

A Seed Of Highest Quality

The Seed Growth Process

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I would like to begin with a quote that is indirectly related to seeds. According to the November 21st, 2011 NaturalNews.com article, by S.D. Wells, titled *Health Basics: What are GMOs*,

Molecular engineers working in laboratories for Monsanto, the giant American biotech company, are gene-splicing vegetable seedlings with poisonous pesticides and herbicides so the plants are inherently protected from the insects and worms that might damage them. The majority of products Americans eat daily contain some form of GMO, soy, corn, canola [which is from rapeseed oil], or cottonseed oil. Research shows that consuming the popular herbicide/pesticide *RoundUp* leads to the mutation of cells in the human body, in turn fueling the development of malignant tumors and other various forms of cancer.

In other words, as the plants grow up from the ground, they already contain genes from toxic concoctions, therefore helping corporations and their “cooperating” farmers maximize profits [It always seems to be about profits, does it not?]. Some countries are terrified and outraged, knowing there are not sufficient studies on the long term effects from this bio-engineering ‘guessing game,’ and are boycotting American exports of major vegetables, dairy, and meat products for this specific reason, including Germany.

Consider this: What if over half of all the food being sold in grocery stores contained pesticides that you couldn’t taste or smell, with no warnings on the labels, and then you got cancer from eating them after ten years?

To pour salt in the wound, GMO pesticides not only kill most of the nutrients in foods, but most GMO plants die after one year and new seeds must be purchased from Monsanto. It’s all part of the money making scheme.

Terrible sins affect all of us to some extent or another, but few things are as far-reaching

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and damaging, with regard to our physical lives as this total disregard for God's creation. Genetic engineers are trying to usurp God's authority; and there is little or no fear of God in the land. The result is chaos; as a people, we are disintegrating from within, bodily, and as a nation.

God told Israel that the fear of Him is not in her, and that she relied on her own resources for her needs. I am going to show you how the Israelitish nations today are making the same mistakes, and the Biblical imagery of seeds reveals the judgment, blessing, and salvation of Israel and the Church.

During Jeremiah's time, the ancient Israelite tribe of Judah was also faced with the imminent disintegration of their country. Jeremiah warned both captive, scattered Israel and collapsing Judah of the punishment for their sins. Along with Israel and Judah's idolatry went unbridled, long-term immorality. In chapter 2 of Jeremiah, he pictures idolatry as spiritual adultery. Canaanite worship chose high hills, flourishing trees, and other elements of the ecosystem to carry out its immoral rites. Worship of the environment and its elements was in full swing; it was a society very much like today, except without the technological advances that we have.

God designed and created Israel as a seed of highest quality, but she rebelled against Him, turning herself into a degenerate, alien plant. God gets right to the core of the problem through Jeremiah, telling Israel that the fear of Him is not in her.

Jeremiah 2:1-3 Moreover the word of the LOORD came to me, saying, "Go and cry in the hearing of Jerusalem, saying, 'Thus says the LOORD: "I remember you, the kindness of your youth, the love of your betrothal, when you went after Me in the wilderness, in a land not sown. Israel was holiness to the LOORD, the firstfruits of His increase. All that devour him will offend; disaster will come upon them," says the LOORD."

Eventually, they stopped loving, reverencing, and obeying the Eternal.

Jeremiah 2:13 "For My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water."

So Israel and Judah committed two evils which they continued to commit and even to this day, in the Israelitish nations of the world. The first was that they have forsaken, that

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is, hated and rejected God. The second is that they have relied on their own resources for their needs. Physically, they have rejected God's providence of living waters: the source of water and the food which sustains them and the right agricultural methods that God instructs in scripture. Spiritually, they have rejected God's providence of living waters, the Holy Spirit, which can only flow from God through Jesus Christ.

Jeremiah 2:19 "Your own wickedness will correct you, and your backslidings will rebuke you. Know therefore and see that it is an evil and bitter thing that you have forsaken the LORD your God, and the fear of Me is not in you," says the Lord God of hosts.

This is the heart of the reason why people go contrary to the natural laws of life. They do not fear God, therefore nothing restrains them. The Eternal says their own wickedness will correct them. In our lifetime, this altering of God's creation with GMOs will become a punishment on this nation in sickness, deformities, and death. This nation is degenerating and disintegrating before our eyes, and it almost brings us to tears, especially when we sing a song like we did last week, "American the Beautiful."

Next, the Eternal emphasizes the fact that Israel's sin is long-standing and deep-rooted.

Jeremiah 2:20-21 "For of old I have broken your yoke and burst your bonds; and you said, 'I will not transgress,' when on every high hill and under every green tree you lay down, playing the harlot. [That is, the spiritual harlot; seeking other gods, worshipping other things.] Yet I have planted you a noble vine, a seed of highest quality. How then have you turned before Me into the degenerate plant of an alien vine?"

Ancient Israel turned into the degenerate plant because they did not fear God. They forsook Him, the fountain of living water; and so that seed of highest quality that God planted rejected the true fountain of living water. In stark contrast, dead gods cannot impart life, and they are not a source of living water. God the Father is the source of the spiritual water. Christ is the fountain, the delivery system. The living water is the Holy Spirit.

The rebellion of the Israelites in verse 21 is like a vineyard that was planted with choice vines, but produced only inferior ones. Jeremiah is glancing backward to the time when the Eternal planted the Israelites, when the seed was pure. Even though it had been planted correctly, the result was corrupt, rotten branches, alien to the genuine stock.

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Later, their behavior was against God in rebelliousness: they became an abnormal vine in the well-tended vineyard; they became a degenerate, abnormal people, because they had no fear of God. Jeremiah said the Israelites want to have gods in their own image.

Today, greed for money and power, as well as scientific and technological advances, are major idolatries of this present Israelitish society. Jeremiah continues, if they make gods for themselves, these are the gods that they should call on for help in their time of trouble. They have attempted to steal from God Himself, nothing less than His gifts and their own birthright. They wanted to be creators, but all they do is degenerate God's creation, which they have stolen from Him.

Jeremiah's response, later in verse 29, to their attitude is that despite all that God has done for them and despite the rebelliousness against Him, they still have the audacity to complain against the Eternal God.

Jeremiah recorded that the Eternal had said to Israel, "I planted you a noble vine, a seed of highest quality." The seed image often represents human lineage and heritage. A seed of Eve, which continues on down through Adam and David to Christ, is opposed to the seed of the serpent, beginning with the forbidden tree tragedy.

The seed of David is a specific reference to Jesus Christ. In comparison, Abraham's seed refers to the many spiritual descendants of the Faith. In Genesis 12:7, the Eternal promised Abram that his offspring would inherit the Promised Land. Abram is in Shechem at this time, and the focus is on the land, as well as other reaffirmations of the promise. The land becomes an inheritance, thanks to God's promise to give it to Abraham and his descendants. The Israelites rightly consider themselves of Abraham's physical seed, having descended from his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob.

However, the apostle Paul points out that Abraham's spiritual descendants were heirs through the righteousness that comes by faith, not the law. In this distinction, he asserts that because Abraham was credited with righteousness by faith and not by law, spiritually converted Gentiles also descend from Abraham, being heirs to God's promise.

Before Jesus was resurrected, He promised to send a spiritual helper, the Spirit, thereby making converted Gentiles heirs through the righteousness that comes by faith. In Romans 4:13, the apostle Paul interprets the giving of land to be a reference to Genesis 12:7, to the entire world. Prophetically, Israel's domain is the whole world. In Romans 4, notice the caption (at least in my Bible) is "the promise granted through faith."

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Romans 4:13 For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

Paul defines the seed of Abraham as all who by faith embrace the promise of the Spirit, which enables the obedience by which we are credited righteousness.

Romans 4:14-16 For if those who are of the law [That is, the physical descendants of Abraham.] are heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect, because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law [That is, the physical descendants of Abraham.], but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all...

So the true seed of Abraham is the individual who is an Israelite inwardly, who has the Holy Spirit, and this is spiritual conversion. But since the physical descendants of Israel rejected their covenant with God, they rejected their spiritual inheritance as Abraham's seed.

Galatians 3:29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

God's relationship is now with spiritual Israel. The physical nation of Israel rejected God's covenant with Him, so the physical descendants of Israel do not really understand what is happening today. The only ones truly part of spiritual Israel are those who have been circumcised in the heart. Therefore, if a Gentile is circumcised of the heart, then in God's eyes, he is a spiritual Israelite, a spiritual Jew.

Romans 9:7-8 ...nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham, but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called." That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed.

Just because they were physical sons of Abraham did not mean that they were shoe-ins

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for the Kingdom of God. God can raise children up out of stones, and He said His church would be the foolish and the weak of the world. Not impressive individuals, not the great, not large numbers.

Even though there might have been some Jews who were intellectually superior and physical descendants of Abraham, it meant nothing spiritually at all.

John 8:37-44 “I know that you are Abraham’s descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. [That is Jesus talking to the Jews.] I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father.” They answered and said to Him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus said to them, “If you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this. You do the deeds of your father.” Then they said to Him, “We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God.” Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand my speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.”

You might recall earlier that Jeremiah was accusing, and rightly so, the ancient Israelites of speaking and doing of their own resources. That was equated to denying God.

God has a plan of salvation for mankind that continues to work through Israel. It is not the physical nation that He is concerned about, at least at this time, as much as the spiritual. He is concerned about the future of the descendants of physical Israel, as we see in many prophecies. He is intimate with and concerned for spiritual Israel, the Church, at this time.

These Jews to whom Jesus was speaking acted more like children of Satan than children of Abraham. They lived their lives with the same attitude and lies that Satan lives by and transmits to a worldly society. Therefore, they are his children, and what we see here is the contrast between the children of truth and the children of lies—and is it not what we are looking at today in our society? God’s people are the children of truth,

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and this world's people are the children of Satan, the children of lies, because they do as their father does.

Christ is in the lineage of Abraham, and He prepared the way by which everyone can eventually develop a relationship with the Father. Christ's work makes it possible for God to be our God, just as He promised.

Galatians 3:16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ.

Paul makes it clear that this seed is Christ, and the word *seed* refers to a single person. Jesus Christ, the seed to whom the promise referred.

Galatians 3:19 What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed [that is, Jesus Christ] should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator.

Galatians 3:26-29 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. [There is that faith again that is necessary.] For as many of you are were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

In the history of humanity since Adam, only one person has qualified to receive the inheritance of the promises that were made to Abraham; that, of course, is Jesus Christ. We become co-heirs with Him if we are in union with Him. But we have to meet the conditions of the New Covenant.

That means that God has called us to His truths, to His way of life, and we have unconditionally yielded to God. We believe the Gospel of the coming Kingdom of God. We accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; we have been baptized; we have received the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands by a minister of God. If we submit to God in this way, we become "in Christ." We are in Him, and He is in us; He becomes part of us through the Holy Spirit. This happens in a spiritual sense,

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and we become members of His church, and heirs to God's kingdom.

Since Jesus Christ is the inheritor of God's promises, He has covenanted with us to forgive our sins. Our acceptance and obedience to the New Covenant sets us on the course toward eternal life.

There are multiple metaphors that we can draw from concerning the growth process. The actions of sowing and waiting represent preaching and God's calling. Knowing the value of seeds, we wait with the farmers who watch for the return of the large investment they have sown. Thus we learn to protect, and prepare, and care for the Word in the new Christians' lives that are sown as seeds on various ground.

In the parable of the growing seed, found only in Mark 4:26-29, Jesus compares salvation to vegetation. Just as God created the world without man's assistance, He also established the Kingdom of God in the hearts of His people, through the coming of His Son, Jesus Christ. God has chosen, however, to appoint men as His coworkers in both physical and spiritual responsibilities.

In agriculture, the farmer sows the seed and then waits for growth to occur. Likewise, in the spiritual sphere, we are to speak and demonstrate the Word of God to those around us. We must then wait for God to work in their lives. Just as the power of life and growth is in the seed, so also is it in the Word of God, spiritually. Man only assists in the process of disseminating God's truth abroad, just as a farmer casts the seed.

Mark 4:26-29 And He said, "The Kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how. For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head. But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

After sowing the seed, the man in the parable left the matter in God's hands. Instead of staying up all night worrying about it, he went about his business as usual (verse 27). In spiritual matters, we should not fret either, but wait for God to do His work through His spirit.

During this time, the seed sprouts and grows, and he does not know how. The man could observe but not explain what God accomplished in the growth of the seed. The Greek verb translated *spring* (in the King James version) is also translated as *sprouts* or

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sprout in the New King James version, the English Standard Version, and the New International Version. It basically means *germinate*.

In verse 27, *grow* in Greek means *lengthen*. This action is of God, not man. The farmer is careful not to disturb the growth of a tender young shoot. Likewise, we should not try to hurry spiritual maturity in a young believer. He is equally fragile. The stages in the growth of the plant have been determined by God and occur automatically.

Verse 28 tells us about the stages: first the blade, then the ear; after that, the full corn in the ear. Spiritual growth also follows a preordained pattern that we cannot change. To try to rush someone's baptism and conversion is to work against God.

In verse 29, the farmer harvested the grain. After planting the seed and waiting patiently for God to make it mature into grain, the farmer then harvested it at the opportune time. So we see the parallel there between the spiritual and the physical.

God calls us into action at the proper time, and the faith which He has produced in the believer needs to be channeled in appropriate ways to benefit the body of Christ and continue its growth. Here is what we have to do to contribute:

Ephesians 4:15-16 ...but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

We have to do our share and more. Edifying each other in this manner, we can equate this to the farmer, who reaps the harvest and makes it into nourishment for himself and others.

Seeds are small. That is not shocking to anyone; we have all seen seeds. Their minute size is emphasized when Samson's parents are told, as in Numbers 6:4, that a Nazirite cannot touch grapes, nor skin, not even the seeds. The mustard seed is the smallest of its kind in the Middle East. The Parable of the Mustard Seed is in Mark 4:

Mark 4:30-32 Then He said, "To what shall we liken the Kingdom of God? Or with what parable shall we picture it? It is like a mustard seed which, when it is sown on the ground, is smaller than all the seeds on the earth; but when it is sown, it grows up and becomes greater than all herbs, and shoots out

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large branches, so that the birds of the air may nest under its shade.”

So the mustard seed stands for the progress of the Church from small beginnings, looking at its spiritual application. Because of its minuteness, the mustard seed came to symbolize small beginnings, representing the smallest weight or measure, a tiny particle. This parable focuses on the idea of smallness. The mustard seed is something small that does its part to expand in preparation for its purpose, that is, the Kingdom of God in the spiritual sense. The seed represents an instrument by which spiritual growth can be advanced, just as a plant grows and reproduces itself through a seed.

In this parable, the smallest seed is the Church, which appeared as the first fruits of the Word. Just as in the parable of the sower, the one who sows the mustard seed is the Son of Man, Jesus Christ, and the ground is the world.

Jesus Himself had an insignificant entrance into the world by human standards. He was born of a woman. The Church He founded is likewise a little flock, small in design by God, not to become a physically large and powerful organization that would make a spectacle of itself.

Let me give you four scriptures that express this idea.

Luke 12:31-32 “But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

In Matthew 7:13-14, Christ says that the way that leads to eternal life is difficult and narrow, and few find it. In Matthew 20:16, He reiterates that few are chosen. In Luke 10:2, in sending the 70 out, He says the laborers are few.

In I Corinthians 1:26-29, Paul contends that God calls the weak and base of the world to put to shame the mighty and the noble. That is not only on a personal note, but it is also on a larger note, as far as an organization size.

Jesus is referring to those few who, upon their calling by God, voluntarily submit to God’s dominion, the Kingdom of God.

Not only is the body of Christ, the Church, small, but more importantly, its spiritual quality is superior to all others. God’s small spiritual Church has not been perverted like

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the world's syncretistic religious organizations. We can easily draw an analogy between the genetically modified organisms and God's creation of seeds, animals, and other creatures, which He made very good. We just cannot say that about the GMO.

Genesis 1:29-31 And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food"; and it was so. Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

Even though it is God who made it possible for seeds to grow on their own, man has the duty to dress and keep the earth. We have a responsibility to not try to improve upon what God has designed, created, and done. It would be an affront; it would be to deny God to try to alter what He has created, in the way of genetic modification. Given their fragile size and potential value, seeds need nurture from their environment. They require protection, preparation, and care. However, genetic scientists and engineers do nothing but destroy what God has created.

The physical mixing that goes on with GMOs is analogous of a serious spiritual type of mixing. I will give you some statistics and quotes. According to the latest data available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (the USDA), Economic Research Service, up to 86% of all corn, 90% of all soybeans, and 93% of all cotton planted in the U.S. is of G.M. (genetically modified) origin. That means that virtually all food products containing corn, soy, or cotton derived ingredients, that are not certified organic, are also of G.M. origin.

According to the April 5th, 2012 NaturalNews.com article, *Healthful Hints for Avoiding GMOs* by Ethan A. Huff, "Canola oil, also known as rapeseed oil in some countries, is another major G.M. product found in many salad dressings, dips, snack products, and practically anything that contains oil additives. Nearly all of the canola grown in the U.S. is grown in North Dakota, and at least 90% of it is said to be of G.M. origin. Conventional products that do not specifically list sugar additives as cane sugar may be using beet sugar, the vast majority of which is of G.M. origin as well. At its peak, G.M. sugar beets represented a whopping 95% of all domestically grown sugar beets."

Also according to NaturalNews.com, Monsanto's pipeline of upcoming genetically modified organisms includes several new varieties specifically engineered with "stacked

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traits.” That means they contain multiple genetic modifications, and built-in resistance traits, as opposed to just one. A new study published in the *Journal of Applied Toxicology* has found that these new multi-trait GMOs appear to be exponentially more harmful to humans than single-trait GMOs, because of their synergistic toxicity.

According to a HealthyEatingPolitics.com article entitled *Genetically Modified Plants and Sterile Seeds*, “The contamination of natural self-propagating plants and seeds from genetically modified plants is one of the scariest issues associated with industrial agriculture. Agribusiness intent on cornering the seed market are using tactics which could destroy the self-germinating seeds of our natural food crops through cross-pollination with sterile genetically modified seeds and plants. Destroying self-propagating crop seeds will ensure that all farmers have to buy new seed each year from these businesses, instead of being able to save natural self-propagating seeds, capable of re-germination in the next planting cycle.”

So we see what is happening before our eyes, as well as the more sinister things going on behind the scenes, to combine aspects of different systems of agriculture. Physical seeds and plants are just a part of the genetic modification going on today. It carries over into other things, as animals and even humans. Genetic engineering combines parts of God’s creation that man has no authority or divine approval to fool with. The consequences of playing God is bringing misery to millions of people who do not have the physical stamina to withstand severe poisoning of the human body. This diametric combining of unlike genes is just another physical parallel to the perverted mind of humanity that seeks to syncretize Satan’s way of life, in the way of a perverse counterfeit religion with God’s way of life, and the way of true, pure religion of the sovereign God of the universe and beyond.

Let us look at the spiritual mixing and mingling called *syncretism*. Generally speaking, syncretism is the combination of different systems of philosophy or religious belief or practice. Because of spiritual mixing, syncretism, and persecution of the saints, God will pay Babylon back in perfect equality, what she herself has paid out on the innocent.

Revelation 18:6 Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her.

There is a penalty, a punishment, that is coming on those who do this mixing of seeds in the way that they are with DNA, and on the rest of society as well. This context speaks in terms of punishment, and that is, bring upon her double the amount of calamity which

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she has brought upon others. Take full vengeance on her; let her drink abundantly of the wine of the wrath of God, double what she has dealt to others.

That can be interpreted in two ways. Either let the quantity administered to her be doubled, or let the ingredients in the cup be doubled in intensity. In life, God has laid down a law by which a person reaps that which he sows. Even in the Sermon on the Mount, in Matthew 7:2, we find an expression of that law, "With the measure you use, it will be measured back to you."

The double punishment and the double reward come from the fact that frequently, in the Old Testament law, anyone responsible for loss or damage had to repay it twice over. The Old Testament prophecy of Babylon's demise is mentioned in Psalm 137:8.

Psalm 137:8 O daughter of Babylon, who are to be destroyed, happy the one who repays you as you have served us!

Jeremiah 50:29 Call together the archers against Babylon. All you who bend the bow, encamp against it all around; let none of them escape. Repay her according to her work; according to all she has done, do to her; for she has been proud against the LORD, against the Holy One of Israel.

There is no getting away from the fact that punishment follows sin, especially if that sin has involved the cruel treatment of others. What they are doing to the food that God has given us to eat is cruel. Pride is mentioned as the primary motivator for Babylon's work and what she has done.

All pride will one day be humiliated. Babylon's supreme sin has been pride, and there is a sin which the Greek calls *hubris*, a term which I think is used in our law system today. What it means is arrogance. Arrogance that comes to feel that it has no need of God. The punishment for that sin is ultimate humiliation. Notice the whole context that contains Revelation 18:6, that I mentioned previously.

Revelation 18:4-8 And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her. In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the

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same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, 'I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.' [An arrogant station: hubris.] Therefore her plagues will come in one day [That is, very quickly.]—death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her.”

Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words says: “In Revelation 18:6 (King James Version), *kerannumi* (the original Greek word which means “to mix”) is incorrectly rendered *to fill full* in the King James Version, and the Revised Version says *to mingle*.” So we get the obvious sense that Babylon is guilty of a tremendous amount of syncretism here, of premeditated and deliberate religious confusion through syncretism.

Paying retribution to the wicked according to their mistreatment of others was a fairly common occurrence in the Old Testament. Paying someone back double indicated that the retribution would be more than complete.

Babylon does not like to retain God in her knowledge. Her philosophy was: the people like to be deceived, so let them be deceived! Is that not what we are getting from our government today? “You let us deceive you; we will deceive you all the more!” Like the words in the popular song from several decades ago, “Tell me lies, tell me sweet little lies.” That is a correct evaluation of this nation.

In Revelation 18:11, we find that the merchants who gained wealth from the great geopolitical prostitute issue a lengthy lament. The great prostitute especially represents the lust for materialistic acquisition and luxury.

As the beast power incorporates every expression of corrupt government, so also the prostitute includes every corrupt economic and religious system. Even humans are reduced to cargo, traded as slaves to drive the engines of production and prosperity.

Revelation 18:11-13 “And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore: merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of citron wood, every kind of object of ivory, every kind of object of most precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble; and cinnamon and incense, fragrant oil and frankincense, wine and oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and bodies and souls of men.”

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We could also throw in there seeds, which is represented by the wheat. This certainly includes genetically engineered seeds, plants and crops, as well as animals and cattle, which are also now being genetically modified.

Regarding Revelation 18:13, *Barnes' Notes* says:

“The word used and rendered ‘souls’—*psuchas*—though commonly denoting the ‘soul’ (properly the ‘breath’ or ‘vital principle’ [Basically meaning thinking or life of a person.]), is also employed to denote the living thing—the animal—in which the soul or vital principle resides; and hence may denote a person or a man. Under this form it is used to denote a ‘servant’ or ‘slave.’ [That is not talking about an immortal soul.] ... This kind of traffic in the ‘persons’ or souls of people...is mentioned in two forms, as that of bodies and the souls [or minds] of people but it would seem most probable that the writer meant to designate all that would properly come under this traffic, whether male or female slaves were bought and sold...for servitude...whatever might be the kind of servitude that they might be employed in, and whatever might be their condition in life. [This kind of human trafficking can include scientific research, and most likely does, because it is such a major part of technology, and commerce, and science.] The use of the two words [*bodies* and *souls*] would include all that is implied in the traffic, for, in the most important senses, it extends to the body and the soul. In slavery both are purchased, both are supposed...to become the property of the master.”

If you think about the average person in this nation, this society has captivated not only the bodies of people—we are captivated, we are slaves because of the amount of taxes we owe, we are “owned” that way—but also, what is it doing to the minds of everyone, especially children? They are trying to capture the minds of the children as early as possible; you can now put your child in school when they are 3 or 4 years old, rather than 5 years old as it was before, and before that it was 6. They keep lowering and lowering the age: they want control of your child. What they are doing is so obvious, especially when you relate it to scripture.

The combining of unlike genes in scientific research and commerce, to get rich, is analogous to the distorted, hostile religious syncretism of Satan’s influence of mankind, as he perverts the sovereign God’s true, pure religion for personal gain. Is that not what is done in the mega-churches: they get on TV, and they try to pull in as much money as they possibly can, selling books and selling God’s “truth” so to speak. Their commerce

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in religion is just despicable. That is why in God's church everything is freely offered, to anyone who asks.

Job 31:24-28 "If I have made gold my hope, or said to fine gold, 'You are my confidence'; if I have rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because my hand had gained much; if I have observed the sun when it shines, or the moon moving in brightness, so that my heart has been secretly enticed, [That can also mean to worship those things. Worship the sun, Sunday sunrise service; the moon, there are people who worship the moon, especially in the New Age religion.] and my mouth has kissed my hand; this also would be an iniquity deserving of judgment, for I would have denied God who is above."

An interesting tidbit about Job 31:27, where it says "and my mouth has kissed my hand"—in several religions, if they cannot kiss it with their lips, they kiss their hand and then touch that object. For example, in the Muslim religion there is a black object in Mecca that they kiss in that manner. There is also a statue in the Vatican where the same thing is done. So "my mouth has kissed my hand" is an ancient ritual that people have done for thousands of years.

Denying God, who is the supreme creator of all things, is a sin deserving of God's judgment. Genetic engineering, combining of DNA of different species, does the same thing that Satan did, with his same attitude, when he tried to usurp the throne of God. Likewise, spiritual mixing brings on an even more terrible judgment.

In both physical and spiritual contrast to the way Satan and his evil world use seeds to acquire personal power and wealth, God uses seeds to produce pure and wholesome things with great benefits and no side-effects. The Old Testament images of seed are often concerned with the crop that will result, as well as the relationship between sowing and reaping, and between right-living and prosperous harvests. A seed's miraculous growth is a blessing from God.

We see this same principle in the New Testament in I Corinthians 3:6 and I Corinthians 9:10:

I Corinthians 3:6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.

I Corinthians 9:10 Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our

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sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope.

The Greek used here is literally and correctly rendered in the *New King James Version*, “He who plows should plow in hope.” To which we can add, “Of reaping a harvest or attaining success in his labors.” According to *Barnes’ Notes*, the sense is:

“The man who cultivates the earth, in order that he may be excited to industry and diligence, ought to have a reasonable prospect that he shall himself be permitted to enjoy the fruit of his labors. This is the case with those who do plow; and if this should be the case with those who cultivate the earth, it is as certainly reasonable that those who labor in God’s husbandry, and who devote their strength to his service, should be encouraged with a reasonable prospect of success and support.”

So we in God’s church can apply this principle to our own lives, that if we do the work—God wants us to work—then we do the work in hope, that is, we hope that there will be fruit that comes from it. God promises to give us success. God gives the increase, therefore we have very reason to hope for success.

The seed’s productivity indicates judgment or blessing. At times, the Israelites received judgment, when they were told that their seeds would be ineffective because of their sin. Other times, blessing is indicated by a seed that has abundant water or a seed that grows well. Obedience is promised a reward: to increase your store of seed.

This is not to say that someone who is out of work, or is underemployed, or is not rich, is not being blessed, because this is referring to your need. The quote there is, “increase your store of seed,” which equates to, God will provide for your needs, and He certainly does.

In contrast to the long life promised to the righteous, the wicked receive judgment with a wide variety of ill health. For example, Jeroboam chooses a personal idol and is judged by having his hand wither. Things like that happen today also; if a person does not have good health or if they do not take care of themselves, parts of their body do wither.

Death is a judgment. For example, in scripture a prophet lies and is then killed by a lion. But death can also be a blessing. Death can be seen as a judgment of mercy on a larger scale. A judgment that prevents heightened misery is actually a blessing. In some

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cases, death can be a positive thing, as in the lead-up to the growth of seeds and the resurrection of the dead. It anticipates it.

The picture of a seed dying, so as to create roots and produce other seeds, is representative of discipleship. Jesus clearly links the death of a seed, and the roots and sprouts that follow, with the death of a believer.

John 12:23-25 (NIV 1984) Jesus replied, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.”

This metaphor of the seed predicts the physical death of Jesus. It also encompasses a metaphorical death to self—that being a disciple of Christ requires a laying down of one’s life, figuratively and even literally at times.

John 15:13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.

Regarding friends, most of us have many acquaintances, but few friends. Even some our friends may prove unfriendly or even unfaithful. In a Psalm by David about the blessing and suffering of the godly, he writes:

Psalm 41:9 Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.

Even a devoted friend may fail us when we need him most. Peter, James, and John went to sleep in the garden when they should have been praying. Peter even denied Jesus three times. Our friendship to each other and to Christ is not perfect, but His friendship to us is perfect. Christian love is not basically a feeling; it is an act of the will. The proof of our love is not in our feelings, but is in our actions and even to the extent of laying down our lives for Christ and for one another. Christ was willing to lay down His life for both his friends and His enemies. It means treating others the way God treats us.

In the metaphor of resurrection, Paul reminds us that to each kind of seed, God gives its own body. He emphasizes seed when he contrasts an adult plant to a mere grain.

I Corinthians 15:35-36 But someone will say, “How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?” Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies.

A person is a fool to object to the resurrection, which must exist in the undeniable and everyday facts that everyone witnesses. All one has to do is observe the growth of grain.

Suppose you have never seen grain grow. You were told that it was to be put into the earth, that it was to die, to be decomposed, and from that decayed kernel, first there would start up a slender green and tender spire of grass. This would send up a strong stalk, and would produce hundreds of similar kernels in the near future. You would find that impossible to believe, had you not been educated with it or seen it yourself. Those facts would be as improbable to you as the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is to many worldly people.

I Corinthians 15:37 And what [seed] you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain—perhaps wheat or some other grain.

Continuing with the analogy, one kernel is sown, which is to produce many others. They will not be the same that is sown; they will be new kernels raised up from that, of the same kind, showing their intimate and necessary connection with that which is sewn.

It is implied, here, that the body which will be raised will not be the same in the sense that the same particles of matter will compose it (that is, physical things). It will be the same only in the senses that it will have sprung up from that. The body will constitute the same order, and rank, and species of being, and be subject to the same laws, and deserve the same course of treatment as that which died. The same sewn particles of matter do not enter into the body which will be in the harvest, meaning we leave our physical bodies behind in the resurrection. The same particles of matter that constitute the body when it dies do not constitute the new body at the resurrection.

I Corinthians 15:38 But God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body.

God gives the sewn seed its own proper body, formation, and growth. The word body used here, as applied to grain, implies the whole system, or combination of roots, stalks,

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leaves, flowers, and kernels, that start out from the sewn seed. A form is produced from the sewn seed as God pleases. Paul is tracing the result to God to show that there is no chance, and it did not depend on the nature of things, but was dependent on the wise design of God. There was nothing in the decaying kernel itself that could produce this result, but God chose to design it that way. God gets all of the credit.

God was pleased to, He chose to, it was His will to design and create a unique body produced from each seed. His design conforms to His natural laws. He acts according to His own pleasure in the formation of each root, and stalk, and kernel of grain.

Paul states that God gives to every seed its own body, a body that appropriately belongs to it, and is the same kind. He does not cause a stalk of rye to grow up from a kernel of wheat, nor corn from barley. That would be a perversion of God's design, to attempt to do it, which we are seeing with the genetic engineers. God has fixed proper laws, and He will not be mocked for long before He brings severe judgment down on those who try to usurp His sovereign creative authority, by genetically engineering perverse seeds.

Genetic engineering research is most often carried out on animals such as pigs, mice, sheep, other farm animals, fish, seeds, and plants. It has become so bad that those of us who keep God's laws of clean and unclean meats are seriously wondering whether the foods (that is, the meats, vegetables, and fruits) we are eating is actually free of unclean meat. In the case of "flavor-saver" tomatoes, as they are usually called, tomatoes are genetically altered by introducing into them genes from a fish, the Arctic flounder (at least it is clean), so as to reduce freezer damage. Alterations are made to enable tomatoes to have a longer shelf life, to ripen longer on the plant while remaining firm at the time of picking and transporting, and to make them bigger and tastier as well. The average person is unable to see the difference between "flavor-saver" and a normal tomato.

Other such experiments with seeds and vegetables include chicken genes introduced into potatoes for resistance to disease, and for increasing shelf-life and size. Some tobacco has been altered with mouse genes, to reduce impurities (That does not make any sense, does it?), or with fireflies that makes the leaves glow at night. They have even successfully added firefly DNA to cats, and have gotten them to glow, so they are even changing the species. Is God far from returning?

Scientists have recently taken the gene that programs poison in scorpion tails and looked for ways to combine it with cabbage. Why would they create venomous cabbage? (Because they are insane?) The reason is to limit pesticide use while still

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preventing caterpillars from damaging cabbage crops. These genetically modified cabbages would produce scorpion poison that kills caterpillars when they bite leaves. But the toxin is supposedly modified so that it is not harmful to humans. (I feel much better now!)

People may soon be getting vaccinated for diseases like hepatitis-B and cholera by simply taking a bite of a banana. Researchers have successfully engineered bananas, potatoes, lettuce, carrots, and tobacco to produce vaccines. But they say that bananas are the ideal production and delivery vehicle.

British scientists have created a breed of genetically modified hens that produce so-called cancer fighting medicines in their eggs. The animals have had human genes added to their DNA, so that human proteins are secreted into the whites of their eggs, along with complex medicinal proteins similar to drugs used to treat skin cancer and other diseases.

And the list goes on, and on, and on. What will we be eating in a few years? Only what we grow, it seems. May God save us all from this.

The fear of God is not in these people as they rely on their own resources. The Biblical imagery of seeds reveals so very much that is encouraging. God gives to every seed its own body, and in a sense, that is a type of what God will do in the resurrection. Everyone will have his own, that is, his proper body; a body which will belong to him and be suited to him. The wicked will not rise with the spiritual body of the just.

It is extraordinary in the doctrine of the resurrection that the fact is constantly before us on earth that grain, that seems to rot, sends up a shoot or stalk, and is reproduced in a wonderful and beautiful manner. In a manner similar to this, the body will be raised.

I Corinthians 15:39-43 All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of animals, another of fish, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.

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How encouraging that is, despite what man is doing to destroy everything he can. In a manner similar to the sown seed and to the different degrees of splendor and magnificence in the bodies in the sky and on the earth, the dead will be raised in a manner analogous to the springing up of grain. There will be a difference between the body here and the body in the resurrection. The body here on earth is sown in corruption and dies, but the body in the first resurrection rises in incorruption, and is no longer liable to sin, disease, and decay. It lives forever.

How encouraging and how wonderful it is, that God has planned such a wonderful plan for us. And we are going to be part of that, as long as we remain faithfully true to God.