of mind” disposition, which is a synonym for humbleness. The absence of which, the accusing party will be haughty, proud and arrogant towards the other being judged. This is what happened with the Pharisees—they ceased

to walk with God ‘humbly’, which is what practicing the Faith involves. Indeed, the Lord presented such a circumstance in the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican. The Pharisee knew no compassion because **Luke 18:9** says they “... *trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.*” In other words, he had a self-righteous attitude. A leader/minister that has stopped walking with God, transforms into a legalistic and feigned relationship. As a result, like the Pharisees, instead of showing mercy and compassion towards others they are judging—they behave in an authoritarian manner—despising others, because they believe they have a higher understanding and greater knowledge of the word of God than what their sheep do. However, they fail to realize that we are all cut from the same cloth. Leaders will additionally undergo God's same humbling process, just as the everyday Believer is required too. Remember Nebuchadnezzar, and how God humbled him?

The **Micah 6:8** verse previously mentioned, also corresponds with the fruit of the Spirit in **Galatians 5:22-23**—

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, [23] Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

These requisite qualities are the starting-blocks in order to participate in any ministry/work for the Lord. If the Believer does not possess these qualities, one cannot even start the race, let alone compete! It starts as an inward work by God, then it manifests itself in conduct. It was for this reason that the Lord Jesus severely reprimanded the Pharisees, calling them hypocrites. They were only observing the light, peripheral matters of the law. See **Matthew 23:23**. He charged them with folly that they should have kept the weightier matters of the law, “... *law, judgment, mercy, and faith*”—

Matthew 23:23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy,

and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

Then shalt thou enquire, and make search, and ask diligently; and, behold, if it be truth, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought among you;

Note, as aforementioned, the practice of these qualities, is at the heart and soul of the law. Has anything changed (Yes, the covenant—New Testament)? The point is, without these qualities, generally, being apart of the personality of the Berean, one has absolutely NO part to undertake watchman duties. The Lord Jesus went on to say, “. . . *cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.*” See [Matthew 23:26](#). The significance being, the absence of the fruit of the Spirit qualities on the inside, will fracture the judging process. Therefore, just as the case with the Pharisees, Believers would be likewise labelled, “. . . *whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.*” See [Matthew 23:26-27](#). The judging process involves applying New Testament commandments and doctrine; issuing judgment to ensure that it is being adhered to; showing mercy towards them being accused; and the practice of the faith.

B2.3 The preliminary correction judging process

What is the correct process to judge righteously, when you suspect error or a problem? As the Lord Jesus said to do: we are to “*judge righteous judgment.*” See [John 7:24](#). This is all about evidence gathering. It all depends on the circumstances with which to start an initial investigation. One must carry out a preliminary investigation process prior to judging another Believer, as is only right. The implications if you don't, are that you could end up with egg on your face for accusing another Believer unjustly and wrongfully. One can not just accuse someone without prior investigation to establish whether there is any validity to the accusation been made. Otherwise, this would amount to judging by appearance or judging based upon assumptions. See also next heading, [B3.1](#). What if the accusation arose as a result of gossip, making assumptions, hearsay, malice, etc. The prospective accuser must make enquiries into the accusation made against the wrongdoer. A good rule of thumb is the principle in [Deuteronomy 13:14](#) —

The definition of “*diligently*” means: industrious, painstaking, persistent and being thorough. When making enquiries, it must be painstakingly thorough, and one must not tire until the truth has been discovered. It must be so because we serve a just and righteous God who demands justice. Further, we owe it to the Lord to perform this duty as children of light. It is worthy of note that this investigative process is not a [Psalm 64](#) type of “*diligent search*” of wrongdoing.

Is someone in the local church teaching error or committing some major sin? Start asking Biblically based interrogative and probing questions, to find out who is saying it; gather any written works or recorded public speeches to determine what their intent was. If it is a mainstream media based platform, then follow the above to obtain written records, transcripts of recorded media teachings. Carry out Google searches to ascertain if there are other incidences. All of which must be true and authentic. In doing so, a righteous judging process will flag-up whether the supposed wrongdoer is being unjustly persecuted. If someone else is accusing the wrongdoer, the accuser might be culpable, but not necessarily. This is why an investigation is needed. The witness might have ungodly motives—malice, bitterness, or the accuser might be guilty of teaching error, etc.

A practical Biblical example of an investigation is King Solomon. He was required to decide which of two women was the correct mother of a baby, when the baby was switched, and both claimed parenthood. He listened to their narrative, to establish what was in their heart, to establish who was telling the truth. See [1 Kings 3:16-28](#). The false mother did not have any maternal instincts for the child and, therefore, she was prepared to let the child die.

3. What judging righteously does not look like

We all judge others unconsciously, and we don't even know it. This heading analyses the manner of how one judges people, unconsciously,

by making assumptions, jumping to conclusions and stereotypes. This entails a discussion about the most common types of judging at a personality level, such as character, disposition, temperament, temper, and one's intellectual capacities, etc. Next, we examine judging for the purposes of upholding man-made traditions. Following that, we discuss the area of ulterior motives for judging and reliance on false evidence. Finally, we discuss the various modes that a Believer can be embroiled in, with regards to judging, including the provision of incentives, and other influences.

B3.1 Making assumptions based on stereotypes

This is all about the inner man—what is in the heart. This consists of one's perceptions about others and inner beliefs. As already mentioned, we commonly stereotype 'judging' as legalistic behaviour, and the person that does it, is a Pharisee. However, one's bad legalistic judgement arises from what is in their own heart ([Matthew 15:18-20](#)). Conversely, good judgment is issued from a true, righteous manner, and is far from being legalistic, when done properly.

The first type of judging is in [John 7:24](#). It states that when one judges, "*Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.*" Judging according to appearance is the same as superficial judging. In [1 Samuel 16:7](#), God said the same thing, when He condemned judging by mere appearances—

But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart

Note, these Scriptures do not say that the Believer must not judge. Rather, just ensure that your viewpoint is not formed based on the outward appearance. This involves a range of applications. The four primary stereotypes include—

- i. judging somebody on the appearance, what a person looks like and wears
- ii. the sound of a person's voice, and the tone of voice

- iii. the gender, ethnicity, skin colour, weight and height
- iv. class designation—in terms of employment, whether a person is a blue collar worker or a white collar worker.

Generally speaking, all of these aspects influence us on how we judge people, not exclusive to Believers. Whether we like a person or not, this should not come into it. But, in reality, it is seamlessly integrated into our personalities. The Berean realising this, must discard these inherent traits: biases, and the "*outward appearance*" of judging. See [1 Timothy 5:21](#).

Morgan Freeman, the actor, is hired to narrate documentaries just because his voice sounds so wonderful to hear. This illustrates the everyday-realities of just how effective and persuasive the human voice can be—to influence acceptance of information presented. Hitler had this same charisma. Thus, we judge everyone, founded upon our perceptions, which is, in turn, intertwined with our own intrinsic prejudices. For example, Simon the Pharisee in Luke 7, passed judgment on a woman based upon her appearance and reputation, but he could not see that the woman had been forgiven. The Lord Jesus rebuked Simon for his unrighteous judgment. See [Luke 7:36-50](#).

The second type of judging is related to superficial judicial judgment. We judge, drawing conclusions or jumping to conclusions, just on mere circumstances, without any corroboration or foundation, we convict others. This is the remit of what God was saying in [1 Samuel 16:7](#) (quoted above); when the Berean judges, he/she must ensure that one's judgements are based upon facts, sound evidence from true witnesses, and not hearsay or gossip.

In the judicial system today, mere assumptions, circumstantial evidence, and a lack of sound evidence are the predominant, underlying characteristics that run through most, not all, 'miscarriages of justices.' This is what happened with the Lord Jesus—he was wrongfully convicted. We convict fellow Believers on nothing: drawing conclusions from a collection of "*facts*"—just assumptions and stereotypes that cannot be substantiated with hard facts. In Luke 18, tax collectors were hated with disdain. In fact, tax collectors were stereotyped as sinners even if they were

righteous living men, performing gainful employment, as a means to live. This type of judging is based on stereotypes. It is probable that such employment attracted unscrupulous and scheming people, just like Zacchaeus in [Luke 19:1-10](#). He was recorded as self-enriching, corrupt, and traitorous. Does this mean we should broadbrush every tax collector as the same? Making assumptions is not the foundation laid down by God. Assumptions are not the basis to judge tax collectors on, or other employment sectors, such as pawn brokers or sanitation cleaners. However, this may differ when contrasted with immoral positions such as employment within a brothel, employing illegal immigrants for cheap labour, strip-clubs, etc.

B3.2 Judging another to maintain and uphold religious traditions

In [Matthew 15:1-9](#), once more, the Lord Jesus reprimanded the Pharisees. They were upholding man-made traditions, commandments, and doctrines of men over and above the word of God. Are there not churches like this today? Some Baptist Churches, for example, have some strict customs. No church has any authority or can derive any authority from the Bible to judge people for falling foul of their traditions. This is false judging. In [2 Thessalonians 2:15](#), the verse states that Believers were admonished to uphold the traditions that they had been taught—

Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

However, this is a far cry from the Matthew 15 type of traditions. They differ from Matthew 15 because they are based upon man-made ones, not upon the word of God. Whereas the 2 Thessalonians 2 verse is based upon, and derived from the word of God itself, which did not have the effect of nullifying or stifling the word of God, like the Pharisaic traditions did. For example, a church tradition where they (i) read the word of God to open the service, and then (ii) sing a few hymns, followed by a couple of modern choruses. These are godly traditions that do not nullify the word of God or undermine good Biblical Christian

conduct. Rather, they glorify the Lord Jesus. Traditions or commandments of men, cannot trump or better the word of God. In sum, judging somebody on the basis of keeping commandments of men/traditions, is legalistic judging.

B3.3 Judging with a motive of retribution, and reliance on false evidence

In [Leviticus 19:35](#), when any Believer is engaging in the judging process, in the first line of the verse, the Lord Most High states that, “*Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment . . .*” This covers everything including not judging another from a heart of retribution, or from evidence founded upon, and derived from false witnesses. [Romans 12:19](#) says, not to avenge oneself, because vengeance is God’s to repay. A further category is judging from a heart of malice, which involves issuing judgment based upon an unjustified dislike/disdain for a person. It is for this reason that the accuser is prohibited from judging, since the accuser is most lightly, personally and/or emotionally, involved. One already has a vested and biased interest in the outcome of the case. Therefore, true judgment is then compromised and skewed, heightened with the probability that one will draw evidence from false sources, or from lies becomes a reality. This is not true judgment. [Proverbs 19:5](#) says—

A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape.

This is what had happened with the Lord Jesus following his arrest. They arrested him without a cause. The Pharisees hated him, so they obtained false witnesses. These false witnesses gave false testimony relied upon it, then they themselves twisted the Lord’s words to convey lies. In Jewish law, and in accordance with the present rule of law in western society, generally, just one witness testimony alone cannot obtain and sustain a conviction. In a modern-day court of law, only by two or three witnesses could condemnation be issued. If their accounts contradicted each other, then the conviction cannot stand. There are some exceptions, one of which are rape allegations, for example. See [Matthew 18:16](#); [Deuteronomy 19:15](#);

2 Corinthians 13:1. In this regard, this is what is meant by **Titus 3:2**, “[t]o speak evil of no man . . .” Thus does not mean one should not judge, simply because the verse has negative undertones. Rather, it is referring not to slander or accuse a person unjustly.

This is what transpired with the apostle Paul, after he had been arrested by the Romans. Jerusalem Jewry conspired between themselves, binding themselves with a curse, to kill Paul. See also **Judging process influenced by incentives, p.18**. In **Acts 23:30** and **Act 25:7**, they lodged “. . . many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove.” They could not merit the charge of Paul breaking Jewish law. There were forty plus witnesses that accused Paul, but only evidence of three witnesses were required under Jewish law, to condemn him to death, but all forty plus witnesses were corrupt. According to **Exodus 23:2**, this is classified as “. . . speak[ing] in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment.” The meaning of this is that Jerusalem Jewry declined true judgment, and participated collectively to subvert the correct judging process. They were unrighteous witnesses, and feigned themselves as true before the Roman governor, providing false testimony. Thus, no matter how much evidence one had acquired, prior to the Berean judging the wrongdoer or prior to lodging an official accusation, the Berean should have already authenticated the initial accusation with an investigation, to establish whether or not it was lies. Generally, if no evidence has been obtained it has little or no probative value, the accusation then that is brought against the wrongdoer, the damage has already been done. This is unjust judging.

B3.4 Judging process influenced by incentives

Incentivised judging is a theme running throughout the Bible. Judging must not be influenced by anything that “wrests” or distorts judgement. **Exodus 23:1-8** provides all of the permeations of how judgment can be subverted via third parties, including personal biases. Incentivised judging comprises bribes, gifts, and rewards which include tips. All of these synonyms can refer to financial compensation. However, their scope encompasses tangible forms, digital transactions, receipt of a benefit, and the receipt of a service, or performance or non-performance of a

service. Anything that interferes with true judgment being rendered is perverted judgment—

Deuteronomy 16:19 Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.

Following the Apostle Paul’s arrest, (cited earlier in relation to Paul’s arrest), Felix, the Roman governor, had been a judge over Israel for many years. Therefore, Paul pleaded his own case before Felix. See **Acts 24:10**. However, Felix was corrupt. He desired that Paul would give him a bribe in exchange for his freedom. When Paul declined, Felix rendered an unjust judgment. Felix considered it to be a great pleasure to favour/take the side of Jerusalem Jewry, so he decided to leave Paul bound. See **Acts 24:26-27**.

Judgment can be corrupted at any stage of the judging process, whether at the beginning, middle or end of the judging process to skew judgment in favour of the accused. A person can be re-enumerated prior to the start of the process, to judge favourably on behalf of the wrongdoer, or can be compensated not to judge at all. For example, a leader in the church being judged. One could bribe or gift the accuser to look the other way and pervert judgment. For instance, a church pastor found to be committing adultery, accordingly, would be judged and dismissed. The person(s) who discovered the adultery could be intercepted by the Pastor, to pervert the ensuing judgment against him, by bribing the person who discovered it, to say nothing. Alternatively, if this stage is past, bribing the leadership to compromise, to judge in favour of the pastor. This scenario is just between the accuser and the accused, but there are many other variations with the intervention of other multiple third parties who have a vested interest in a person(s) not being judged.

The interaction between the accuser receiving a bribe, gift or reward, in exchange for the accuser to furnish a favourable outcome, is termed as having “*respect of persons in judgment*.” See **Deuteronomy 1:17**, **Deuteronomy 16:19** and **James 2:1-9**. See also heading, **The ways that righteous judgment can be perverted, p.31**.

4. How to reach the 'judge righteously' standard?

Under this heading, we explain the importance of reading the word of God, exemplified in the birth of a child the transition to adulthood. In spiritual terms, this is founded upon the connection of being integrated into the “*True Vine*,” creating the Believer’s birth and kinship to the word of God. Lastly, we elaborate on adulthood, which is parallel to spiritual maturity, and is preparatory for entrance into ministry.

B4.1 Importance of reading and studying the word of God

We have already discussed what righteous judging is and is not, and what personal qualities are required to perform the duty properly, in a manner that glorifies the Lord Jesus. Accordingly, how do we reach this standard?

A baby born into this world is analogous with the same requirements as those who are just starting out in the Faith, as a new Born Again Believer. The same principles of learning apply: everybody goes to school; we all learn the same basics: we all develop an elementary interest in a particular vocation; we all reach adulthood. Then we cultivate that vocation further, to specialise and study our field of interest. It is exactly the same process in spiritual terms. [Ephesians 4:1](#) says—

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called

In other words, a Born Again Believer is called into a vocation, a profession or an office, whatever that may be. Learning one’s vocation starts with reading the word of God, and not just reading, but it involves study too. This should be the Believer’s PRIMARY source, just as mother’s milk would be the primary source for a baby. Stop making excuses to read secondary sources instead. We need to stop reading books about the Book, and instead read THE BOOK. There is no substitute for reading the Bible. A new-born baby born into this world, needs pure milk to grow; so too, [1 Peter 2:2](#) says, that new Born Again Believers should

“*desire*” the “*sincere milk of the word*.” The meaning being: cry out for it as a baby would—hunger for it, thirst, and long after it. See also [Matthew 5:6](#). Note, the [1 Peter 2](#) verse says that the Believer should desire it; it does not say ‘if you prefer to or choose to, then read.’ Rather, reading the word of God is a necessity.

In natural terms, if the new-born or “*babes in Christ*” refuse this basic nourishment, then as you would expect in the natural, the child will be physically stunted or cognitively deficient later on in life. See [1 Corinthians 3:1](#). These same nourishment principles apply spiritually. If the Believer fails to perform this obligation for themselves, they will not really be doing himself/herself any favours, at all. Appropriately, [1 Timothy 4:6](#) explains, that to be of any use to the Most High, and to amount to anything of value in the Faith, as just explained, the new-born has to be “. . . *nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained*.” For spiritual well-being reasons, for the Believer’s own sake (applies to everybody, not just new-borns), one must set some time aside to have some quality reading time in the word of God. The development of knowledge and skill to enter any spiritual vocation is presented in [2 Peter 1:5-8](#)—

And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; [6] And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; [7] And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. [8] For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Believers gain the knowledge, experience, and the necessary life skills to be able to competently handle any emerging problem: to judge error, and to counsel other Believers in matters of faith and practice, with godly Scripture guidance. Once the Believer has reached spiritual maturity, [1 Corinthians 2:15](#) says, the Believer is then enabled to “*judge[] all things*”—we now no longer need ‘baby milk’; we are now ready for meat—specialised, advanced teaching from the word of God. In fact, it is not God’s will, at

all, that we should remain in a carnal babyish state. See [1 Corinthians 3:1-3](#). God wants us to grow-up to become discerning, mature believers, just as children do, to grow up into mature adults. See also, [The remit of judging and examples, p.3](#). This is precisely what [1 Corinthians 13:11](#) says, that we are to put away childish thinking, babyish behaviour, and childish understanding of the bare basics—

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

In [Hebrew 5:14](#), amplifies upon this allegory of nourishment in babyhood as against adulthood—

But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age . . .

The meaning of “*meat*” is deeper understanding of Scripture that goes beyond the basics, and is only intended for mature Christians, not babies or minors in Christ. A baby is not of age to eat meat—it is too young in the Faith.

B4.2 Relationship with God, and the Believer’s connection to the word of God

The Lord Jesus in John 15, compared Believers to be like unto branches in a vine. First, the Lord emphasized the importance of relationship. Jesus said in [John 15:1,5](#) that he is the “*True Vine*” and the branches that are connected to it, are Believers. This is descriptive of a reciprocal relationship with the Lord Jesus, not a one-way relationship. Further, fellowship with God is not exclusively about having daily prayer and fellowship.

This is best illustrated by what the Lord Jesus went on to say. He explained about the branches abiding in Jesus—the vine, and Jesus abiding in them—the branches; only then, by abiding in the Vine, can the branches produce fruit. Obviously, if the branches are NOT connected to the Vine—the principal source of nourishment from the root to the branches, then the branches are disconnected—the branches are dead. See

[John 15:4-6](#). Second, the Vine explanation underlines the linkage between our relationship with the Lord Jesus and the written word of God. It is not simply about being in relationship, it is more than that. It is all about being nourished with what is written in the Bible. The verse [John 15:7](#) says—

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

The reference to “*my words*” are referring to the content of the Bible. One of the titles of the Lord Jesus is the “*Word of God*.” If we are connected to His person, the Word, we additionally need to be connected to Him, by reading the written word of God too. The Word and written word of God are inseparable—one and the same. Being in relationship with the Word, plus reading and studying the written word, equals eternal life—abiding in the Vine. If the Believer professes to be in relationship, but is not joined to Him by reading the word of God, how then is one abiding in the Vine, and Jesus abiding in us? The verse makes it abundantly clear for us: by abiding in Jesus and the word of God—The Lord Jesus then will abide in us. This is what constitutes abiding in the Lord Jesus, and this is what glorifies God. See [John 15:8](#). Paul reiterates this point in [Colossians 3:16](#)—

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

For the word of God to dwell in us “*richly*” or in abundance, as aforementioned, we do so by reading, through much study and practical observance. How else is the word going to dwell in us “*richly*,” if we do not adhere to the above? The contrapositive of this doctrine is, if one does not lend themselves to reading and studying the Bible, so that the word of God abides in the Believer, again, how then are they connected to the Vine? According to Jesus, if His words are not abiding in the Believer, such a person is a disconnected

branch. The Bible says that such a person is withered and burnt. See [John 15:6](#). Essentially, reading and studying the Bible are basics—baby steps requirements, leading to maturity in the Faith.

B4.3 Study and Discernment to discover what's true and what's not

The study element for this heading is provided in [2 Timothy 2:15](#), which states—

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Through reading and study of the Bible, the Believer will become conversant with the mechanics of the faith, and understand all of the doctrines of the Bible, and how they work. Once the Believer has increased in knowledge, they will then be able to “*rightly divide*” the word of truth about what the Bible teaches, and apt to discern what is false teaching, and which may consist of only subtle differences. Accordingly, [Hebrews 5:14](#) teaches us that a Believer is of “*full age*” when one is able “. . . to discern both good and evil.” See also next heading, [Part C. What is the basis for judging?, p.22](#), for detailed explanation.

Once the Believer has attained this level of understanding, one is equipped to enter into ministry to teach others. The ministry offices are delineated to be—

[Ephesians 4:11-12](#) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; [12] For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

The corresponding gifts that pair with the above offices are listed in [1 Corinthians 12:28-29](#)—

And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. [29] Are all

apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?

As already discussed, one such ministry is a Berean, or prophet, or watchman. Both a Berean and watchman derive their duties from the overarching office of a prophet. We do not have prophets today because we have the word of God that contains the full and final prophecy, until the end of the world.

5. What is the persona of a good Berean?

We summarise what we have discussed so far, to describe what judging looks like. Such a person is Born Again, loves God the Father, the Lord Jesus, allows the Holy Spirit to rule in his/her life, and loves God's people. His heart, like Paul's, is to look-out for the sheep, to protect them from wolves. One knows how to behave, is a godly person and lives out the faith on a daily basis in one's own personal life. Others can see evidence of the fruit of the Spirit within the Believer's life. The Believer will be a student of the word of God, and conversant with what the Bible says, to enable the Believer to rightly divide the word of truth, as against what is error. One will be skilled in Bible apologetics, to be able to defend and contend for the faith.

A Berean appreciates the hierarchical differences from study of the Bible, between what issues are of major importance, camels, when something has to be said; as against minuscule matters, gnats, which are insignificant, not to speak about.

The Berean is not self-righteous, nor looks down on, or despises others. Consequently, the action taken or not taken, is not motivated by Pharisaical judgment—only seeing that the word of God has been broken, black-letter law. Rather, the Berean has the heart of Jesus: exercises compassion and the grace of God, just as God has done upon us, by saving us. He understands the heart of God. The experienced Believer properly assesses all circumstances, applying God's mercies. Does not misquote or misjudge, by improperly applying God's mercies to 'sweep a serious issue under the carpet', and vice versa. Speaks the truth in love, and when warranted, knows when to issue a warning, rebuke, admonition, or a reproof.

The Believer will not show respect of persons, by showing partiality, which diminishes what the outcome would have been (positive or negative). Right judgment is not based upon judging on appearances, or by making assumptions, or judging on the basis of one's own personally held convictions, to issue censure. The Believer will not engage in incentivised judging, or judge on the basis that is derived from or stems from revenge. The Believer will not support judging in order to uphold man-made traditions or doctrines of men. The believer is only led by what Scripture says, keeping with the spirit of what the text is teaching, and being led by God's Spirit to apply the Scriptures that merit the degree of censure to be applied.

Bereans love dispensing justice, and love right judgment. They do not fabricate, distort, take out of context, or falsify the evidence, and do not rely on bad evidence/testimony of false witnesses as the basis to judge somebody. Accordingly, they gather all available evidence, not from one source, but from many sources; fairly evaluates it to discover if any allegation is substantiated and can be proved to be true, and weeds out the unreliable information. ■

PART C. WHAT IS THE BASIS FOR JUDGING? (RIGHT JUDGING)

1. Who can be judged?

The following is an excerpt from this writer's book; available for free on my website (see hyperlink in footer^[2] below)—

It is not the intention of any righteous, good Berean to go after a godly preacher/teacher to destroy them. See [2 Corinthians 10:8](#). Bereans are merely concerned with one thing—the desire and inclination to protect the sheep, by looking-out for them, to ensure that they are not deceived. Simply put, these are the checks and balances to correct error so that God's people are better informed about what is right and wrong.

These teachers claim to be “*ministers of the gospel or evangelists*.” Accordingly, any Bible Believer that is called by God to ministry, is called in accordance with the mandate that God has laid down when they have been called to be ministers, per [Ephesians 4:11-12](#). See previous paragraph, ‘Study and Discernment.’ Therefore, they, as a result, are subject to the word of God. The point being, God has no loose canons, or bastards (see [Hebrews 12:8](#)), in his service who are above correction. Therefore, the professing ministry holder can be reprov'd, corrected, rebuked, or exhorted for instruction in righteousness. See [2 Timothy 3:16](#) and [2 Timothy 4:2](#). In fact, to go one step further, it is not just Bereans or apologists particularly, that are given the task to reprove and correct error, but every Born Again Believer is called to prove one's own self. Second, it is for every Believer who is called “*to prove all things*.” See [2 Corinthians 13:5](#) and [1 Thessalonians 5:21](#). If necessary, a Believer should call out error, just as every Believer is required to, “*do the work of evangelist*”, even when one's calling is not an evangelist. See [2 Timothy 4:5](#).

In the above scripture ministry listing, one such ministry is the office of a prophet. Although, we do not have prophets today because the Bible is the full, complete, and final canon of scripture (there is no

² See Horsfall. D. (2022), End of the World, Rapture of the church: Annual September False Prophecies, 1999—2020, pp. 138-59. See my website below.

additional revelation about future events). So, why is a prophet mentioned then? One aspect of a prophet is carried over to the office of a watchman. A watchman is an Old Testament designation, whilst a 'Berean' is a synonym for the same office in the New Testament. God calls watchmen to ministry, to correct error within the body of Christ, "[f]or perfecting of the saints and for the work of the ministry." See [Ephesians 4:12](#). So where are the watchmen today then? Salt is an excellent preservative to prevent pathogens entering into the body, and when they do enter, to prevent it from manifesting—they kill the disease or the infection first. This is the function of a Berean within the Body. The late Dave Hunt had a public Berean ministry, as do many others. A watchman is nothing, a pastor is nothing and likewise, an evangelist, etc. They are just like any other minister. Therefore, the person who thinks he is better than, or above another minister because of a position held, then he is deceiving himself. All are part of the body and all have a function to perform. See [1 Corinthians 12](#) and [Galatians 6:3](#).

As we know, Israel was surrounded by enemy countries who hated them, which is still the case today. A watchman's function in Israel was one of a look-out post upon a 'watchtower'. It was his job and role to sound the trumpet alarm for Israel to prepare for battle and fortify the city defences. Similarly, it is the same for the Church today. Watchmen evidently can foresee problems or trouble ahead within a local church, and the outcomes as a result of adopting particular behaviours, beliefs, teachings, or the performance of certain acts. This is how the Lord has gifted them. The general idea is that they can see the 'writing on the wall' for the commission of error that others may not apprehend. In the book of Ezekiel, God said he had called him to be a watchman. Ezekiel was to give warning to Israel to repent and turn back to God. See Ezekiel 2 and 3. When they did not give heed to Ezekiel's warnings, his subsequent duty was to give them the word of God, and "*give them warning from [God]*" about the consequences. See [Ezekiel 3:17](#). Watchmen can additionally go off the rails, because of the deceitfulness of sin. See [Jeremiah 17:9](#) and [Hebrews 3:13](#). Consequently, all such utterances from any person are to be tested and judged. See [1 Corinthians 14:29](#).

Given that these ministers are teaching publicly, their teaching accordingly, are absolutely subject to scrutiny, just like any other minister. They hold a position of influence to ". . . *draw away disciples after . . .*" them. See [Act 20:30](#). In other words, no officer of the Lord Jesus Christ—a watchman, pastor, worship leader, Bible study group leader, or minister can be above the word of God, to be exempt from being checked for error. ALL are on an equal playing-field with God, for correction, rebuke, admonishing, and reproof.

2. The Right to be Warned and Implementation of the Heretic Process

The bottom line, simply defined in one sentence: a person that refuses correction is a bastard, a reprobate, and a heretic, after the first, and second admonition.^[3] The Lord Most High has designed his reproof and admonition system within the Bible to apply uniformly to every Believer, and for them to be subject to it—a Theocracy. Whilst a local Church may formally recognise a person as a heretic, the doctrine was prescribed by God. Therefore, it is actually God that is labelling the person a heretic, not a Believer or minister. This process is no light thing. To formally classify a Believer as a heretic is a lengthy Biblical, procedural matter. It must be so because of its dire, manifest outcome. If a Believer is involved in a heretic proceeding, justly inaugurated, they got there because one refused to accept a warning against teaching error, or the warning content, or both. [Proverbs 13:18](#) says—

Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction: but he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured.

Essentially, every human being has a right to have knowledge of, and to be informed of the offence being committed against God. It is this same model of warning in a court of law, or in a family setting, where it naturally occurs between a parent and their child. A child has little or no understanding between what

³ See [Proverbs 13:24](#), [2 Corinthians 13:5](#), [2 Timothy 3:8](#), [Titus 3:10-11](#) and [Hebrews 12:8](#).

is right and wrong, until such time they are warned or informed by the parent. While the child is in the family home, they are subject to the parent's rule and authority. Likewise, as God's children we are also in God's home. To continue, will result in higher censure from God, The Most High. This is the significance behind the first and second admonition as written in **Titus 3:10-11**. The rejection of the first admonition will result in a higher censure and likewise the second.

3. God's Warning System: The Process of How it Escalates to Heretic Status

Now we will develop a full in-depth explanation of how the heretic process works and how it is constituted. The process starts from a position that an offence has been committed against God (in whatever form that takes). The preamble to the heretic process is similar to the western judicial process—it starts with a charge. Then, in accordance with the well established equity principle, the error must be substantiated or established by two or three credible witnesses. But an accusation brought by only one witness, cannot stand as valid evidence for the unbiblical teaching/error that is alleged to have been taught. See **Deuteronomy 17:6**, **Deuteronomy 19:15**, **Matthew 18:16** and **2 Corinthians 13:1**. So what about the scenario where a Believer is not attending any local church? This is a plausible circumstance given the times in which we now live, in light of the apostasy that is current in the local church. It cannot, however, mitigate this equitable Biblical principle, neither can it be derogated from. This applies to any Bible teacher, even where the platform is social media and the congregation is the whole world.

It is not simply a case of a rebuke being issued, the recipient rejects it, then such is designated a heretic. Rather, the process is cumulative and layered. These headings explain this process as follows, entitled—

- I. BEREAN WARNING SYSTEM
- II. RATIONALE WHY PEOPLE MUST BE WARNED
- III. CUMULATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR REJECTION
- IV. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE

BELIEVER TO INFORM

I. Berean Warning System

What are the causes where God will issue correction? It is not simply to maintain order and sound teaching within the church, but it is also to address error that inadvertently creeps into the church, or division that emerges as a result of failing to check bad doctrine, or in the worse case scenario, to expose deceptive ministers of God.^[4] Problems may be classified as gnats or camels. See **Matthew 23:24**. Straining at gnats are minor issues, and are hardly worth barking about, and are not fundamental to trigger the heretic process. However, one is to be vocal about straining at camels—matters so serious that God will have the heretic process inaugurated. Note, it is not the local congregation's call to institute the process—the Lord Jesus Christ, the head of the church, does.

In **Jeremiah 7:27-28, 30**, Jeremiah gave warnings for tolerating error and idolatry. God charged Jeremiah to tell them, “. . . *but they will not hearken to thee: thou shalt also call unto them; but they will not answer thee.*” In **Ezekiel 3:18**, when God declares that the wicked will die, and those that are charged to give the warning, but do not fulfil their obligation to deliver it, the spiritual death of the unwarned/unsaved is upon that Berean (“*Ezekiel Doctrine/System*”). God clearly declares, “. . . *the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.*” Thus, those that understand are responsible to declare it, and those that neglect to do it, are culpable. The Berean is called upon to dispense judgment and justice. Furthermore, God repeats the doctrine two more times: once in **Ezekiel 18**, then in **Ezekiel 33:1-12**. If God speaks a decree once, it is important, twice it is critical, but for it to be written three times in the word of God is of grave significance, to pay close attention. Often, God repeats important principles 2 or 3 times. The argument is submitted that this was an Old Testament approach, and, therefore, it does not apply to New Testament doctrine. The objection is submitted that God deals with us under grace. Really!? In other words, the doctrine was only valid to the Old

⁴ See **Acts 20:29-30**, **Romans 16:17**, **1 Corinthians 1:10**, **1 Corinthians 14:33, 40** and **2 Corinthians 11:13-15**.

Covenant—the provision of salvation under the Law of Moses. But, the Ezekiel doctrine is not connected to the Old Covenant, neither is it an annexation to it. Rather, it is God's warning system for His people to avert (i) straying away from right doctrine, and (ii) to prevent people from falling away.

However, this is not even the main point of rebuttal here. If the above objections were valid, yes, whilst this is a partial truth—that we are under grace because grace abounds to us—this model however, often propagates a license to sin. Therefore, this absolves any and all culpability of the offending recipient. This is not correct. The Romans 6 passage explains why this is not correct. In fact, there is a New Testament precedent, that follows the two or three witnesses rule. Paul had already established in [1 Corinthians 13:1](#), when he gave two warnings to the Corinthian church. Paul then said he had to come again on a third occasion, where he stated that he would not spare. See [2 Corinthians 13:2](#). The Ezekiel doctrine carries over to the New Testament with reference to [Titus 3:10-11](#)—after the first and second admonition, reject. Furthermore, the God of the Old Testament is the same God of the New Testament. Thus, in Malachi God says of Himself that He does not change. It is repeated in the New Testament—Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. See [Malachi 3:6](#) and [Hebrews 13:8](#). Furthermore, in [James 1:17](#), it also reiterates the same, that there is “... *no variableness, neither shadow of turning*” with God. Second, in the New Testament, Believers are informed that the doctrine in the Old Testament writings, were “*written for our learning*.” This statement is repeated twice—once in [Romans 15:4](#) and the other in [1 Corinthians 10:6](#).

God prescribed several life scenarios, allocating four categories of what the implications will be when a warning is given or not given—

- A. The Berean trumpets his obligation to impart warning. The recipient gives heed and repents. Both have delivered their own soul
- B. First warning imparted and the recipient fails to listen or give heed. The recipient is without excuse. They are subject to God's censure for refusing to listen, and/or lose rewards from

God

- C. Second warning imparted and the recipient fails to listen or give heed. Individual(s) subject to God for refusing to give heed to a second warning, or God designates the recipient a heretic;
- D. The Berean fails to administer his obligation in accordance with the truth of what he knows. He is subject to God's judgment and is accountable for the blood of the recipient. God appoints somebody else to undertake the task

The provision of a warning is the synonym for, 'execute judgment.' See [Isaiah 56:1](#), and [Jeremiah 5:1](#). The latter scripture emphasises that God was looking for any person in Jerusalem that was dispensing judgment and seeking truth. God found none. Thus, it is not exclusive for God alone to perform—He expects all of His children to do it. See also [Proverbs 21:15](#) and [Proverbs 24:23](#). This is why in the *category D*, premise, when the Berean fails to discharge his obligation, he brings himself and his faith into disrepute. See [Isaiah 59:4, 9-15](#). The very essence of being a Believer is to do judgment and justice against error. This is what God did against Egypt.

II. Rationale Behind Why people Must be Warned

The rationale and purpose for correction is to keep the Believer/congregation holy and blameless before the Lord. That is, to abide in right doctrine. See [1 Corinthians 6:14-18](#) and [1 Peter 1:15-16](#). The point being, if the error is not corrected, the Lord will remove the lampstand from the local church and it will be finished. [Revelation 2:5](#) applies. The same rules apply to individuals. See the conclusion of [Titus 3:10-11](#). Another vital reason for correction is that because it is easy for any Believer to be drawn away from the “*Straight and Narrow Path*,” to go down a dirt path. Thus, Paul's writings are procedural matters to ensure the church/Believer is placed back onto the right path. Read the Pilgram's Progress Book. In accordance with [Romans 4:15](#), “... *where no law is*,

there is no transgression.” It is for this purpose that a correction/warning that is administered, and rejected, that God will now attribute sin. Now they know—they see. So too, now they are guilty before God for rejecting truth. [Hosea 4:6](#) emphasises, it is for the lack of knowledge that God people’s perish, simply because knowledge was rejected—

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

The contrapositive of this principle is—sin is not imputed if the recipient does not know and has not been informed—the Believer is considered to be blind. This is how the Lord Jesus said it in [John 9:41](#)—

Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

To not see, is to be ignorant and unenlightened. Once eyes are enlightened, then one understands what is meant. At that point, one is without excuse and the individual is deemed accountable for what they do with that knowledge. See also [John 15:22](#). The person that fails to responsibly handle the information, by acting on it, or by omission of not acting, the sin remains. [Romans 5:13](#) reinforces this application, namely, where there is no knowledge and understanding—sin is not imputed. The person is still blind. Indeed, [Deuteronomy 1:39](#) provides an apt application when the children of Israel entered into the promised land, they “. . . *had no knowledge between good and evil.*” The Canaanites in the promised land had knowledge of good and evil. Therefore, because of this, God threw them out for their sin. It was because of Israel’s status, first, as children of God, and second, they received forgiveness of sin. Therefore, sin could not be imputed onto them, enabling them to go into the Land to possess it. Conversely, judgment came upon the Egyptians and the Canaanites for sin. As children, they did not have the requisite ‘knowledge to know the

difference between good and evil’, even though they had sin, “. . . *for all have sinned.*” See [Romans 3:23](#). When they had committed sin, which they did, they were forgiven because for the wrong that a person does not know, it cannot be imputed. The Lord Jesus Christ said it this way—

If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin. ([John 15:22](#))

Everyone has a right to know the truth, to have the opportunity to flee from it, or not. Indeed, [Job 34:32](#) reads, “[t]hat which I see not teach thou me: if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.” Thus, it is by instruction and teaching from the word of God that brings iniquity to the light. The bottom line is this: ALL have sinned and come short of the glory of God. See [Romans 3:23](#). Therefore, this is the basis of why God ensures that everyone is warned, so sin will be imputed, and they are without excuse.

III. Cumulative Consequences for Rejection

For those in leadership, God said only two rejections in [Titus 3:10-11](#). It is at God’s discretion if another warning is given, but one should not go beyond the Scriptures—to tempt the Lord God; thinking because of His grace—He will allow another warning. He may allow or He may not. This is why it is wise to listen at the first instance. If God does permit a third time (remote), relying on [2 Corinthians 13:1](#), it will be severe. However, with the unbeliever, God may give multiple warnings within a person’s lifetime, to accept salvation, but need not do. God owes NO person multiple chances. If God so chooses, two or three opportunities are sufficient to accept. When a person’s mind is fully enlightened to the Gospel message and they intuitively understand it, at that point they must embrace salvation. See also [2 Corinthians 6:2](#). A rejection, when one knows the truth, with all the opportunities God has given, renders the person lost—meaning that God gives no more opportunities for salvation. For the sake of completeness, in addition to the table below, we will also examine the corresponding

New Testament doctrines. This is summarised in the cumulative stages table below—

GOD'S FIVE STAGE REJECTION PROCESS		
	SCRIPTURE GROUPING	PRINCIPLE
STAGE 1 & 2	Proverbs 1:20-23 Song of Songs 5:2 Jeremiah chps 5-11	First and Second Admonitions' given, require repentance as unto the Lord (grieves the Spirit after first).
STAGE 3	2 Corinthians 13:1	The exception, at God's discretion, third warning given.
STAGE 4	Proverbs 1:24-25 Song of Songs 5:3 Jeremiah chp 13	Refuses to hear and rejects Admonitions (quenching the Spirit). Designated a bastard and heretic.
STAGE 5	Proverbs 1:29-33 Song of Songs 5:7-9 Jeremiah chps 15-22	They turn to the Lord, but too late—the Lord God has withdrawn Himself and rejected them.
OUTCOME	Proverbs 1:29-33 Song of Songs 5:7-9 Jeremiah chps 15-22	God brings judgment for rejection and preference for false doctrine.

Table C-1. Rejection Process Synopsis

With a Believer it is different. A Believer may make repeated rejections of truth for correction, but this is not sacrosanct. Thus, we are called not to “*tempt the Lord thy God*.” God has prescribed the guidelines in the Scriptures of what to do with a Bible Believer that has gone off-track. A Believer that does not hold an office is certainly less accountable than a Believer that is a minister of the Gospel. The minister should know better. So, it all depends where the Believer is in the Lord. Thus, on a pecking order, as the table opposite shows, a rejection will incur incremental consequences. Depending on where the recipient is in the heretic process, this could involve chastening ([2 Corinthians 5:10](#)), to cause the recipient to accept the message. In the worse case, very sobering, is where God allows the individual to fall away—when God officially and formally designates a person as a heretic. Jeremiah the prophet was nicknamed the ‘weeping prophet.’ He had no delight or received no edification whatsoever to deliver such warnings, and coupled with the fact that Jeremiah knew that the people would refuse to hear, he knew that God’s judgment would ensue as a result of their rejection.

Believers dissenting, may adopt a Calvinistic approach. One aspect is ‘once saved always saved’—the ‘elect’ perspective, the position where one can *never lose salvation*, by citing one of the Calvinistic proof texts, [Romans 8:34-39](#). This reasoning is absolutely correct when it is applied to ‘abiding in Christ’, are obedient to God our Father, and maintain right doctrine—then we have sweet fellowship. Obviously this does not apply when one is wilfully abiding in error, even when such a one has been judged/exhorted, but refuses to be corrected. This is what 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus 3, 1 John, 2 John and 3 John are for. It addresses how to expose error or bad doctrine, and the process of how to correct it. If a person is of the Calvinistic persuasion, then stay true to the ideology adherence—put the belief to the test: reject the entirety of this message, then see whether God will honour it. If the gamble fails before God—because they placed their faith in false doctrine, they are the loser here—lost for eternity. It is sheer stupidity to gamble with your eternal destiny. Indeed, one should not tempt the Lord thy God. Beware, if you do ignore a heretic procedural warning, consider what the consequence shall be when God does not honour it. If it is a second

admonition, the danger is, if one rejects the message, God will honour what [Titus 3:11-12](#) says: “*after . . . the second admonition reject . . . Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself*.” As aforesaid, a rejection of just one warning will not result in eternal death. Rejections are subject to a sliding scale model.

C3.1 Principles from the Old Testament and New Testament

This heading explains the stages in [Table C-1](#), and addresses, in particular, the final doctrinal principles of stages 4 & 5. [Proverbs 1:20-33](#) mirrors the Song of [Songs 5:2-6](#), and Jeremiah, from chapters five to twenty, are the practical execution of these principles. It is [Jeremiah 5:3-4](#) that teaches that rejection results from NOT grieving for one’s sin, when it is revealed to them that it is sin. This is grieving the Holy Spirit (stages 1 & 2). It is ultimately pride that prevents a Believer from hearing from God ([Jeremiah 13:15,17](#)). Accordingly, they harden their heart to such an extent that they refuse to “*. . . receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock . . .*” ([Jeremiah 5:3](#)). This leads to the next stage, namely, quenching the Spirit of God (stages 4 & 5), which means rejection from God is final ([1 Thessalonians 5:19](#)).

The meaning of ‘quench’ is to extinguish light ([Isaiah 66:24](#)). God calls them foolish because they “*. . . know not the way of the LORD, nor the judgment of their God*” ([Jeremiah 5:4](#)). For the individual Believer, [Jeremiah 6:19,30](#) provides the consequence of rejecting the word of the Lord, because they do not delight in truth, so God rejects them. The two scriptures of [Isaiah 65:12](#) and [Isaiah 66:3-4](#), both amplify this thought further where a Believer “*. . . have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abomination*”, by continuing in error when it is manifestly shown to be error. The next verse, [Isaiah 66:4](#), God then goes on to say, consistent with the principles already explained, “*. . . I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear*.”

The Lord explains in [Jeremiah 6:30](#) that those who reject truth, “*Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the LORD hath rejected them*.” This is normal

nomenclature, because they have refused to accept abundantly clear teaching from the word of God, so God in return, rejects them. In accordance with [Jeremiah 19:15](#), God said He was bringing judgment upon the nation, but the same principle applies to individuals too. Because of pride one hardens oneself in order not to hear: *"Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon this city and upon all her towns all the evil that I have pronounced against it, because they have hardened their necks, that they might not hear my words."* Consequently, for not accepting truth, God will allow such a one to go into the slop of the world, to be plagued with false teaching and overtaken with false teachers. God has no favourites. Church-wise, this would equal the lampstand being removed from the Church ([Revelation 2:5](#)).

A Born Again Believer is a Temple, as stated in [1 Corinthians 3:16-17](#) and in [1 Corinthians 6:15-16](#). As such, we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. To remain in error and sin, these Scriptures state such persons are in agreement with lies it. See [2 Corinthians 6:14-17](#). Clearly, the Holy Spirit does not lead people to sin—He is The Spirit of Truth and Holiness—not the Spirit of error and sin. Can God make this any clearer than what these scriptures make plain? To continue on in error or in a false apprehension of what one believes to be right, is committing spiritual harlotry. Whichever way you want to dice it, directly or indirectly, in this case indirectly, it is still false.

C3.2 The meaning of silver and its relationship with redemption

Silver represents atonement and redemption. The redemption of the Children of Israel involved a redemption price. That price was personal and was mandatory for every male Israelite to pay in silver coin. In [Exodus 30:13-16](#), every Israelite had to give half a shekel *"after the shekel of the sanctuary"*. Accordingly, the shekel in verse 15 was, *"... to make an atonement for your souls."* In verse 16, the Silver Shekel is called atonement money. Failure to pay meant death or to be cut off from the congregation. Indeed, silver is subscribed to atonement, and atonement was only by blood, per [Leviticus 17:11b](#). The significance being if the coin was not paid, it meant God's judgment, since this would imply the person had not received

atonement for his soul. Thus, silver is the price of blood. In [Exodus 38:27-31](#), the Tabernacle was built upon a foundation of silver—the Israelite shekel offering. [Exodus 38:27](#) describes that the pillars of the sanctuary and the *"sockets of the vail"* were cast from silver—

And of the hundred talents of silver were cast the sockets of the sanctuary, and the sockets of the vail; an hundred sockets of the hundred talents, a talent for a socket.

The purchase price of silver or, put another way, silver is the price to purchase life. [Leviticus 17:11a](#), states, *"For the life of the flesh is in the blood . . ."*. In [Genesis 37:28](#), Joseph was sold for twenty pieces of silver by his brethren. The Chief Priest in [Matthew 27:3, 4](#) said silver is the price of blood. For this reason, the Lord Jesus was sold for thirty pieces of silver—the atonement and redemption. The purchase price for every soul, Jew and Gentile, is the precious blood of Jesus Christ. [Hebrews 9:22](#) says that, *"... without shedding of blood is no remission."* The blood was the foundation for the Tabernacle in the Old Testament and, likewise, so too, is the precious blood of the Lord Jesus. It is the only foundation on which the whole of redemption rests. How appropriate that every Born Again Believer has also received forgiveness by the precious blood of the Lord Jesus, who are *"... as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house . . ."* See [1 Peter 2:5](#). In summary, silver, atonement, forgiveness, and shedding of blood are bound up in the salvation of souls.

C3.3 Reprobate Silver and Nomenclature being designated a heretic

The meaning of reprobate is rejection and degenerate, as already outlined at ["Principles from the Old Testament and New Testament"](#). Therefore, God is saying that they were silver, but now are reprobate silver—now without hope and standing before God. In fact, in [Jeremiah 6:30](#) and [Isaiah 66:4](#), God provides the definition, *"Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the LORD hath rejected them."* The same goes for Believers. A Believer can reach a particular

point because of rejection of sufficient warning(s) or cumulative rejections, to become reprobate silver. This is why the Believer needs to be filled with the fear of the Lord and trembling, not to toy around with issues of life and death.

C3.4 Given over to a reprobate mind

In **2 Timothy 3:8-9**, Jannes and Jambres had resisted the truth. For this purpose they were then labelled men of corrupt minds. If readers recall, the mind is what is hindering—the principal source with which to accept or discard the knowledge of error. Those that resist the truth God designates them *reprobate* concerning the faith (**2 Timothy 3:8**). In order for such a person to reach this point of resisting the truth and subsequent rejection, they must then have already been ‘judged’/received correction first, to have this state-of-mind. Thus, it is God’s desire for believers to be judged/corrected to continue on as sons of God. As Hebrews says, children of God receive chastening/correction. The **2 Timothy 3:8-9** passage concludes that, as Believers, “. . . *they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.*” The significance of *proceed no further*, means a Believer’s walk with the Lord Jesus has ended. If that was not enough, the next chapter of **2 Timothy 4:4** also underlines how Believers “. . . *shall turn away their ears from the truth . . .*” The finality of God’s rejection can be observed in **Titus 3:10-11**. God will give warning, and after the “. . . *first and second admonition reject.*” This brings us to the Level of **2 Thessalonians 2:11-12**. Indeed, this concerns the coming last days’ apostasy—the great falling away. This is presently an ongoing event and there is a finale event. This is a reference to the apostate church and unbelievers. It will be enlarged to encompass those that reproach the counsel of God. It is, “. . . *for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.*” With the Believer’s decision to uphold believing in a lie, God then gives them over to a lie, despite the fact that God issued informative warning opportunities.

C3.5 Sliding Scale Model to Make a Right Determination

To broadbush any Believer into the same category, without taking into account various considerations would be unjust to say the least. At the first stage, make a distinction between: (i) what amount the Believer knows, (ii) the depth that the Believer knows, (iii) how long the Believer has been walking with the Lord Jesus Christ, and (iv) does he hold an office in the Body and what is the length of time he has held it.

Then at the second stage, take into account, (a) mistakes or error of judgment for whatever reason, (b) habitual difficulties with which a person has no control, (c) remaining in error through ignorance, (d) wilfully sinning. Thus, the emphasis in the word of God makes plain that we are NOT perfect. Therefore, according to **1 Thessalonians 4:3-4**, sanctification is the process with which God uses to purify His Saints from faults, habitual sin, general sinful behaviour, deliverance from the “*pollutions of the world*” (**2 Peter 2:20**). Given this fact, Believers can still be overtaken in a fault, per **Galatians 6:1**. Even more seriously than that, some of us have backslidden from the Lord. Even there the Lord is gracious to heal our backslidings as per **Jeremiah 3:12** and **Hosea 14:4**. As brethren, we can also fall into the trap of quarrelling. **Colossians 3:13** commands us to forgive one another, even as Christ forgave us. There are Believers who oppose themselves in **2 Timothy 2:25**, and God can grant them repentance too. At some stage in a Believer’s walk with the Lord Jesus, there are instances when the true Believer stumbles into sin and error. Therefore, taking into account these factors, they are grouped into the following tiers—

- I. Believers who have little or no understanding of the Bible, its doctrines, understanding of Bible history or prophecy. They may be a Babe in Christ, or one that is just newly Born Again and attends a congregation for teaching.
- II. Then there are those in the middle of the scale, the lower level of leadership. Perhaps they are newly established or not so experienced in a leadership role, but are well educated in the Lord Jesus sufficient to establish them into ministry. These comprise: Bible translators,

Born Again Bible researchers, elders, leaders, pastors, teachers, preachers, textual critics, apologetics, experienced watchmen type ministries. They are innocent. They need not necessarily be affiliated with a church.

- III. At the far extreme, top of the scale, is the upper level of leadership. They need not necessarily be affiliated with a church. They comprise all the above in tier II. They are experienced, highly knowledgeable in Biblical matters and have been serving as a long-standing leader. They teach error and they have received a warning or more for it. The person then makes a fully informed decision to reject the truth.

These model principles (Tiers I.—III.) comprise the sliding scale heretic process. The latter two tiers are in leadership and essentially, they are the same, but comprise a lower and upper Level. The former, are still accountable since they possess the prowess, they have the spiritual intellectual capacity, and the Biblical acumen to discern between good and right doctrine. The latter is focused on experienced persons, who have been in ministry for a considerable time and are highly knowledgeable in the things of the Lord. This model has its limitations since God has already specified only two admonitions in [Titus 3:11-12](#). Therefore, within God's heretic procedure, given the solemnity of the process, recipients of these admonitions, will most likely fall within the top two tiers of the model, II.—III.

Generally speaking, as already explained, in accordance with God's compassion, there is a good degree of flexibility within each stage. The model is not strict, neither is it a hard and fast rule, when a Believer comes within any particular stage. Such is God's perfect standards of equity and justice. However, with ministers, [James 3:1](#) exhorts Believers saying, *"My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation."* Thus, this is the reason why God is less accommodating to those in the upper and lower tiers. They are ministers who should know better, and therefore, the Lord Jesus holds them to a higher standard. This is illustrated by the proverb of Jesus in [John 15:22](#) that, *"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin:*

but now they have no cloke for their sin." Once one has been informed, then they are without excuse. The two admonitions may consist of a verbal message, and the second, a full-on written warning. But, this is not specifically expressed within the verse. ■

PART D. RECOGNISE BAD JUDGMENT AND HOW TO PREVENT IT

1. The ways that righteous judgment can be perverted or manipulated

This heading explains what the outcomes are for having *"respect of persons"* on a general level. It can have detrimental outcomes as it destroys fairness and perverts righteous judgment. Lastly, practical examples are provided on many different levels to demonstrate how easy it is to have *"respect of persons."*

D1.1 Showing partiality/respecter of persons in judgment, generally

We have already discussed how easy it is to pervert and influence judgment with incentives.^[5] This sub-heading examines how showing 'respect of persons' can influence the judging process and even the entire outcome. However, we distinguish this from a person showing respect for office and position. For example, a nurse towards a doctor, and vice versa. In most circumstances, we respect the office, but we may not necessarily respect the person, with few exceptions. We respect the office of the President of the United States, but need not respect the person, if they are making ungodly decisions. In accordance with the Romans 13 commandment, we obey the authorities over us. This is conditional; subject to the person not being proud or given over to lies, then we should not respect such a person, as per [Psalm 40:4](#). In [Psalm 119:78](#), it defines the proud to be those who have dealt perversely: *"Let the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause . . ."* Doctrinally, this is speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who deal with the Lord Jesus perversely are not worthy of the Believer's respect.

⁵ See [B3.4 Judging process influenced by incentives, p.18](#). See also [D1.2 Practical examples of respect of persons, p.32](#).

First of all, let us start with the basic foundational truths about the Lord God Himself. In many scriptures, God speaks of Himself as not being a respecter of persons. See **2 Chronicles 19:7**. Another reference is **Romans 2:11**, which says, “*For there is no respect of persons with God.*” In reference to Believers, in living out the faith, we are not to show “*respect of persons,*” respect towards a proud person, or towards a Christian Believer that we previously respected, but has subsequently fallen away. See **Psalms 40:4**. However, generally, to have “*respect of persons*” when engaging in the judging process is sin—

James 2:1, 9 My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. [9] But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

The synonyms for the act of respecting another is the same as showing partiality: having a bias, or manifesting favouritism towards somebody.^[6] The verses in **1 Timothy 5:19-21** state overall that the judging process, as a matter of course, must be carried out without preference or respect for one thing, person or another, without bias or partiality when judging between good and evil, and right and wrong. For this reason, this of kind of respect is not to be confused with those Scriptures that say that God had ‘respect unto Abel’ or God ‘had respect unto Abraham, etc.; God’s respect unto them was not connected to God dispensing judgment. Rather, God was saying that He is showing respect to their prayer, or God was finding favour with a certain person, as pleasing to Him. For example, Enoch pleased God, and God took him.

It’s the ‘face’ of a person that really threads all of the above dimensions together, and this is what God emphasises in **Deuteronomy 1:17**. God said, “. . . *Ye shall not respect persons in judgment but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man . . .*” The “*face*” can both look nasty, and therefore “*fearful,*” or beautiful, and

consequently is difficult to resist. The terms *great* and *small* in the verse, God requires the Berean to judge the great, which represent the rich and powerful; we are instructed not to be afraid of them because of their stature. For the small, they represent the poor people and those of no influence. We are not to diminish right judgment because they are poor. The decision made for the rich, by the same token should be the same as the decision for the poor—circumstances all being equal.

God issued an identical decree to both Jeremiah and Ezekiel prior to commencement of their office. See **Jeremiah 1:8**. In the Ezekiel record, God said he was not to be “. . . *afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house.*” The last half of the sentence signified that, because of their state of rebellion, Ezekiel would receive an unpleasant and nasty response. Consequently, God’s exhortation to Ezekiel was that he was not to allow his judgment to be affected, by diminishing it, or by not delivering it at all, because of their unpleasant facial expressions. See **Ezekiel 2:6** and **Ezekiel 3:8-9**.

D1.2 Practical examples of respect of persons when judging

In the epistle of James, he provided a parable to emphasise what having respect of persons looks like in practice—

James 2:2-4 For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; [3] And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: [4] Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?

The rule that the parable is highlighting is that when two persons or more are on a level footing, we should not make favourable or preferential decisions that are based on what a person’s appearance is, or because of one’s status in society. For example, the President of the United States, the Prime Minister of the UK, Company CEOs, judges, famous actors,

⁶ Horsfall, D. (2017), The Apostate NKJV Bible and The Mark of the Beast, pp.595-607, 695-97. My book is available on my website, below.

Royalty etc., they are not to be treated any different as against normal, regular people who have no status; they receive exactly the same treatment, regardless of whether the judging outcome be a good or bad one. **Job 34:19** confirms this application with regard to these distinctions—

How much less to him that accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor? for they all are the work of his hands.

The same rule encompasses all life scenarios. Bearing in mind though, principles of justice, mercy and equity are an intrinsic and interwoven part of the judging process when it comes to deciding a cause. Some practical secular examples of showing respect of persons include, but not all—

- **A legal matter within the court system.** The judge's decision should not favour one party founded upon social status, one's education, or one's appearance. The decision is based on the facts and principles of equity, for all.
- **On a social setting.** If a diplomat went to a prestigious five star hotel and the red carpet was rolled out for him to welcome him into the hotel, then the same red carpet treatment is accorded to all of the hotel guests. If such treatment is not bestowed upon regular guests, then comparatively no one should be given the red carpet treatment.
- **Respect on grounds of race.** Two people are interested to purchase a certain residential property. Two of the people might be Chinese, Caucasian, Black, or Indian. The realtor/estate agent rejects one of them or more, on the basis of skin colour, when most other factors, such as professional status and income, are equal.
- **Someone with whom one has a close bond.** This is likely the most difficult type of judging a Believer will have to face. A Believer has a Christian friend who has become embroiled in adultery or in some other unchristian conduct. The Believer compromises and capitulates to let the friend off the hook, or to just give

a wishy-washy, feeble warning. Whereas, the same Believer gives a direct stern warning/censure to a person who is not a friend, and is subsequently dismissed from the church. In other everyday life activities, we are quick to judge another with the correct form of judgment, to whom we do not like. However, when it is towards a person with whom we have an excellent rapport, we shy away from judging, all circumstances being equal. This is respecting persons.

Note what James concludes in his epistle. He emphasises that it is all connected with the mind. The verses states—

James 2:3-4 And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: [4] Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?

When James mentions, "*partial in yourselves*" is a reference to the mind. The mind is the seat of the soul from which all thoughts, ideas, likes and dislikes are conceived. The mind is the nucleus for dispensing of corrupt judgment: the main ingredient for entertaining evil thoughts. Evil judgment will emanate when it involves thoughts of showing partiality or favour.

2. Respect of persons by close ties of friendship

This respect of persons heading explores further the intricacies of close associations of friendship, including family, and the danger it poses to 'muddy' the Believer's thinking. Lastly, we explain the manner of how an unbeliever's lifestyle/communication can rub-off on the Believer, to influence decision-making.

D2.1 Friendship respect of persons leads to compromise

This type of judging can get rather tricky. Forming close friendships with unbelievers may compromise

our Christian values, influence us to blaspheme or even express the same coarse language as them, to demonstrate we have common ground with them. On one hand, we judge/counsel people righteously and handle situations properly, that is glorying to the Lord God, but on the other hand, when it involves people with whom we have a close relationship, we water down the standard (intentionally or unintentionally).

Respect of person(s) can occur either in a social or professional setting. This can involve (i) existing friendships; (ii) ones where no prior friendship exists, but upon meeting the person, one develops an instant connection and rapport with the person(s); (iii) opposite sex mutual attraction, etc. All of these types are influential factors that directly or indirectly impress upon our minds. This can determine what we decide to do, or not do. This is what showing respect of persons signifies. This is partly what God was warning us about; developing intimate friendships, which then makes our task of judging righteously enormously difficult. When compared to people we have never met before, the task of judging is easier, lacking the personal relationship features.

The Lord knew where a Believer's proclivities and loyalties would lie in circumstances of this nature. Therefore, he provided [Psalm 1:1-2](#), one of the most famously spoken exhortations—

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.
[2] But his delight is in the law of the LORD;
and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

Essentially, the scope of this verse entails not to develop close relations with unbelievers, worldly Believers, or carnal believers and then accept advice, counsel or guidance from them; when they don't even believe in, or accept Biblical principles for Christian living. The Lord set up the contrast in [Psalm 1:1](#) to counsel the Believer not to identify with the unbeliever; but, rather, the Believer that loves the Lord will delight in God's word and study it. This enables the Believer to make right decisions where to draw the line. What the Believer reads, he keeps, in order to receive the blessing from God, as written in verse one. Bad counsel

will pervert and manipulate the Believer's judgment on what is right and wrong, from a Biblical perspective. See also [How to recognise bad judgment, p.35](#).

D2.2 The manner how it permeates the mind and then perverts one's ensuing judgment

Friendship requires, to a large degree, a meeting of minds, and to have some mutual interests in common. [Psalm 1:1](#) remember, says "*Blessed is the man that walketh not . . .*" [Amos 3:3](#) says "*Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*" Try walking with someone with whom you have no rapport, or with a spouse with whom you have had a disagreement; with someone with whom you have no friendship, or have no respect for. It is impossible to do without creating an uncomfortable atmosphere. Arguably, the influence of evil that interferes with the good judgment of the Believer, the reverse of this principle also applies to the unbeliever; specifically, we can be a witness for good to influence the unbeliever, in order to win such for Christ. See also [How to prevent bad judgment/counsel, p.36](#). However, this is seldom the case in practice. To have companionship with unbelievers in a social setting, in most cases will be adverse. The verse in [1 Corinthians 15:33](#) confirms this thought—

Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

We have all been there before we got saved! Cursing and blaspheming in our conversations with friends were commonplace. The Lord Jesus said that evil behaviour that proceeds out of the mouth, is really what is in the heart: "*. . . for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.*" See [Luke 6:45](#) and also [Matthew 15:18-19](#). Further, [James 3:6](#) says, the "*. . . tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity . . . it defileth the whole body . . .*" Therefore, keeping company with the wrong types, no surprise then, such "*evil communications*" are going to affect, and rub off on us. Note, having a friendship with an unbeliever is not the same concept as having fellowship. In fact, having fellowship with an unbeliever is strictly forbidden. See [2 Corinthians 6:14-17](#). The companion words

that draw out the meaning of 'keeping bad company' in [Psalm 1:1-2](#), are the verses in [Job 34:8-9](#)—

Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men. [9] For he hath said, It profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himself with God.

This is the reason why [1 Corinthians 15:33](#) instructs us NOT to be deceived. We should not be under any false misapprehension or delusion that an ungodly behaviour will not permeate and infect our minds, to influence our judgment; to the extent that we then make allowances for bad conduct. In fact, [Ephesians 5:11](#) takes us further. Rather than tolerating "evil communications" from the unbeliever, and being corrupted by it, the unbeliever should be judged in the form of a reproof or rebuke. Thus, where the normal response would involve a rebuke, the close ties have affected the Believer's mind. The Believer shows favouritism and partiality toward the friend because of being personally involved, and in turn, the Believer dismisses appropriate Biblical judgement. According to [James 2:2-4](#), the Believer has become a "judge of evil thoughts."

The conclusion to the above, in [Job 34:8-9](#), God highlights, in terms of judging, that God will not commit iniquity or do wickedness by showing partiality or favouritism—

[Job 34:10-12](#) Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of understanding: far be it from God, that he should do wickedness; and from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity. [11] For the work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways. [12] Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment.

The standard that God sets for Himself is the same standard that God expects from Believers to abide by, per James, chapter 2. The all-encompassing general rule is, we are not to hold respect of persons towards a person on any grounds. The main categories,

but not exhaustive, are status, class, rich or poor or intimate friendships.

3. How to recognise bad judgment masquerading as right judgment

We have already discussed how right judgment can be perverted in showing respect of persons. Under this heading, we discuss from an outsider/bystander position how to recognise and discern when others have become compromised, as a result of corrupt judgment. The account of Ahithophel in 2 Samuel, starting at chapter 15, will be our focus of study.

Ahithophel held the position of counsellor to the King, by appointment of King David. Absalom, David's son, was the leader of the insurrection against King David. Ahithophel committed treason and agreed to counsel Absalom to overthrow David's kingdom. Absalom is a type of Antichrist because he was a man of flattery who charmed the people. It was for this reason that "... *The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom.*" See [2 Samuel 15:13](#). Ahithophel counselled Absalom, providing him with a strategy how to attain the tactical advantage to obtain the throne, by killing David. See [2 Samuel 16:20-22](#) and [2 Samuel 17:1-4](#). In [2 Samuel 16:23](#), it states that the counsel that was given for that time period: "*And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counselled in those days, was as if a man had enquired at the oracle of God . . .*" In other words, when there was a presumption that God had already spoken. Accordingly, Ahithophel's counsel was taken as if God Himself had spoken it.

The application to recognise bad judging is linked to Ahithophel's outward behaviour in how he deployed his gifts, and the manifestation of what was in his heart (see [Luke 6:45](#))—

- i. The first discernible attribute is from an outward behaviour point. Ahithophel's judging expertise, enabled him to apply his wisdom, develop a seemingly flawless evil strategy. This was then manifested in the form of a regimen, which was then implemented into mainstream society.
- ii. Any person that switches loyalties to an unbeliever, such as Absalom, and endorses

him, is a sign that he has rejected the Faith, and has perverted right counsel of the word of God.

- iii. The elements to discern compromise, is analogous to Ahithophel's inward proclivities and mannerisms. For instance, in his heart, he exhibited a propensity to follow after, and be in league with Absalom, a flatterer. Flattery enabled him to win the hearts of all of the people. Hitler and Joseph Goebbels are exemplary personalities of flattery. Other synonyms for flattery are seduction, charming, and alluring. In this writer's last book, this author explained the traits of flattery—

A person that has a personality of being charming, or a person's speech is one that whispers, such a person is known as a 'smoothie' or 'smooth talker.' For instance, in [Psalm 55:21](#) a smoothie is descriptive of a person where the ". . . words of his mouth were smoother than butter . . . his words were softer than oil . . ." No surprise that this verse, doctrinally, is referring to antichrist.

The primary evil attribute that makes an aesthetic seducer and charmer so effective is the use of flattery. This is also known colloquially as "sweet-talking" somebody. It involves paying a compliment to another in an excessive and insincere manner in order to win favour. . . .

Needless to say, a seductive personality is one that is alluring, persuasive, is a good orator, and is a person that may speak or teach in a calm, smooth, soothing whispering manner. See [Isaiah 30:10](#).^[7]

In today's climate, a Believer with the expertise and skill of Ahithophel, is equivalent to a highly skilled Berean or leader within the body of Christ. Such a person is not the kind of Believer that is considered to be "[h]aving a form of godliness" type. He knows too much. See [2 Timothy 3:5](#). Thus, to disguise or

masquerade the right counsel of the Lord, the traitor cloaks counsel with euphemisms. Further, because such a person is conversant with what is right before the Lord (prior to switching allegiances), and knows how a true Believer thinks; such a person is an expert in using Scripture—to gain a tactical advantage to draw Believers into the net—to deceive a Believer to accept evil evaluations.

When Ahithophel realized his counsel was foiled and not followed, he killed himself. See [2 Samuel 17:23](#). In the same manner, the true Believer will exercise good discernment, and will judge everything. We do so in order not to be deceived. See [2 Corinthians 11:3-4, 13-15](#). When we discover the truth we also warn our fellow brethren. The leader is then exposed and is dismissed. We judge by testing it against the word of God: ". . . *that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.*" See [Isaiah 7:15](#) and [1 John 4:1-3, 6](#). Then, just like King David, when he re-established power, so too, God will bless us with a right leader.

4. How to prevent bad judgment/counsel from being accepted

We are all members of the body of Christ. We do not follow the evolution logic of 'dog eat dog' or 'every man for itself' or 'survival of the fittest,' type of concepts. Christ's church, his bride, are family. The verses in [1 Corinthians 12:25-26, 29](#) states that all should care for one another, and we should look-out for each other—

That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. [26] And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. [29] Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?

The point being, we share information with each other to prevent bad counsel and bad teaching from being accepted. All have different offices, and we all have different giftings. Therefore, those that are knowledgeable, ought to be teaching others; warning

⁷ End of the World, Rapture of the church: Annual September False Prophecies, 1999—2020, pp.47-48.

them about bad teaching that is in circulation within the local churches and, more recently, on mainstream media platforms, globally. We are not all teachers, pastors or watchman, but some are. It is their role and expertise, specifically, to ensure that God's people are made aware of false teachers or false teaching in circulation. This is their job. The net result is, it sustains the church in purity and keeps God's people walking on the straight and narrow path that leads to life.

Further, this is the purpose of apologetics. Generally, it is a meticulous systematic discussion of any theme designed to inform God's people of the particularities, about why something is right or wrong, viz., the different views of the rapture, various date-setting theories in circulation, Calvinistic vs. Arminianism viewpoints, etc. Without apologetics one would embrace some of these beliefs without even knowing whether they are right or wrong, because the Believer has not been exposed to the other views.

Other ways to prevent bad judgment/counsel from being accepted, is sharing literary resources and teaching videos to raise awareness. For example, on this writer's website (see footer below), this author has published several publications. One is an exhaustive study of the error of date-setting, and bad teaching of the blood-moon prophecies. There are other topics too. They are published for God's people for free—to heighten awareness of false teaching—so that Believers do not inadvertently go astray to veer off down a dirt road, more commonly known as the “*broad way*.” See [Matthew 7:13](#). See also [Respect of persons by close ties of friendship, p.33](#).

5. Are we to judge unbelievers, false teachers/prophets, and known heretics?

The short answer is no. When the gospel is preached to unbelievers, they are already judged. Put another way, their judgment, condemnation, and punishment are built into the gospel message. There is no need to condemn them any further. Accordingly, [John 3:16](#) sums up the gospel message. Remember what Jesus said two verses later, though? The Lord Jesus stated that they are condemned or are judged already. Then the Lord Jesus defined what the condemnation is—they have rejected the Light, Jesus, because they loved darkness, sin—

[John 3:18-19](#) He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. [19] And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

If a Believer returns back to the “*darkness*”, this verse would also mean that one is going back under the condemnation that the Believer had being delivered from. Note, the once-saved-always-saved Calvinistic doctrine perspective is false. In accordance with the list of sins in [Romans 1:29-31](#)—

Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, [30] Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, [31] Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

The resulting condemnation or censure upon the unbeliever for commission of these things, God says in verse 32, that they are “*worthy of death*.” In [1 Corinthians 5:12-13](#), Paul rebuked the Corinthian Church for judging those outside of the Church (unbelievers), when they were not supposed to; it was/is God's role to judge them, not the Believer's task. See also [Watchmen/Judges are necessary for correcting error, p.9](#).

In sum, the Believer is required to judge. This is a fact. The Believer's life consists of living out the faith, and not engaging in conduct that the New Testament states is wickedness, and second, one's motives and reasons must be pure to judge righteously, not underpinned with inward, ulterior bad intentions for desiring to judge another Believer. There is a wrong type of judging which is linked to hypocrisy. The Lord Jesus and the Apostle Paul, both had given commandment that this form should not be practised. The right type, is reserved for the mature Believer in

Christ (this is not physical-age based), which in turn, is linked to holding an office of watchman or Berean in the mainstream church.

The persona of a watchman is not Pharisaic in nature, that manifests legalistic judging. Rather, like the Lord Jesus, the Believer shows mercy or compassion. The Watchman has a job to perform, which involves

correcting error and maintaining purity within the church, which maybe unpleasant sometimes, when it is not well-received on the part of the recipient, even though it was communicated in a nice manner.

However difficult it may be, sometimes it is necessary to administer some “*tough love*”; but who wants to shoulder that responsibility.

What do readers think? Do you have any Biblical thoughts that contributes to this discussion? Is there any issue that has not been covered, and you think it should have been? Does this article inspire readers to write a similar paper? Cite this paper: Horsfall, D. (2023), ‘Don’t Judge me’: fact or Fable; Are we to Judge or not? Journal of Biblical Prophecy and Apologetics 1(1), 1-40

Email me your thoughts on my website below, or email me direct at nkjvapo.stateinfo@gmail.com

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COMMENTARY | COMPLETED MANUSCRIPT

MATHEMATICAL ANALYSIS OF THE MORTALITY RATES WITHIN THE TIME OF JACOB'S TROUBLE

Abstract

Many Bible students over the years have failed to apprehend just how catastrophic Jacob's Trouble will be. Consequently, they have underplayed and understated God's judgments in the book of Revelation. Many distinguished and novice book authors, who are mid/post-tribulation survivalists, also known as doomsday preppers, have written books on how to prepare for the apocalypse to live through it. For example, to stockpile large amounts of food stuffs. Survivalists are preparing in vain. Nothing will survive. How bad can it be? Upon analysis of the Old Testament counterparts, on which the Book of Revelation is based, Scripture reveals that once Jacob's Trouble commences, it sets in motion the destruction of the whole earth. First, this paper will establish the timeline. Second, we will reference Old Testament prophecies that frame, not only the destruction elements, but more than this, an unprecedented global cataclysmic period. Finally, we will analyse the fractions in Revelation to disclose what the global mortality rates will be.

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I am a Born Again Christian professional researcher, writer and illustrator.

Inviting all Born Again Bible students to contribute an in-depth Biblical exposition of end-time events. In addition, apologetics submissions are welcome.

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Introduction

For well over a decade many doomsday false prophets have made fantastic claims that unspeakable worldwide catastrophes would occur. Y2K for example. What started as a genuine, bona fide problem, was hijacked by eminent doomsday prepper Christian leaders,^[1] and was transformed into a Biblical apocalypse prophecy.^[2]

They published survivalist doctrine literature, by providing analysis and recommendations of how to stockpile food items, antibiotics, guns, and how to survive the Tribulation period in underground bunkers

or fallout shelters. Further, they were instructing believers to pray, and were explaining to Believers how to prepare for it. That was 1999. Since that time, annual September false doomsday prophecies have grown exponentially, and are still current today, 2023.^[3] Likewise, as they have grown, so too, many mid and post-tribulations have been duped to adopt the preppers doctrine. The Christian doomsday prepper's ideology is a subliminal suggestion that Jacob's Trouble is survivable. Moreover, they embellish their teaching with the miraculous—God's protection will be over Believers—further endorsing the survivalist doctrine. At the same time, others may find that this article provides some informative insights as to the severity of God's judgment. Just cast the net into the Christian community and you will discover the

¹ Such as Pat Robertson (1990), James Dobson, Hal Lindsey Tim LaHaye, Jack Van Impe, and Jerry Jenkins, and others.

² See Horsfall, D. (2022). End of the World, Rapture of the church: Annual September False Prophecies, 1999—2020, pp.83-90; Hunt, D. (1999). Y2K: A Reasoned Response, pp.5, 130,137, 235-7; Robertson, P. (1990). New Millennium.

³ See Horsfall, D. (2022). End of the World, Rapture of the church.

multitude of Believers that subscribe to a mid-trib or post-trib rapture viewpoint, because they are under apprehension it is survivable.^[4] Wasn't this just like Nazi Germany? Many Jewish souls also perceived that the Nazi era was survivable, but in reality it was a totalitarian society of terror.

The intent of this paper is not to defend or provide support for a pre-tribulation rapture. Although, the harrowing content may indirectly provide support for it. Rather, the objective is show how awful the first half will be, that the chances of survival are going to be slim. The Believer that subscribes to the belief that they will have to endure the calamity of the wrath of God being poured out upon the earth, for the first half, or for the full seven years, the survivalist/prepper doctrine emerges as a viable belief. Hence, they understate God's judgments of just how horrific it will be. They have been wrongly taught that it is liveable. The underlying rationale and perception for this belief is that they have been educated to believe that God will protect them, and the earth will be habitable. This perception can be corrected if one will take the time to study what God says in the Bible.

Even world leaders, the aristocracy, who are not believers, are all too aware of the Biblical proportions of the apocalypse and just how dreadful it will be. Specifically, world nations will gather together for the "*great day of God Almighty*"—Battle of Armageddon, the Second Coming (Revelation 16/19)—the final act of global destruction. See [Revelation 16:14](#). Survivalists consider that the severity of destruction and mortality is only allocated to Armageddon. This is the underpinning rationale for these prepper preparations—to enable them to survive such events. However, as readers will no doubt appreciate, this is at the end of the tribulation period, and the mortality rates are not exclusive to Armageddon. What survivalists, mid-trib and post-tribulationists fail to apprehend is that a significant proportion are killed at the beginning of the tribulation, six years previous. The entire seven years is the outpouring of the wrath of God.

Accordingly, world governments have prepared for such a scenario. They have taken pre-emptive measures, anticipating such a time, and have built

deep underground complexes to shield them, so they think, from the destruction on the surface. One well-known facility is the Cheyenne Mountains Complex, located 2,000 feet underground, in Colorado Springs. All underground facilities, fallout shelters, cave dwellings etc., and in addition, space station living quarters, will all be destroyed. The stark reality is this: individuals under the delusion that they can take refuge in these facilities, to escape the wrath of God, do not realise these facilities will be their final resting place—their grave.

To correct this prevailing misapprehension from survivalist groups and to address the title of this paper, it will be answered in two parts. The first part comprises two sub-sections: (a) setting the scene by establishing a brief timeline, and (b) an Old Testament analysis to develop a vivid composite picture of Jacob's Trouble, as it is linked with Revelation. Part (b) is not intended to be an exhaustive analysis, just sufficient to provide a picture.

The second part will present the mortality rates from Revelation. This is based upon current world population data that would go into Jacob's Trouble if it were to start tomorrow. This does not include virus outbreaks that might occur prior to commencement of Jacob's Trouble, as did Covid. This paper will overestimate the survival rates and underestimate the mortality rates where appropriate. Thus, the figures are not skewed unfairly to support a biased proposition. ■

⁴ This is not an apologetics article to argue for a pre-wrath rapture.

PART A. ESTABLISHING THE SCENE FROM
THE OLD TESTAMENT

1. The Timeline

The time of Jacob's Trouble is divided into two divisions. Both divisions are comprised of 1,260 days (3½ years), which total seven years. See [Table A-1](#) below. These timescales are precise and cannot overrun, otherwise it will extend the overall seven year period.^[5] The seals, and trumpet judgments occur within the first-half, upto the 6th Trumpet. Broken down further: the seals begin at the first year, and conclude at the beginning of the third year; the Trumpet judgments, with the exception of the 7th Trumpet, are from the third year, a duration of six months, concluding at midpoint.^[6]

The 6th Trumpet establishes the start of the second half—mid-point. This is an important anchor, since it determines where within the seven year period the seals, trumpets, and vials are to be placed. After the Antichrist has risen from the pit at the 5th Trumpet, in Revelation 9, he kills the two witnesses within the timeframe of the 5th Trumpet. See [Revelation 11:7, 11, 13](#).

Table A-1. Seven Years Timeline Outline

JACOB'S TROUBLE SEVEN YEAR BREAKDOWN		
FIRST HALF		SECOND HALF
1,260 DAYS		1,260 DAYS
TWO PROPHETS TESTIMONY		JEWISH REMNANT FLEE
Seal Judgments (1-7)	Trumpet Judgments (1-5)	☛ 6th Trumpet (Start of 2nd half)
	Killed at 5th Trumpet	☛ Vials
	└─→	☛ Antichrist rules 42 months

2. Old Testament Prophecies—On the surface
destruction

A2.1 To whom is the destruction intended for
and why?

As the Bible is Jewish, written for Jewish people by Jewish people, you would be forgiven for thinking that the wrath of God prophecies written in both the Old and New Testaments, are intended only for Jewish people. Some prophecies are intended for the Jewish nation, but there are many prophecies that are unequivocally intended for gentile nations. Two such scriptures are in Jeremiah. The first prophecy is [Jeremiah 30:11](#), which refers to both Israel and the nations being judged. —

For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.

First, by reading the whole chapter, the verse is framed within the context of the actual tribulation period. The emphasis of the verse is about God's judgment upon all gentile nations, with a parenthetical reference to Israel that they will be punished for sin as well, just not as severe. Second, the phrasing ". . . whither I have scattered thee . . .," is a reference to the nations where the Jews were scattered to, in both the 1st and 2nd diaspora. This prophecy has not yet been fulfilled, given that God has not made an end of the nations, past or present. They still exist. Second, God has purposed that his vengeance will be meted out upon all nations—it will be the complete, "full end" for them (with the exception of the sheep nations in Matthew 25). Whereas, God's punishment upon Israel

⁵ See Horsfall, D. (2022), pp.74-6, for a full explanation.
⁶ Horsfall, D. pp.239-60, for full analysis.

is for correction—Israel shall remain and survive the worldwide cataclysmic changes. Third, the text teaches us that it is not a localised destruction, but global. Further, [Isaiah 28:22](#) categorically states that God has called for a worldwide consumption or desolation of the whole earth: “*for I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth.*” This corresponds with what [Zechariah 5:3](#) says, that it is a “. . . *curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth . . .*” These verses also correspond with Revelation, chapters 14, 16, and 19, where God provides a vivid picture of how He is making, “*a full end of all nations.*” See [Jeremiah 30:11](#) and [Jeremiah 46:28](#). In particular, [Revelation 5:2-5](#), the opening up of the seals, which are actually the ‘*title deeds*’ to the earth—Jesus’ inheritance that God His father promised He would give to him—the earth for his possession. The second Scripture of [Jeremiah 46:28](#) is identical. When God speaks of a matter twice, generally speaking, this is God’s confirmation that the matter will be accomplished. This is established, good doctrine, buttressed by “*the two witnesses*” doctrine to establish and confirm a matter to be true. See [Deuteronomy 17:6](#), [Deuteronomy 19:15](#), [Matthew 18:16](#), [2 Corinthians 13:1](#), [1 Timothy 5:19](#) and [Genesis 41](#).

The short answer to why destruction is coming upon the gentiles is, broadly speaking, because it is God’s judgment upon sin/iniquity since Noah’s flood. More specifically, [Malachi 3:5](#) says that destruction is coming to remove and cleanse or root out from the earth wickedness—

And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts.

[Isaiah 3:11-22](#) adds to this list that, essentially, it encompasses every human being that does not have a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus. The next reference of [Isaiah 24:18](#) further adds onto this: “*the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones that are on*

high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.” This includes, the proud, lofty, and the haughtiness of men. See also [Isaiah 13:11](#).

The New Testament elaborates on the above, about why destruction is coming—

[Colossians 3:5-6](#) Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: [6] For which things’ sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

The “*children of disobedience*,” is a reference to those who are not Born Again. The verses of [2 Thessalonians 2:10-12](#) go further to identify those that have rejected the Gospel—“*the love of the truth*,” these all shall be damned because they “. . . *believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*” In sum, this is the purpose for why the wrath of God will consume the entire earth.

A2.2 Who will survive God’s vengeance?

Consider what the implications will be when these cataclysmic changes occur? The global landscape will change forever. For example, contemplate the past historical natural disasters, such as the Mount Vesuvius volcano eruption in Pompeii, first century. More recently, the Japan 9.1 magnitude earthquake, Bali’s tsunami, Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Maria, Matthew, Ian in the USA, etc. These were acts of nature, not God’s wrath. The infrastructure damages were repairable. Now enlarge the acts of God onto a global scale. This destruction will not be repairable. John Whitmore (2008) noted the mortality rates from various types of geological disasters compared to what they were prior to Noah’s flood—

[T]he Indian Ocean Tsunami of 2004 killed at least 230,000 people; the eruption and aftermath of Mt. St. Helens cut 150-foot-deep (46m) canyons in solid volcanic rock; the Pakistan earthquake of 2005 killed 86,000 people, and the China earthquake in May of 2008 killed more than 80,000 and left millions homeless.

Yet post-Flood catastrophes of even greater scale have occurred . . . These early post-Flood catastrophes had the power to cause enormous geologic change, including massive erosion, altered landscapes, and deposits of sediment layers thousands of feet thick.^[7]

What about the flood itself? There were billions of people living on the earth prior to the flood because people lived until 900 years old. See heading [Comparative Analysis of Noah's Flood, p.53](#), for further discussion. Of those billions, how many survived? Only eight people! The same God that brought destruction then, is the same person bringing the future coming calamity.

[Joel 2:2](#), [Matthew 24:21](#) and [Mark 13:19](#) all mention that there is nothing like Jacob's Trouble since the beginning of creation, and nor will there be anything like it, after it. In other words, WW1, WW2, and all of the world's greatest historical disasters, are but a drop in a bucket, compared to what Jacob's Trouble will be. The biblical synonyms for the rhetorical statement, '*who will survive*' Jacob's Trouble are, "*. . . for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?*", and another Scripture: "*But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?*" See [Joel 2:11](#) and [Malachi 3:2](#). The [Nahum 1:6-7](#) phrasing is slightly different—

[Nahum 1:6-7](#) Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him. 7 The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.

Obviously, the answer, plainly, is that no unbeliever will survive or be able to stand or abide His anger—it is that bad. However, in [Nahum 1:7](#), God provides us the remedy on two levels. First, to get saved before that time comes (Jacob's Trouble), by crying out God for forgiveness of sin, asking God to save one's person and

then to trust the Lord Jesus not just as Saviour, but Lord as well.^[8] Second, those that are in Jacob's Trouble, they too can call upon the Lord, while they still can be saved, and before it gets much worse. The first coming of the Lord Jesus, he came as meek and lowly, and bore the sin of the whole world upon himself. In [Nahum 1:9](#), it says that at his second visit, He will not bear sin again, but will make an "*utter end*" of sin. In [Amos 5:18-20](#), the Lord rebuked some people for desiring this awful day of the Tribulation period, and this is what He had to say them—

Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD! to what end is it for you? the day of the LORD is darkness, and not light.

Second, the famous psalm of Psalm 2 is a prophecy about the confederacy of nations of Revelation 16/19, gathered together against the Lord Most High, to attempt to destroy God's people. The Most High is addressing specifically, world leaders, kings, and judges, in anticipation of the coming end of the world. In [Psalm 2:4-10](#), God states His intent that he "*shall laugh*" at them, and in His wrath He shall vex them. Therefore, this is the reason why God is providing the kings, rulers, and judges with a fair opportunity to turn to the Lord Jesus to repent, to accept Him, and serve Him (prophecy of the Lord Jesus' kingship over the earth). See verses 10-12.

When you read [Jeremiah 25:17-26](#), God mentions a plethora of nations to whom desolation will come. Just like Fibonacci's Sequence ratio: it starts with the mention of a small circle of neighbouring nations to Israel, then it just keeps getting bigger and bigger to encompass all the nations, concluding with verse 26. It states "*. . . all kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth . . .*", will not escape God's wrath. In [Jeremiah 25:29-38](#), the Lord prefaces the destruction of the earth with an idiom of the fall harvest with treading of grapes. The grapes represents unbelievers, and that they will be crushed. The same concept is cross-referenced with Isaiah 34/63 and Revelation 14, as confirmation that the world is going to be a blood-

⁷ Whitmore, D. J. H. (2008). Continuing Catastrophes, p.71; Austin, S. A. (1984). Catastrophes in Earth History.

⁸ Note [Nahum 1:7](#) verse does not say that the individual should ask God for protection to survive that time.

bath—the crushing of grapes. In [Jeremiah 25:29-30](#), God is speaking directly, when He states: “. . . *I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the LORD of hosts . . . he shall give a shout, as they that tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth.*” God has a controversy with the nations, even to the ends of the earth. See [Jeremiah 25:32](#). If this reference was not very clear, verses 32-33 are. They reveal a graphic and definitive picture of unburied dead bodies, stockpiled throughout the whole earth—

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. [33] And the slain of the LORD shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground.

This is not reserved for the middle or even the end of the tribulation, but this is occurring from the opening of the seals at the beginning until mid-point. It is sure and it is certain that the Lord Himself is causing these dreadful events to happen. In [Jeremiah 5:28](#), He states, “. . . *I have spoken it, I have purposed it, and will not repent, neither will I turn back from it.*” There is nothing that anybody can do to stop it, or to prevent it from happening. The Most High has decreed it, and He will not change His mind.

A2.3 Mortality by God's four methods

The following are the first-half judgments. The Lord's uses four mechanisms of mortality which are the same in both the Old and New Testaments. These include war, famine, pestilence, and death by animals. In [Ezekiel 5:16-17](#), God explicitly states that He is sending these four plagues. Famine is termed 'evil arrows of famine'; 'evil beasts' are animals killing, sent to "bereave"; pestilence are plagues/viruses, and the sword is war. See also [Job 4:19-22](#) and [Jeremiah 15:2-3](#). The main prophetic passage that correlates with the first half of Jacob's Trouble is Matthew 24, and Revelation 6, seal judgments. See [Table A-1](#) above. These plagues are also mentioned in verses [Matthew 24:6-7](#). Further,

the Lord stated that the famine will be in a diversity of places, not exclusive to Israel. In [Revelation 6:3-4](#), the 2nd-Seal is the red horse which represents war; which is worldwide: “. . . *to take peace from the earth and that they should kill one another . . .*” The 3rd Seal is famine, where food will be measured or rationed. The fourth seal is a double portion of the above plagues, with the addition of (i) beasts killing people, and (ii) a contiguous pathogen outbreak. Remember, these seals commence in the first year of Jacob's Trouble.

Why will all the animals' behaviour change, so that they will be attacking people, when they are not currently? By divine appointment. Don't forget, God speaks to animals. For example, God opened the ass's mouth of Balaam that it spoke; the raven that God sent to feed Elijah; God speaking to a pack of lions not to attack Daniel in the lion's den; God speaking to the fowls in Revelation 19. God has orchestrated and designed for the animals to kill people. We have already mentioned [Amos 5:18-20](#) earlier, in relation to who will be able to abide the day of the Lord? These verses however, go on to highlight the awfulness of these evil beasts that are attacking people. First, because it is pitch black, these beasts are roaming around freely in public places, and secondly, when they are attacking, the people will be unable to see them. [Amos 5:19](#) accentuates the idea that there is no escape for those on the earth surface—

As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. [20] Shall not the day of the LORD be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?

Arguably, lions or bears do not reside in Europe, England, or Japan, etc. However, most nations have zoos, and they do house these creatures. Further, most households have pets of dogs and cats. God is going to change their behaviour. Amos is revealing that these creatures are on the loose roaming the streets. The emphasis on the darkness being "very dark," is not a reference to normal darkness of night. The cross-references of [Isaiah 60:2](#) and [Jeremiah 13:16](#) defines this darkness as "gross darkness." It is the same judgment as the 9th plague in [Exodus 10:21-23](#), where

it states that it was a gross darkness that could be felt. Think of fog. The worse kind is where you cannot see a single thing, not even one's own hand placed in front of one's face. It is the same concept, only this kind of fog is dense black.

This writer says all of this to make the point that this is a picture of what hell looks like. Hell is intended for unsaved people, and the tribulation is intended to be hell on earth for them. One will not see any dog, cat, lion, or bear attacking them, because of this "gross darkness." Moreover, the Lord goes on to present an awful analogy of no escape and nowhere to run, to escape. If you escape a lion, then a bear will get you, and if you escape these, by taking refuge in some building, a serpent will get you.

be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done." Most of us perceived that it was just a parable or an illustration to describe what faith accomplishes. Who really understood that it will actually, physically happen. There are many Scriptures that elaborate on this theme. [Psalm 46:2-3](#) reiterates the same thought that the mountains are going to be flattened—

Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; [3] Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

A2.4 Geographical and Topography Changes—from Troposphere to Exosphere (outermost layer of the atmosphere)

The following commences at the start of year three of Jacob's Trouble, the Sixth Seal. The type of geologic changes we are attempting to draw attention to, are altered landscapes, and ocean water changes. First, let's deal with the topography.

There are many Scriptures that highlight God's intention to level all of the world's mountains. This includes, Mount Everest, K2—all of them all over the world will disappear. The short answer to the why, simply put, is because it is preparatory for the Lord Jesus Christ's return to earth. When He will physically rule and reign on the earth, one must 'go up' to see the Lord. The highest mountain will be located in Jerusalem where His throne will be. There can be no higher mountain than the Lord's mountain/hill. The mountain of the Lord is a modest elevation. As such, the Lord has not made the ascent up to His hill burdensome, perilous, or fraught with danger. Therefore, when a person is invited to see the Monarch, you go 'up', or 'ascend' the Lord's mountain to see the King. It is extremely insulting to the Lord Jesus to go down to see the King. He is exalted—the Lord Jesus is the greater, we are the lesser—so we must ascend.

The Lord Jesus alluded to the mountains being removed and the landscape being flattened in [Matthew 21:21](#) and [Mark 11:23](#), when He said, "... if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and

Remember the walls of Jericho? The walls were completely flatted to enable the Israelites to conquer the city. Additionally, the background to the [Matthew 3:1-3](#) prophecy: John the Baptist, the forerunner to Jesus, was a reference to [Isaiah 40:1-3](#). In the following verse, [Isaiah 40:4](#), it states, "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low. . . ." Obviously, this did not happen at the time of John the Baptist, but it will in the Tribulation period, when the mountains will fall down flat. Some mountains will fall into the sea, the others will be flattened, and the valleys will be exalted, to be on a level plain with the rest of the landscape.^[9] [Nahum 1:5](#) references the mountains quaking before the Lord, and the hills melting. Thus, the shaking loosens them, then they are burnt, which melts them, which then causes them to tumble. As an additional sidenote: there are some hints from Scripture that a proportion of ocean waters will dissipate or disappear. See a few Scriptures of [Psalm 18:15](#), [Amos 7:4](#), [Revelation 8:8-9](#) and [Revelation 18:17-18](#). This is NOT global warming. These are on the surface topography changes.

What about the wider global events effecting the internal infrastructure aspects of the earth? This is the most destructive of all the God-driven disasters upon

⁹ The mountains of the world disappearing corresponds with Scriptures of [Psalm 144:5](#), [Isaiah 34:3](#), [Isaiah 54:10](#) and [Nahum 1:5](#). The mountains evidently are being set on fire, shaken and are melting, preparatory to them falling. See also Psalm 18 cross-referenced with Revelation chapter 8.

the earth. [Isaiah 13:13](#) encapsulates the severity of this judgment at the Stratosphere to Exosphere levels of the earth's atmosphere. God is going to “*shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts . . .*” This is a graphic illustration of the earth being shaken to and fro, continuously. Put another way, like the motion of a drunk person swaying from side to side. As a result of the earth shaking in this manner, it will cause a continental shift, namely, a removal from its stable position, which was the same outcome from Noah's Flood, or even in the days of Peleg when there was an earthquake that divided the earth. See [Genesis 10:25](#). The same thought is expressed vividly in [Isaiah 24:1,19-20](#)—

Behold, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. ... [19] The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. [20] The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.

Do readers realize what this means? All of the nobility, wealthy, world leaders, kings etc., that will be hiding in deep underground facilities/cities will be destroyed. [Isaiah 24:18](#) reiterates this idea: “*for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake.*” As a result, the earth will move out of its place “*exceedingly*.” This is confirmed in [Psalm 18:7](#), where the earth is shaking and trembling, and as a consequence, the foundations are being shook so violently from side to side. This bears the same meaning as “*reel[ing] to and fro like a drunkard.*” See [Isaiah 24:20](#). The relevance to these deep Atlantis underground cities is that the infrastructure, the walls, in and around them, will completely collapse. Furthermore, when [Isaiah 13:13](#) mentions that the “*heavens*” will be shaken, the heavens encompass the atmosphere levels from Troposphere to Exosphere.

Further, these are not events that most people would describe as nature's way of bringing retribution. Rather, [Psalm 18:7](#) highlights that it is a direct result of God's wrath and retribution. This Psalm and the

other Scriptures already quoted are cross-referenced with the 6th Seal, up to the 3rd Trumpet timeframes. See Revelation chapters 6 and 8. In [Revelation 6:13](#), it says that the stars are falling unto the earth. A synonym for the “*earth being shaken like a drunkard*” which is the same as the heavens “*depart[ing] as a scroll.*” See [Revelation 6:14](#). The significance being, when a scroll is opened, the analogy is, that once one's grip upon the scroll is released, it springs back to its original form. Thus, the spring-back motion is causing enormous geologic changes, the mountains, islands, and the continents are being moved out of place with the earth being rolled up like a scroll, coiled or wrapped up.

Thus, those who take residence in outer space accommodation for protection from on the surface calamities, the shaking will breach the infrastructure of the space stations. Whichever way one chooses to slice it, either choice of protection in space, or in the safe-haven of underground facilities, there will be no escape from destruction. If any person conceived for one minute that Isaiah went on a frolic of his own to speak out of turn; the Lord confirmed His intent in [Isaiah 24:3](#), when He added, “*. . . for the LORD hath spoken this word.*”

A2.5 No protection from Satanic creatures in any building or location

The following are mid-point, or are approaching mid-point events. The background to Revelation 9 is derived from Joel 2. The 5th and 6th Trumpet judgments are the same as the Joel 2 descriptions. They are satanic in nature. The satanic locusts are the 5th trumpet, and they arise out of hell. See [Revelation 9:2-3](#). They are described as having a shape of a locust and look “*. . . like horses prepared unto battle*”; they have crowns on their head; they have tails like scorpions and sting with them, and have faces like human beings. The [Joel 2:3-9](#) verses are companion verses to Revelation 9. The Joel verses describe these locusts to be similar to horses and horsemen. Nothing will escape them. They are constituted as a military formation that do not break ranks. They climb walls, and cannot be killed. They possess unique abilities: they can leap and possess exceptional running abilities. In terms of what their height are, the question emerges: ‘why would the Lord emphasise the point of the locusts faces? Faces

are created to be seen. Locusts are so minutely small it is impossible to identify their face, except under a microscope. A locust averages about 35 to 55 mm. [Joel 2:7, 9](#) informs us that they “march” and “. . . they shall enter in at the windows . . .” In other words, if they are marching, then likely they are walking; yet they are small enough to enter building windows? The inference being: from their human faces description there is the plausible suggestion that they are the height of a human—anything from a child to adult height. It is plausible that the Lord is describing a cross-breed creature between humans and locusts. Remember, locusts do not walk, only fly and leap. An adult sized person could enter a reasonable sized window, although with some constriction, but anything from the size of an average sized dog to a small child could easily accomplish it. In relation to the military aspect, [Revelation 9:9](#), says, that they have an armour of iron. Their king is Antichrist. See [Revelation 9:11](#).

This corresponds with the description in [Joel 1:6](#). These locusts are expressed first, to be a nation, and second, they have teeth like a lion, and their jaw teeth are like a great lion. The cross-reference is [Revelation 9:8](#), which confirms their lion teeth description. There is a more graphic description than this in [Proverbs 30:14](#); but in this verse, instead of being called a nation, they are labelled a ‘generation’: “There is a generation, whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw teeth as knives . . .” [Figure A-1](#) shows, for comparative purposes, the lion having knife teeth, as against the alien teeth, whose teeth are swords and knives. The two large front fangs of the lion are analogous with the [Proverbs 30:14](#) description of knife teeth. However, according to Revelation 9, they do not utilise their teeth for any carnivorous purpose, unlike the animals in the 4th Seal (as explained earlier), who are killing for food. Their remit is not to kill, only to torment those who are not saved—those that had an opportunity to get saved since the Tribulation started. See [Revelation 9:4-5](#). ■

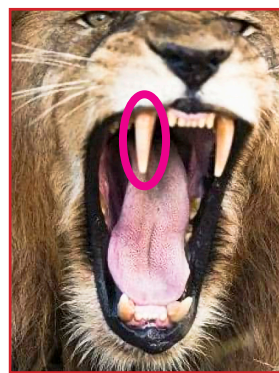


Figure A-1. Lion teeth compared with knife teeth

PART B. MORTALITY RATES

1. Beginning of Jacob's Trouble—The First-Half

Prior to commencement of Jacob's Trouble, the rapture of Born Again Believers, the Church, takes place. This is the pre-wrath position. [Table B-2, p.51](#), accounts for the rapture of Believers, with a lofty global estimation of one billion believers. However, this estimation does not take into consideration apostates, cult groups subscribing to Christian beliefs, or other false religions bearing the designation of 'Christian.' The official world Jewry population of 15M is current, as of 2022, reported in Haaretz. The present world population is eight billion, as of November, 2022.^[10]

The first-half is comprised of seals and the trumpet judgments. The mortality rate calculations will be based on the starting population of 6.985B (minus raptured Believers and world Jewry), if Jacob's Trouble were to start tomorrow. In [Revelation 6:8](#), the 4th seal, states—

Revelation 6:8 And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

The trumpet judgments (one to five) consist of fractions of thirds. These judgments vary, and are allocated to land, nature, and animals being killed. For example, a third part of nature is burnt up, a third part of the earth's animals are killed, a third part of the earth's water is poisoned, and a third part of the celestial atmosphere becomes darkness; but nobody

¹⁰ The world population has been adjusted for to account for 15M world Jewry. This is to enable a more accurate model of what the most probable mortality rate for gentiles would look like.

dies. See Revelation 8. However, in terms of people, the 6th Trumpet at mid-point is different. The text highlights twice, that one third of the people on the earth will be killed—

proportions. Therefore, the total mortality at mid-point is going to be much more than specified in [Table B-2](#).

Revelation 9:15,18 KJV And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. ... [18] By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

Furthermore, by cross-referencing Revelation chapter 11, the 6th Trumpet has a dual, overlapping, two-sided judgment element to it.^[11]

In the first-half, (from commencement of the Tribulation to midpoint), [Table B-2](#) (next page) shows a total mortality of 3,490,753,750 billion (inclusive of the 4th Seal and 6th Trumpet). The mortality rate is sacrosanct, only if the present population (2023) remains the same. Employing the measure and the information that the Bible has already provided, enables us to generate the exact mortality values. If the judgments of the 2nd to the 3rd seals had prescribed fractions, then we would be able to determine those who died as a result of war and famine, too. The 4th Seal translates to 1,746,250,000 billion mortality, one fourth, in the first quarter of the first half. At the arrival of the 6th Trumpet (satanic horses), the mortality is at 1,744,503,750 billion, one third; if the present population remains stable. The surviving population (not including Jewish people), is a reduction of almost half from the starting population of 6.985B. These numbers serve to provide us with an informative, and sobering insight that the Tribulation at commencement is anything but survivable, for the most part. This is further compounded with those that are killed in the 5th Seal, the martyrs who keep the Faith, but no fraction is specified to enable a calculation to be made of those martyred. Furthermore, we are informed that as a consequence of the 3rd Trumpet, “*many men died*” from the poisoned waters, but it does not prescribe the

¹¹ This discussion in terms of the overlap with the 5th trumpet, is out of scope for this paper.

Table B-2. Mortality Rates in the First Half of Jacob's Trouble (4th Seal & 6th Trumpet)

(B=BILLIONS)	<u>POPULATION B^a</u>	<u>MORTALITY VALUES B</u>
Present World Population ^b	8B	
Population minus Raptured Believers (1B) ^c	6.985B	
World Jewry Pop. (reported in Haaretz) (15M)		
4th Seal Judgment (¼ World dies)		1,746,250,000 (¼)
New Start Population	5,238,750,000	
6th Trumpet Judgment (⅓ World dies (Mid-Point) (Rev. 9))		1,744,503,750 (⅓)
New Start Population	3,494,246,250	
Total Population Mortality Rate		3,490,753,750
Total Population Remaining at Mid-Point	3,494,246,250	

^aNumbers are rounded.

^bReported as of October 2022.

^cRaptured Believers total is estimated (not accounting for false believers).

Table B-3. Gentile Groups Alive at Mid-Point

(B=BILLIONS; M=MILLIONS; K=THOUSANDS) ^a	<u>POPULATION</u>	<u>MORTALITY VALUES</u>
*AUTHOR'S ESTIMATION		
Mid-Point pop. minus World Jewry pop.	3,479,246,250	
*Wealthy, Nobility and Aristocracy in worldwide underground facilities		2M
*"Great Multitude" Refuse the mark of the beast ^b		1B
*Group that take the mark/Armageddon		2,479,244,250
*Gentiles that survive the Tribulation ^c	2K	
Gentile Population Survival Rate Total	2K	
Jewish plus Gentile Population Survival Total ^d	5,002,000	
Mortality of Jews plus Gentiles from Start to end of Tribulation Total		7,994,998,000

^aDenotes Global Estimation.

^bBased on [Revelation 7:9](#).

^cBased on [Zechariah 14:16-21](#) and [Matthew 25:32-46](#).

^dSee also [Table B-4](#) next page, for Jewish survival rates.

2. Other Gentile groups not specified

We have discussed the mortality groups as a direct result of the 4th seal and 6th Trumpets, but what about the remaining survivalist groups that make it to mid-point?

The aristocracy wealthy, the nobility and the (“aristocracy group”), are located in deep underground facilities and/or space stations. They are not effected at all, by any of the judgments in the first half, compared to those on the surface, where 3,490,753,750 billion will die, per [Table B-2](#). Believe it or not, the aristocracy do actually believe that the Revelation cataclysmic events will happen. This is the primary reason why they have built their bunkers. The other ostensible purposes are so they can continue as de facto leaders in times of trouble, and their additional rationale being: the need for leadership when it is all over.

Moving on to those that did survive the first-half; [Table B-3](#) illustrates that only one gentile group (estimated numbers) will survive the whole of the seven year period, whilst other gentile groups such as the aristocracy group, and those that take the mark of the beast will be the highest mortality number recorded. This writer has over-estimated the surviving aristocracy population grouping, to be two million in total, worldwide. Whilst they are safe for the duration of the first half, their father, the father of lies, their “worshipful master” (freemasonry designation) has deceived them. The aristocracy are freemasons and luciferians who have accepted the false assurances and promises that they will be protected from the evil on the surface. As already explained in the ‘shaking of the earth like a drunkard’ paragraph, these facilities of safety will not survive.

The next gentile grouping in [Table B-3](#) is the “. . . great multitude, which no man could number . . .” that are saved. They refused to take the mark of the beast, and consequently were killed. See [Revelation 7:9-14](#). Since they could not be numbered because it will be a great number, an estimation of one billion is allocated. However, the application of [Matthew 7:13-14](#)—rule of the “strait and narrow road,” and the “broad road” leads to destruction’—perhaps an inversion of these population numbers—

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: [14] Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

The broad road that leads to hell is the aristocracy, inverted, which becomes one billion, given that there be “*many there be which go in thereat*.” The lessor number, the remnant, is the great multitude, it instead becomes two million. This is the strait gate that leads to life—the “*few there be that find it*.” Either way, both groups are killed between the start of the 3rd year to the 6th Seal— mid-point, the 6th Trumpet. There is the group that take the mark of beast who submit to the rule of Antichrist. This group accounts for 2,479,244,250 billion. The mark is preparatory for the creation of a super, enhanced human army “*the instruments of death*,” with a view to heighten their chances of winning at the battle of Armageddon. See [Job 21:30](#), [Psalm 7:13](#) and [Proverbs 16:4](#). They too all die. Remember Noah’s flood? Very few people survived. See heading [Comparative Analysis of Noah’s Flood, p.53](#). Overall, by following the [Matthew 7:13-14](#) rule, the people that take the mark, are the greatest single mortality group of all the groups, which will stand at 2,479,244,250 billion.

The last remaining gentile grouping are those that got saved, Born Again, within the tribulation period. This corresponds with the dragnet parable in Matthew 13—the sifting of the good and bad fish. In accordance with Matthew 25, the sheep and goats separation is the expansion of the dragnet parable—the sifting. It is understood that these are gentiles who have helped and supported the Jewish people throughout the whole seven years, just as the gentiles did in the Nazi era. This writer has estimated this saved gentile group is approximately 2,000K+. This will be the only gentile population that will survive Jacob’s Trouble.

3. The Most High’s purification of Israel

In terms of the Jewish people, God has separated them out from the judgment of the gentiles. At the beginning of this paper, we highlighted how God is going to make an end of all nations, but Israel is not going to be punished to the same extent as the gentiles will be, in comparison. God has already provided the exact numbers of who lives and who dies in [Zechariah 13:8](#). Accordingly, one third of Jewish people live and two thirds die. The scope of the Zechariah Scripture address four Jewish groups, (i) the apostate Jews, (ii) the Jews that identify, realize and accept Yeshua as the Messiah, (iii) the remnant that flee to the mountains at mid-point, and (iv) the 144,000 thousand. [Table B-4](#) below, delineates what the survival and mortality rates would probably look like for the whole period of Jacob’s Trouble, based upon the current 2022 world Jewry population.

The 144,000, and the Jewish remnant is the one third that live, which amounts to a total of five million Jews. As previously explained, the second element to the two-sided judgment of the 6th Trumpet (also known as the 2nd woe), is that 7,000 die in Jerusalem, in a great earthquake. See [Revelation 11:13](#). The mortality of Jews that die include the Jewish people

that embrace salvation, and also the Jewish people that decline salvation, and accept the false messiah of Antichrist. This is the two thirds that die, amounting to a total of ten million. This is the fulfilment of [Zechariah 13:8](#). The surviving population at the conclusion of Jacob’s Trouble, including the gentiles, is a grand total of 5,002,000. Whilst the total mortality for all groups, including the Jewish groups, is just shy of eight billion—7,994,998,000.

4. Comparative Analysis of Noah’s Flood Birth rates and Life Longevity

So we have identified an enormous mortality rate that wipes out three quarters of the world’s population. Any person reading this article is perhaps sceptical? However, is this such a big disparity? Upon review of world history, this is not an unprecedented or an isolated incident. Rather, we have the record of Noah’s Flood serving as a prominent reminder that God has already measured out such an horrific judgment before.

Accordingly, in [2 Peter 2:4-5](#), the Lord draws our attention to just this fact. God reminds people today how God did not spare the antediluvian world. How much more then, the Scripture states, will He

Table B-4. God’s Judgment upon Jewish People during Jacob’s Trouble

(M=MILLIONS; K=THOUSANDS)	POPULATION M ^a	MORTALITY VALUES
World Jewry Pop. (reported in Haaretz)	15M	
One Third of Jews Live (33.3%)	5M	
144,000 Virgin Jews (Rev. 7 & 14)		
Remnant that flee to mountains (Rev 12)		
Sundry Jews left in Jerusalem for last half ^b		
Two thirds of Jews die (66.6%) (Zec.13:8)		9,993,000
Jewish People accept Salvation from Yeshua		
Apostate Jews accept Antichrist		
Jews killed at 6th Trumpet Earthquake (Rev. 11)		7K
Jewish Total Population Mortality Rate		10M
Jewish Population Remaining at end of Tribulation	5M	

^aNumbers are rounded.
^bSee also [Zechariah 12:7-8](#); [Zechariah 14:14](#); [Isaiah 4:3-4](#).

not spare Believers that (i) that do not live their lives whole-heartily unto the Lord the Jesus, or (ii) Believers live like unbelievers, just as Noah's contemporaries did in his day—

2 Peter 2:4-5 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; [5] And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

By comparison, Noah's Flood was marked by a far greater population than today's population of eight billion. Some basic math no doubt demonstrates that from Adam and Eve, to Noah's Flood, people lived until to 900 years old. We know that Methuselah lived the longest, to a grand age of 969 years. The demographics in these modern days average between three to four children per family, in western countries. However, in the Middle East, Africa, and the Far East, the average can be seven children per family, if not more. In Noah's day, if each family had an average of four children per 100 years, for 2,000 years, until Noah's Flood, during a person's lifespan of 800 years, the size of every antediluvian family would be a total of 32 children each. You can see how this could potentially amount to between 30 to 60 billion people living on the earth.

That said, in Carter and Hardy's (2015) research, their principal theme argues that there are just too many unknown variables at play to track and determine what the realistic population size would have been. In order for there to be such a large population size to occur, they explained that this would require an exponential growth formula for favourable results.^[12] They prefaced this with an example—

The population size at 100 years could be drastically different if they had children in the order boy-girl-boy-girl-boy-girl versus a scenario

where they had a series of boys (or a series of girls) . . .^[13]

Other factors they specified that impact upon the growth trajectory, but not all are mentioned here, are—

- Environmental Challenges
- Birth Rate
- Death Rate
- Population Density
- Age of Maturation
- Minimum or average child spacing of antediluvian women

Their conclusion is that it is impossible to estimate the antediluvian population size without the necessary demographic data.^[14] Whilst Carter and Hardy's findings yield some informative insights concerning the ratios, given the proximity of the antediluvian era to Adam and Eve, the mutation rate in their DNA would be very minimal, representing 0.00000001% of the billions of DNA.^[15] In other words, the post Adam and Eve population had almost perfect genes. Sin had not corrupted their genes to the extent that it drastically reduced their life longevity. Hence, it still took 900 years to see the effect of death setting in. See [Figure B-1, p.55](#).

¹² Carter, R., & Hardy, C. (2015). Modelling biblical human population growth. pp.72,77.

¹³ Ibid., p.72

¹⁴ Ibid., pp.77,79.

¹⁵ Jeanson, N. T., & Tomkins, J. P. (2016). Genetics Confirms the Recent, Supernatural Creation of Adam and Eve.

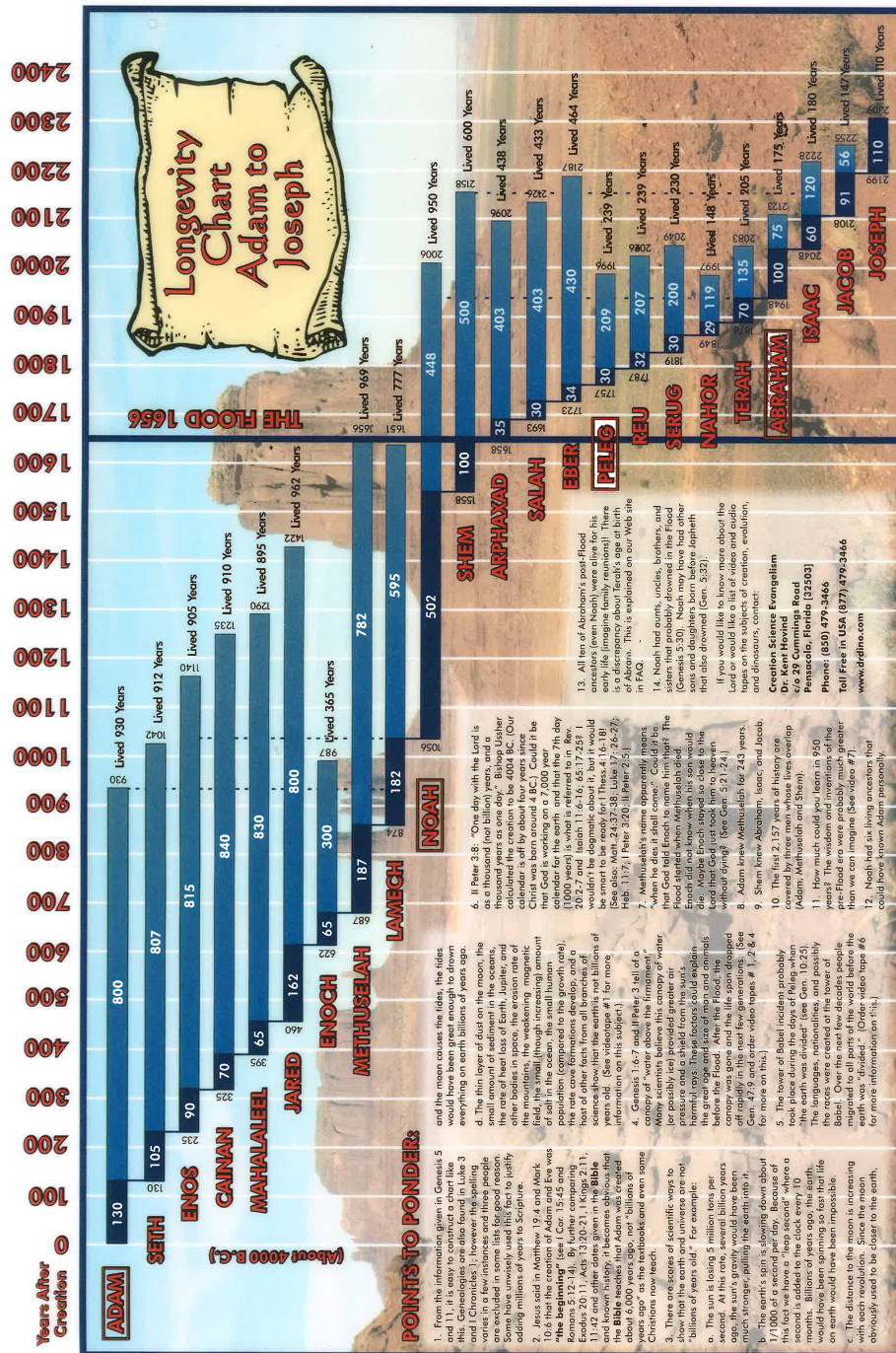


Figure B-1. Longevity Decline Chart as we move further down generation chain from Adam and Eve. Source: Creation Science Evangelism. Dr. Kent Hovind.

Rather, the aforesaid impacting growth trajectory factors would only become an issue to future generations. The after-effects of God's curse upon man had not set in—analogous to a new born in it's infancy stages of life—the body was too young to feel the inward effects of sin. Put another way, death was not immediate, but a slow decline, that would result in death. Hence, as [Figure B-1](#), the longevity chart shows, Adam and Eve and their antediluvian ancestors died 900 years later.

Some of the adverse human unknown variables that they stipulated (this writer mentioned just a few of them), would have been the norm to produce the favourable results they speak of. The general biological conditions would have been that the sperm quality concentrations and the fertility of female eggs would have been high, with the exception of a few abnormalities because of sin. For instance, Methuselah was 187 years old when Lamech was born. See [Genesis 5:2](#). As mankind moved further away from Adam and Eve, defects and abnormalities in the genes became the norm, and life longevity became the rare exception.

Carter and Hardy did analyse however, the Exodus population size. They expressed that a ratio of 12 founding couples, “. . . it was possible to reach 2.7 million people within the 215 . . .” years journeyings.^[16] In accordance with God's prophecy to Abraham in [Genesis 15:13-16](#), we are told that they would be in Egypt for 400 years. If 2.7 million Israelites is for 215 years, then for 400 years would be double. Approximately, 3.8 million. Upon reading [Genesis 46:27](#) and Exodus chapter one, there were only 70 persons going into Egypt. In such a short time they had increased in number between 2.7 million to 3.8 million. Goeman ([online] 2022) stated that this is a growth rate of 2.5650% per year. He then transposed the growth rate to the pre-flood population, and postulated that the population could well have been between 50 to 122 billion.

Whilst one would be right to be sceptical, it is not the objective to proffer a definitive population number. Rather, the bottom line is to submit a general ballpark figure to demonstrate to readers that the killing of nearly eight billion people during Jacob's Trouble, is

not a remote possibility, or without biblical precedent. It is going to happen in Jacob's Trouble—a time of God's vengeance upon all creation, just as He did with Noah's flood.

In conclusion, Jacob's Trouble is not survivable, unless one is part of that special group that become Born Again during that time, and God ordains them to survive. No underground facilities or space stations will be able to protect or shield the aristocracy from the wrath of God. Approximately, 2000+ gentiles will see the end of the seven years of tribulation and they will be Born Again. However, this number maybe much less. In [Revelation 6:4-6](#), the second and third seals, people will obviously die from starvation and war. In [Revelation 6:9](#), the fifth seal, many saints are murdered. In [Revelation 8:11](#), the third trumpet, “many men” died. We are not told what the fractions are of those that died. If these verses did provide it, then just like the fourth seal and the sixth trumpet it would enable a more detailed calculation to be made of the total mortality. In all probability the total gentile survival rate will be in the 100s NOT the thousands. In terms of Jewish people, God will cause 5,000 Jewish souls to survive. ■

¹⁶ Ibid., pp.76-77.

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What do readers think? Do you have any Biblical thoughts that contribute to this discussion? Is there any issue that has not been covered, that you think should have been? Does this article inspire readers to write a paper, or to write a paper expanding upon this theme?

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