

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

a time to be born, and a time to die;

a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;

a time to kill, and a time to heal;

a time to break down, and a time to build up;

a time to weep, and a time to laugh;

a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;

a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

a time to seek, and a time to lose;

a time to keep, and a time to throw away;

a time to tear, and a time to sew;

a time to keep silence and a time to speak;

a time to love, and a time to hate;

a time for war, and a time for peace.

(Ecclesiastes 3:1-9)

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INTRODUCTION

Many Christians naively believe the Star of David is a harmless token representing God's chosen people, and think they are honouring the Jewish people by wearing it. They even believe that by doing so it will bring them a blessing from God.

On the other hand, anyone who speaks against this symbol is sometimes accused of being "anti-Semitic" or spreading hate, due to the world's misconception that this object is Jewish.

Many Christians also believe the *Ichthys* fish symbol represents Christianity – that it was used by the early Christians to represent Jesus being the fisher of men and of the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes.

The fish symbol is also said to have historical characteristics that attributed to the spread and unity of Christianity long before it became popular in society today. Together with other supposed Christian symbols, the *Ichthys* can be found engraved in the Catacombs, believed to be the place where early believers buried their dead.

In the following chapters of this book we will examine some very interesting archaeological, historical and biblical evidence, demonstrating that nothing could be further from the truth.

Using examples from the Old and New Testament, we will also examine the danger of possessing any type of occult object in our lives and homes, and how it can be a door opener to demonic influence and oppression.

THE STAR OF DAVID

The *Star of David*, also known as the *Shield of David* (*Magen David*), is a six-pointed star, comprised of two interlocking triangles one facing up and the other facing down, also called a *hexagram*. In the middle of the star is a *hexagon*, a figure with six straight sides and angles.

It is one of the most prominent Jewish symbols today and appears on the Israeli Flag, on the doors and interiors of many synagogues around the world, on Jewish sculptures, monuments, and even on clothing, jewellery and cooking utensils.

The Star of David, or hexagram, became officially associated with Judaism after it was chosen as the emblem to appear on the Flag of the First Zionist Congress in 1897. Later, in 1948, it was chosen to be incorporated into the Flag of the New State of Israel. However, there is absolutely no evidence – whether biblical, archaeological, or even Talmudic – that the shield King David used in his wars was in the form of a star, or that the so-called Star of David was a God-given symbol for the Israelites or the Jewish people. Neither have any archaeological excavations uncovered the so-called Seal of Solomon.

This star's association with Israel has only been noted in two isolated cases in the third century A.D. First, on a Jewish tombstone at Tarentum, in Southern Italy. Second, its use in a Capernaum synagogue in the same century.

This is a very long time after King David and it is important to state that the Star of David was found alongside images of the pentagram and even the swastika on a frieze.



Star of David in a Capernaum Synagogue

The image of the Star of David can also be seen in the oldest complete Hebrew Bible, the Leningrad Codex, which dates to around 1008 A.D.



Star of David on the Leningrad Codex

The earliest Jewish literary source which mentions the Star of David is the twelfth century *Eshkol ha-Kofer*, written by the Karaite, Judah Hadassi. It says:

Seven names of angels precede the mezuzah: Michael, Gabriel, etc., ... YHWH protect thee! And likewise, the sign called David's shield is placed beside the name of each angel. It was, therefore, at this time a sign on amulets.

Contrary to the total *lack* of evidence mentioned above, there is extensive archaeological evidence, and perhaps biblical, that the Star of David originated in very ancient occult practices and continues to occupy a place in those practices to this very day! Let us view a small portion of the evidence.

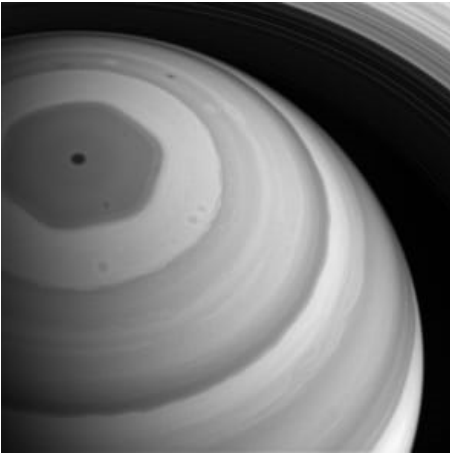
No Point Arguing with Archaeology

The fascinating Archaeological discoveries over the last few decades reveal the hexagram was used in the Hindu, Buddhist, Sumerian, Egyptian, Babylonian, Islamic and Druid religion, to mention a few. In Islam it is known as the *Seal of Solomon*, *Khàtem Sulaymàn*. The hexagram is known as the *King's Star* in astrological circles and was an important astrological symbol in Zoroastrianism.

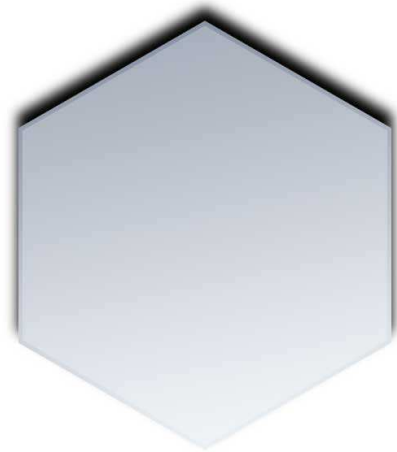
The Sumerian cylinder seal VA-243 depicts a celestial body in the centre of a six-pointed star, the hexagram. Sumerianologists say that this celestial body represents the planet Saturn. The North Pole on Saturn is a permanent storm that makes a hexagon, the shape inside the hexagram.



Sumerian cylinder seal VA-243



Planet Saturn



The hexagon cube, the shape inside the Star of David

This image on the Sumerian cylinder is then surrounded by eleven other stars or planets, or the host of heaven. The seal dates to around the third millennium B.C. This is a long time before Israel had even become a nation. The Sumerian Empire later became the Babylonian Empire and both ruled in the region of Mesopotamia.

As can be seen from the image below, the hexagram, or six-pointed star, is also engraved on the *Talisman of Saturn* that has been used in ritual magic from ancient times to this day.



Talisman of Saturn

Some scholars believe the hexagram was reintroduced to the Jewish people by King Solomon when he turned to witchcraft and idolatry after his marriage to Pharaoh's daughter in 922 B.C., and that is why the Talisman of Saturn became known as the *Seal of Solomon*, or the *Ring of Solomon*. The Bible does actually tell us that Solomon gave himself up to satanic worship and built altars to *Ashtoreth* and the evil god, *Moloch*.



Drawing of the pagan god Moloch

Other findings and historical documents reveal that throughout the Middle Ages the Seal of Solomon was used by Arab magicians, Cabalist magicians, Druid witches, Satanists, Occultists and Freemasons to invoke Satan. These all venerate King Solomon because he turned away from God to worship false gods and because they believe he used the hexagram star to invoke demons.

Hexagram Used by the Babylonians

Further archaeological discoveries reveal the Babylonian astrologers used the hexagram for Sun-worship. The amulets below reveal the veneration the ancient peoples had for the Sun-god.



Amulets worn by Babylonian astrologers containing the Star of David

On the front side of the amulet we see the god of the Sun standing on the lion. According to one commentary, “This indicated the Sun’s position in the constellation of Leo during the hot days of August.” On the back is inscribed *Nachyel*, meaning intelligence of the Sun, and in thirty-six squares are arranged the numerals one to thirty-six. The commentary below explains the meaning:

They divided the starry heavens into thirty-six constellations (ten days each). These were represented by different amulets called *Sigilla Solis*, or the *Sun Seal*. These amulets were worn by the pagan priests and they contained all the numbers from one to thirty-six. By these figures they claimed to be able to foretell the future.

Adding the numbers of any column either horizontally or vertically, and also the two diagonals crossing the square, the total is the same – 111. The sum of the six columns, either horizontally or vertically is 666. So 666 is a number associated with pagan Sun-worship.

Interestingly, if you examine the so-called Star of David more closely, you discover this very significant fact. It has six points, forms six equilateral triangles, and its interior forms a six-sided hexagon. So many believe it has been intentionally designed with a 666 message.



The fact that the number 666 is a number associated with Sun-worship, which originated in ancient pagan Babylon and is still practiced today by “*Mystery Babylon*,” the Roman Catholic Church, and the world’s Elite, many Christian prophecy scholars

actually see the Star of David as the Mark of the Beast. Also because the Apostle John says the number of the Beast, 666, is the number of a man, or person:

This calls for wisdom; let anyone with understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a person. Its number is six hundred and sixty-six.

(Revelation 13:18)

Which the Bible attributes to King Solomon. It says:

The weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred sixty-six talents of gold.

(1Kings 10:14)

The Star of David Used in Ancient Egypt

Together with archaeological discoveries, the Universal Jewish Encyclopedia declares that the hexagram – according to the star-worshipping Rosicrucians – was also used by the ancient Egyptians who worshipped the celestial bodies, especially the Sun. This may explain why Moses sternly warned the Israelites against worshipping the Sun, Moon and Stars, and all the Host of Heaven before entering the Promised Land; they would have observed this practice in Egypt (see *Deuteronomy 4:19*).

What Does the Bible Have to Say?

Although there are no biblical attestations to the Star of David being connected to King David, there are certainly biblical references to Israel having used the image of a star in their worship of false gods.

One particular reference to an idolatrous star among the Israelites is mentioned in the Old Testament prophetic Book of Amos, regarding the Exodus from Egypt to Canaan. The English King James Version reads:

Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel? But ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves. Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus, saith the LORD, whose name is the God of hosts.

(Amos 5:25-27)

Stephen quotes from the Prophet Amos in the New Testament Book of Acts. In the King James Version it reads:

And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their hand. Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, “O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness? Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.”

(Acts 7:41-44)

The Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, reads: “lifted up the shrine of Moloch and the star of your god Rephan, their idols.” Back to that in a moment. Stephen very clearly states that Israel had a star image of a god called Remphan (or Rephan in NRSV), and that they used this image in their

worship. Could it have been the so-called Star of David, the hexagram? Many biblical scholars believe it is.

Stephen stated earlier in the portion of Scripture under examination that God gave the children of Israel over to worship the Host of Heaven. Stephen was certainly referring to the celestial bodies – the Sun, Moon, Stars and Planets.

We learn from many other prophetic Books in the Bible that the Israelites were in the habit of practicing this idolatry over the centuries after their entrance to the Promised Land. For example, the Prophet Jeremiah states:

At that time, says the Lord, the bones of the kings of Judah, the bones of its officials, the bones of the priests, the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be brought out of their tombs; and they shall be spread before the sun and the moon and all the host of heaven, which they have loved and served, which they have followed, and which they have inquired of and worshipped; and they shall not be gathered or buried, they shall be like dung on the surface of the ground.

(Jeremiah 8:1-3)

And as we have seen earlier, there is a lot of archaeological evidence which reveals that the pagan Sumerians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Grecians and Romans all worshipped gods associated with the heavenly bodies, including Saturn.

However, the children of Israel would have taken on this practice from the Egyptians, as they did the Golden Calf worship. As a side note, many religious Jews today say it was the “*mixed multitude*,” that left Egypt with the house of Israel during the Exodus that were responsible for these pagan practices mentioned in the Book of Amos. But God clearly says it was the house of Israel.

Stephen then refers to the image of the “*star of your god Remphan.*” Stephen says that Israel had adopted a god called Remphan and used the image of a star in their worship of that god.

Now, to answer why Stephen says *Remphan* and not *Chiun* in his reference to this star god. Experts in the field say that Remphan in the Egyptian language signifies Saturn. And that the Septuagint interpreters put Rephan (which Stephen calls Remphan) instead of Chiun, because they were better acquainted with the name, and since both names signify the same deity, and the same star.

Interestingly, the Jewish Encyclopedia also interprets the star of Remphan (*Chiun*) to be a reference to the Planet Saturn. Speaking of the practice of star worship in ancient times it says:

This is perhaps the oldest form of idolatry practiced by the ancients. The observation of the stars in the East very early led the people to regard the planets and the fixed stars as gods.

The ancient Israelites fell into this kind of idolatry and they had the image of Siccuth and Chiun, “the star of their gods.” The star of the pagan deity Chiun is generally believed to represent the planet Saturn.

And as we stated earlier, the Sumerian cylinder seal VA-243 depicts a celestial body in the centre of a six-pointed star, the hexagram, and Sumerianologists say that this celestial body represents the planet Saturn!

More Uses *after* David and Solomon

The hexagram has also been found in Arabian magic and witchcraft through the Middle Ages. Many researchers say the actual name *Star of David* originated in the thirteenth century in the Kabbalah – the ancient Jewish tradition of mystical interpretation of the Bible – where it is a magic symbol associated with the pentagram. Interestingly, the word *hex*, which means to put a curse on someone, derives from the word hexagram.

Used by the Roman Catholic Church

As can be seen from the photos below, the Roman Catholic Church has long revered the so-called Star of David, and every entity that they control uses it too.



Hexagram on the pope's mitre



On the floor of Vatican City Museum

Some believe the Roman Catholic Monstrance and the Roman Catholic Chi-Rho symbol also represent the hexagram. The Monstrance features a hexagram that is surrounded by a Sun symbol, although it is hidden so that most people cannot identify

it. In the centre it has the wafer, the supposed body of Christ. And as the hexagram is used to invoke curses, this is cursing the body of Christ. The Chi-Rho was a symbol of the Roman Empire. It has six points which form a hexagram.

Among the many entities under Vatican control that use the Star of David are also many counterfeit false religions and cults – Satanism, New Age, the Mormon Church, Theosophy, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Freemasonry, and many more. Let us take a look at how this symbol is used in these religions.

Luciferians and Satanists

Luciferians revere the Star of David. They do not use the name Satan because they believe that Lucifer is the good god, and that the God of the Bible is bad. The hexagram became one of the symbols for the *Theosophical Society* founded by Helena Blavatsky in 1875. She believed there is no religion higher than (Lucifer's) truth.



Logo for the Theosophical Society

Satanists also revere the hexagram, although it is referred to as the *Unicursal Hexagram*. This symbol has been around for decades. It gets its name from the fact that you draw it using a unicursal motion, meaning one continuous motion. The ability to be drawn in one movement is one reason for its creation and its popularity of being used in magic and the occult.

The Unicursal Hexagram is commonly associated with the *Thelma Religion*, but prior to this it was associated with the *Golden Dawn Group* of Britain, a secret occult society.

Later on, it was adopted by Satanist, heroin-addict, and bisexual Aleister Crowley, who believed he was the anti-messiah of John's Apocalypse. This man founded the *Satanic Order of the Silver Star* and redesigned the Unicursal Hexagram. He placed a five-petalled rose in the centre, which symbolizes the pentacle and divine femininity.

The addition of the rose also brought up the total number of points in the design to eleven, which is the divine number of divine union and magic Crowley's satanic motto was: "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law."



Unicursal Hexagram

The New Age Movement

The hexagram is also used by the New Age Antichrist religion. It is used by their COEXIST Movement. This is all about getting world citizens to humbly join themselves with other world religions in the name of “peace.” The chief promoters of the COEXIST Movement are again the Jesuit-controlled Hollywood, fashion and music industry and quite a number of Protestant puppet pastors.

On their Flag every letter in the word *coexist* has a symbol representing a religion or spiritual ideology. It should come as no surprise that a variant to the COEXIST Flag is a Pride Rainbow version, even though the Gay Movement has nothing to do with religion.



The Star of David in Freemasonry

The Star of David can be found in many Freemason temples, on the walls windows and doors. As can be seen below, the shape is hidden in their compass. King Solomon is the most important figure in Freemasonry because he abandoned God to worship false gods, and because they believe he used the six-sided star to invoke the powers of Satan.



The compass of Freemasonry represents a hexagram



From the Freemason lodge in London

The United States of America

The hexagram also appears very much in American culture. The examples and reasons the Star of David is used so much in America are too many to mention. Below is just one important example. It is hidden above the eagle's head, formed by thirteen stars.



Hexagram on the Great Seal of America
together with other Fascist symbols

In light of all we have seen so far, we are forced us to ask why the leaders of Israel would choose a pagan symbol that was used in the occult and by the so-called anti-Jewish Roman Catholic Church for centuries to represent the new-born Jewish State. This is a question of much debate and the answer we give is of utmost importance if we are to correctly interpret end-time biblical prophecy.

Time to Draw Your Own Conclusions

This is just a small portion of the abundant archaeological, biblical, historical and contemporary evidence at our disposition today, but enough to make it clear that the six-pointed star used by modern Israel is not unique to Judaism.

On the contrary, it has been used in magic and the occult by many pagan religions long BEFORE and long after King David and King Solomon.

Therefore, it should come as no surprise that when the Flag of Israel was unveiled in 1948, it was met with tremendous horror and opposition from many Orthodox Jews around the world who realized its significance. Consequently, to this day many Jewish Orthodox and Christian groups totally reject the use of the Shield of David; they do not recognize it as a Jewish symbol.

Will You Also Light the Bonfire?

Dear reader, I will finish up this chapter with a very important challenge for you. In many of his books, the late Deliverance Minister and prolific writer Derek Prince warns Christians about keeping occult objects and symbols in their homes or ministries, as it can hinder answer to prayer and open the door to demonic oppression and mental illnesses.

Derek says that even Christian music and books that have a hint of New Age occult teaching can be powerful channels through which demons can gain a foothold and he advises believers to completely destroy any such material, even though the value of the objects may be very great.

In his famous book, *They Shall Expel Demons*, Derek says that even while in the ministry he himself suffered from “persistent, crippling bouts of depression” until God showed him the cause and the steps to take towards deliverance. He wrote:

Again and again, as I sought to help those needing deliverance, I observed the close association between occult involvement and serious problems of depression. It became clear to me that this had probably contributed to my own struggles against depression when I was a young Pastor.

One day in 1970 I was meditating on Deuteronomy 7:26: “*Nor shall you bring an abomination into your house, lest you be doomed to destruction like it; but you shall utterly detest it and abhor it, for it is an accursed thing.*”

So I made a decision that I believe had an important bearing on the future course of my life and ministry: I determined not to keep in my possession anything that in any way dishonoured Jesus Christ or that opened the door to demonic influence.

I rid myself of a succession of items I had inherited from my family: four antique, beautifully embroidered Chinese imperial dragons and a whole assortment of Chinese antiques, all carrying the emblem of the dragon.

I also disposed of items containing elegant Arabic calligraphy, some of which undoubtedly gave glory to Mohammed and the Muslim God, Allah. I also cleared out my library, especially Plato’s books, and everything that in any way glorified the occult.

Then I threw away a series of poems I had written in the days when I was still enamoured of India. This

dramatically changed the spiritual atmosphere around me. It was like passing out of twilight into the clear light of day.

I have real concern for the many Christians slow to recognize God's intense hatred of every form of the occult. Tolerating any kind of continuing occult influence in our lives exposes us to forces that threaten our own spiritual well-being.

From this testimony we are reminded of the believers' reaction in Ephesus recorded in the Book of Acts once they were made aware of the reality of Satan's power and influence.

THE FISH SYMBOL

The fish symbol re-emerged in popularity for Christians during the 1960s as a Christian symbol. It is said that during the time of the Roman persecution it was used among believers to display meeting places for everyone to meet and worship. And that the believers chose this symbol to communicate to each other to avoid suspicion, since the fish symbol was also used by several pagan religions at the time.

Consequently, thousands of Christians around the world today display this image on their cars, around their neck, on the walls of their home or churches, and even tattooed on their bodies without being fully aware of what they are giving honour to. Sometimes we can see the name Jesus written in the centre of the fish.

Uses Outdating Christianity

Long before the emergence of Christianity, the fish symbol, a pointed oval sign, was associated with the *Great Mother Goddess* and has been used for millennia worldwide as a religious symbol of this pagan deity. It is the outline of her *vulva*, the external opening to the female genitals. The fish symbol is linked to fertility, birth of life, and feminine sexuality. In Latin it is known as the *vesica piscis*, meaning *vessel of the fish*.

Archaeologists discovered the link between the Great Mother Goddess and the fish symbol in various areas of the ancient world. In China, *Great Mother Kwan-yin* is often portrayed in the shape of a fish. In India, the goddess *Kali* was called the *fish-eyed one*.

In Greece, the fish goddess named *Themis* was worshipped. The later fish goddess, *Aphrodite Salicia*, was worshipped by her followers on Friday, which was considered her holy day. On that day they ate fish and engaged in orgies.

The Great Mother Goddess was also worshipped by the Romans. She was known as *Magna Mater* (Great Mother) or *Cybele*. She is depicted as wearing a fish hat like that of the priests of Dagon. According to the online *Britannica*, the priests of Cybele castrated themselves before entering in her service. This certainly parallels the “celibate” priesthood of Roman Catholicism.

According to some scholars, the Basilica of Saint Peter’s stands upon the original site of the Temple of Cybele. The ruins of another temple to Magna Mater can still be viewed today on Palatine Hill in Rome.



The goddess Cybele wearing a mitre similar to the fish head of Dagon

The fish symbol's link to fertility and birth, was also acknowledged by the Celts, as well as pagan cultures throughout northern Europe. In Scandinavia, the Great Goddess was named *Freya* and here they ate fish in her honour.

The fish symbol itself, the eating of fish on Fridays, and the association of the symbol with deity, were all taken over by the Roman Catholic Church. Only the sexual component was deleted, at least on the surface. In her book, *Freedom from Catholicism*, ex-nun Mary Anne Collins says that orgies are carried out very frequently in the Vatican.

During the Middle Ages, “churches” of England, Ireland and Wales, whose origin was a mixture of Christian and pagan religions, had stone carvings of a naked woman called “Sheelana-gig.” Her large vulva represented the vesica piscis. These were called “fertility figures” and were also connected with the ancient cult of the Mother Goddess.



Sheelana-gig displaying her privates

Archaeologists also discovered in the ancient ruins of Nineveh, the capital of the ancient Assyrian Empire, numerous statues and bas-relief clay engravings that record the supreme position of a pagan deity known as Dagon.

This pagan god was depicted as being a creature *partly human* and *partly a fish*. Occasionally the creature was represented in Assyrian art as a figure standing upright with the head of a fish above a human head.

Writing in the third century B.C., the Babylonian historian Berosus confirms that in the image of Dagon the head of the man appeared under the head of the fish. Images of Dagon were also discovered in the ancient city of Nineveh at the entrance to the temple and palace.

The famous archaeologist Austen Henry Layard discovered sculptures in the remains of ancient Assyria that showed the priests of Dagon wearing clothes that resembled a fish. “The head of the fish formed a mitre above that of the man, while its scaly, fan-like tail fell on a cloak behind, leaving the human limbs and feet exposed.”

This discovery confirmed that it was the rule of all ancient idolatrous religions for the high priest to wear the insignia of the god they worshipped. This was probably the “*foreign attire*” spoken of by the Prophet Zephaniah when he wrote:

And on the day of the Lord's sacrifice I will punish the officials and the king's sons and all who dress themselves in foreign attire. On that day I will punish all who leap over the threshold, who fill their master's house with violence and fraud.

(Zephaniah 1:8-10)

Notice the striking similarities in the images below. All the popes of Rome and various Catholic priests often wear a mitre hat; a head-dress that acts as a direct representative of Dagon the fish-god.



Archaeological discovery of the priest of Dagon



Mystery Babylon the Great displaying her ancient origins

In the Bible we learn that Dagon was also the principle deity of the Philistines, whose ancestors migrated to the Palestinian shores from Crete. Some scholars say the original religion of the Philistines was worship of the Great Mother, but that they later adopted elements of the Canaanite religion, which consisted of Dagon worship.

One biblical example can be found in First Samuel. I have included it because when you read this portion of Scripture, you cannot but be amazed at the Lord's sense of humour:

When the Philistines captured the ark of God, they brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod, then the Philistines took the ark of God and brought it into the house of Dagon and placed it beside Dagon. When the people of Ashdod rose early the

next day, there was Dagon fallen on his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD.

So they took Dagon and put him back in his place. But when they rose early on the next morning, Dagon had fallen on his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD, and the head of Dagon and both his hands were lying cut off upon the threshold; only the trunk of Dagon was left to him. This is why the priests of Dagon and all who enter the house of Dagon do not step on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod to this day.

(1 Samuel 5:1-6)

Dagon worship is also where in Greek and Roman mythology the Mermen come from (*Poseidon, Triton and Neptune*). Mermen are mythical male equivalents and counterparts of Mermaids. They are legendary creatures who have the form of a human from the waist up and are fish-like from the waist down, having scaly fish tails in place of legs.

Vesica Piscis Spreads to Christian Art

We said above that the fish symbol's link to fertility, birth, and female sexuality is referred to in Latin as *vesica piscis*, meaning the vessel of the fish. The vesica piscis is derived by taking two circles of equal diameters and overlaying them in such a manner that their circumferences touch each other's epicentres.

The intersectional area is also called "*mandorla*," an Italian word for *little almond*, and looks like the shape of an almond. This pagan symbol spread to Christian iconography and can be observed in Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox architectures and art.

In some of their “Christian art” Jesus is depicted in the mandorla, said to represent the birth canal or gate of life. During the Gothic Period, the arches, windows, vaults and porches of cathedrals were very much based on vesica piscis geometry.



Eastern Orthodox art displaying the vesica piscis

The pagan vesica piscis symbol can also be traced in St Peter’s Square in Rome and at the Washington Monument in the United States of America. In the middle of the mandorla they have placed an obelisk, representing the male genitals and the union between man and woman.



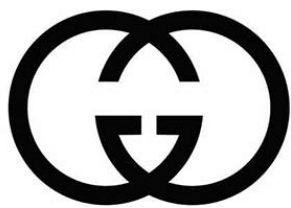
The Washington Monument



St Peter's Square of Rome

Over the centuries this symbol has also been used by Freemasons and by some of the world's governments. In recent times, many multinational companies have used it as a logo, or in their logo, although sometimes it is hidden and not always noticeable. Below are just two examples taken from the fashion business.

GUCCI



03

THE SIN GOD HATES MOST

We have often heard it said that there is a sharp contrast between the Old Testament and the New. That the Old Testament describes the Lord as a God of wrath and judgement, but the New Testament depicts Him as a God of love and mercy.

Such a statement is completely false. When we closely examine the Bible as a whole, we discover God as being both of mercy and of judgement at the same time.

We also discover through a careful analysis of the entire Bible that throughout all dispensations there has been one unchanging requirement for living in a covenant relationship with the Lord. It is to *listen* to His voice and *obey* the conditions of His Covenant. To quote one example, when the Lord prepared to enter into His First Covenant with Israel at Sinai He said:

Now therefore, if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine, but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation.

(Exodus 19:5-7)

Again, in the Book of Deuteronomy chapter twenty-eight – which is devoted exclusively to the theme of blessings and curses – we see the primary cause of both. In the first two verses Moses explains the cause of blessing:

And if you faithfully obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come

upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the Lord your God.

(Deuteronomy 28:1-3)

Similarly, under the New Covenant Jesus acknowledges those who listen and obey His voice as His true disciples. In the Gospel of John He says to the unbelieving religious leaders:

I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me; but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, I know them and they follow me.

(John 10:25-28)

From verse fifteen of Deuteronomy chapter twenty-eight Moses then deals with the cause of being cursed by God:

But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord your God or be careful to do all his commandments and his statutes that I command you today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you.

(Deuteronomy 28:15-16)

Here we see the cause of being cursed is exactly the opposite to that of blessing. It results from not listening to God's voice and from not doing what He tells you. Again, in the Gospel of Luke Jesus describes those who are not His true disciples and why:

Why do you call me "Lord Lord," and do not do what I tell you? I will show you what someone is like who comes to me, hears my words, and acts on them. That one is like a man building a house, who dug deeply and laid the foundation on rock; when a flood arose, the

river burst against that house but could not shake it, because it had been well built.

But the one who hears and does not act is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the river burst against it, immediately it fell, and great was the ruin of that house.

(Luke 6:46-49)

Therefore, the basic requirements are still the same under Law and under Grace. Although, as we shall demonstrate further on, under the New Covenant, hearing the Lord's voice and walking in obedience takes a person beyond mere religious profession and religious activity; it implies something very intimate and personal.

Disobedience in its Worst Form

The refusal to hear and obey God's voice can be summed up in one word – DISOBEDIENCE. Disobedience can take many forms. However, the Word of God leaves no doubt that the main form of disobedience that most surely provokes God is the breaking of the first two of the Ten Commandments. In the Book of Exodus we read:

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a

thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

(Exodus 20:2-7)

Notice the two sins God specifies here. The first is acknowledging any other god before the Lord. The second sin, described in the next commandment, is the making of any artificial representation of God and offering worship to it. This is where I would like to focus in this chapter.

Years later, just before entering the Promised Land, Moses again strictly forbids the Israelites to use any idol or icon made with the hands of man to worship God and that they would be severely punished for disregarding this Commandment. He wrote:

Beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image for yourselves, in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any animal that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air, the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water under the earth.

And beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, you be drawn away and bow down to them and serve them, things that the Lord your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven.

(Deuteronomy 4:16-19)

Similar warnings are given in the New Testament. In his First Letter to the Corinthians chapter ten the Apostle Paul tells believers to “*flee from the worship of idols*” and gives an example from Israel’s history of what will happen to those who are disobedient. And in the Book of Revelation, speaking of the end-time global religious system, the Apostle John says:

For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the power of her luxury.

Then I heard another voice from heaven saying, “Come out of her, my people, so that you do not take part in her sins, and so that you do not share in her plagues, for her sins are heaped high as heaven and God has remembered her iniquities.”

(Revelation 18:3-6)

“*Her sins*” most surely include the use of idols and icons; the pagan way of worshipping the gods behind the idol. In another of his books, *Blessing or Curse, you Can Choose*, Pastor Derek Prince gives a perfect example of how offensive it is to God to represent Him in the likeness of anything of this created world and how slow even Christians are to understand this. He wrote:

Our human minds are slow to understand the awful wickedness of idol worship. The true God, revealed first in Creation and then more fully in Scripture, is holy, awesome, glorious, omnipotent. To represent Him in the likeness of any created being – whether human or animal – is to offer Him a deliberate insult. Let me illustrate this by a crude example.

Suppose someone were to find a cockroach crawling on the floor, photograph it and then display the photograph over the title Derek Prince. I would surely interpret this as an insult aimed deliberately at me. How immeasurably worse is the insult offered to God by those who give His name not merely to the noblest of His creatures, but even to the most debased!

The whole world outside of Christ, and even some professing Christians, have greatly transgressed in this area, and until they recognize their sin and renounce it, they will continue under the curse that God pronounced on all who turn away from Him to worship false gods, and on all who make any artificial representation of Him, even to the fourth generation.

Before finishing this chapter, let us examine more closely the tragedy that follows disobedience to God's Commandment in this passage of the Book of Exodus quoted above:

For I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

(Exodus 20:5-7)

First, this Commandment teaches that God is a personal and jealous God; He will not tolerate or be satisfied with anything short of whole-hearted worship and devotion. However, more tragically, it also means that the following generations of innocent children will suffer the consequences of their ancestors.

Does this not portray God as being unfair? In chapter eighteen of the Book of Ezekiel the Prophet Ezekiel asked the exiles this very question. Apparently, some in his day interpreted this piece of Scripture to mean that God did indeed take out the accumulated sins of parents on their innocent children.

A proverb had been coined in Israel, "*The fathers eat sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.*" Ezekiel, however, argued against such a proverb that, "*The soul who sins is the one who will die.*"

Therefore, the extended consequences in Exodus quoted above can only be interpreted to mean that parents often pass on to their children their misdirected and ill-advised patterns of life, that they learned from their own parents, including wrong notions about God and how to worship Him. And it is only natural that this can be maintained for generations, if not dealt with, and can result in many hardships. In the historical Books of the Old Testament we see this pattern play itself out continually.

04

THE MOST DANGEROUS IDOL OF ALL

The sin of idolatry does not only include the obvious forms we have warned of so far. It includes a wider and more concealing range of practices, such as greed (*Colossians 3:5*), the love for money, (*1 Timothy 6:10*), and the giving of ourselves over to sensual desires (*Philippians 3:19*).

More importantly, idol worship also includes the worship of self, and this is not limited to unbelievers only. There are very many today who define themselves believers yet do not take the call to listen to the Lord's voice and to walk in obedience to Him seriously.

They are willing to receive and confess Jesus as their Saviour quite easily, but they will not have Him as their Lord and Master, by living their lives in *total* submission to His will. By doing this, even in disobedience to the smallest of His Commandments or personal instructions, a person is setting himself up as God.

Christian, this is a very important truth and worthy of much consideration. Many want to hold on to their *soul life*. In other words, they want to remain in control of their own lives and make their own decisions concerning how they will live and serve God. Yet Jesus makes it clear that such half-hearted devotion is not good enough:

If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it. What does it profit them if they gain the whole world, but lose or forfeit themselves?

(Luke 9:23-26)

To act contrary to Jesus' words given here is outright rebellion and disobedience, even if your desires and decisions might be good and noble in themselves. Note, however, that we are not speaking of making mistakes or missing the mark from time to time. Rather, we are speaking of turning a deaf ear wilfully and habitually. The Old Testament equates such rebellion to witchcraft:

Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Surely, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams. For rebellion is no less a sin than divination, and stubbornness is like iniquity and idolatry.

(1Samuel 15:22-24)

In the New Testament the Gospel of Matthew gives a similar warning and a clear indication of the ultimate destiny of those who practice this form of idolatry:

On that day many will say to me, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many deeds of power in your name?" Then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; go away from me you evil doers."

(Matthew 7:22-24)

The word *knew* is the same word used in *Genesis 4:1*, "Now the man knew his wife," and speaks of a very personal and intimate relationship. Jesus could be paraphrased, "You never listened to me, your god was yourself."

On the other hand, if a person *loses his life* – by *taking up his cross* and submitting all his dreams, hopes and ambitions to God "daily," no matter what the pain, loss, disappointment, or reproaches of man – then he will *save his life*, and in the end, find

exactly what he was looking for, and much more than he expected!

Further on in the Gospel of Luke Jesus makes a similar statement to that in Luke chapter nine quoted above concerning the cost of discipleship for each individual. He said:

Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple.

(Luke 14:26-27)

What does it mean to hate father and mother, wife and children, and so forth? It means to love all these less than God. As one commentator aptly said: “The greatest danger of idolatry comes not from what is bad, but from what is good, such as love in family relationships.” This appears to have been the case with Abraham and his son Isaac and God had to show it to him.

Of course, Jesus’ words here should not be used as an excuse for a person to deny his duty and responsibilities to his family. The Lord actually condemned the Pharisees for teaching such things (see *Mark 7:9-14*).

Be Prepared for War!

It is worth noting that sometimes in the Gospel accounts we detect that many of Jesus’ teachings came from His own personal experience, and that He always practiced what He preached. For example, in the Gospel of Mark we find a perfect demonstration of the Lord putting His Heavenly Father before His family members:

Then he went home, and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. When his family heard it, they

went out to restrain him, for people were saying, “He has gone out of his mind.”

(Mark 3:20-22)

Here Jesus’ family, no doubt prompted by the religious establishment, were opposing God’s purpose for the Messiah and His Mission. But just a little while later we see the outcome of this situation. Mark says:

Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, “Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside asking for you.”

And he replied, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” And looking at those who sat around him, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.”

(Mark 3:31-35)

Reader, we need to pause frequently and “*Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners...*” To the Saviour’s many sorrows and sufferings was added the pain of a total lack of understanding from His family members, for we are told more clearly elsewhere that “*not even his brothers believed in him.*”

Finally, we can also conclude that the Lord’s instructions to hate father and mother etc., were a type of warning to His obedient followers that in order to do the will of God they will sometimes be at odds with family members, and some churchgoers as well!

We are actually warned of this fact throughout the New Testament. The Gospel of Matthew says:

Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against a father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and one's foes will be members of one's own household.

(Matthew 10:34-37)

In some cases, they may even expel you from their fellowship, as Jesus warned us they would do. Or you yourself will have to shut them out of your life completely, once it becomes evident that they follow the world and not God. The Lord was quick to point this out to His sarcastic brothers:

Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always here. The world cannot hate you but it hates me because I testify against it that its works are evil."

(John 7:6-8)

However, let us not be discouraged by this. From *Mark 3:31-35* quoted above we understand this amazing fact: Jesus considers His true family those who are united to Him by spiritual ties – all who have become one with Him through faith and obedience. What a privilege!