

The Journal

News of the Churches of God

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Signs in the Colorado sky: Finger of God points way

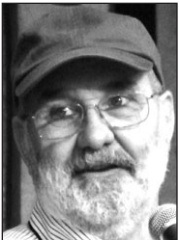
The writer, with his wife, Angie, is founder of the Ami Yisrael Ministry and Ami Yisrael Hebraic Fellowship of Hawkins and Gladewater, Texas. Write the Kelleys at P.O. Box 1633, Hawkins, Texas 75765, U.S.A. or tim@amiyisrael.org.

This article is adapted from one at amiyisrael.org titled "Finger of God: Signs and the People of Israel."

By Tim Kelley

HAWKINS, Texas—In May of 2012 I had one of the most spiritually awakening experiences I've ever had.

I and many of my friends had been praying that God would reveal the whereabouts of the remains of my younger brother, who I had come to believe had committed suicide.



Tim Kelley

My brother Keith was a loner of sorts, an adventurous loner. At 17 he left home, in Grand Junction, Colo., and headed for the mountains of Colorado, eventually hiking most of the Colorado portion of the Continental Divide by himself.

During either his late 30s or early 40s he single-handedly sailed a 30-plus-foot trimaran sailboat from Se-

attle, Wash., to Costa Rica and back. Years later he traveled much of Europe—again, by himself.

When Keith neared 50 years old his eyes began to fail. He found he had macular degeneration, a disease that takes away the vision in the center of the eye. This began to cause him problems with his work as a building contractor.

Keith was a perfectionist in that regard. Therefore he did most of the trim work on his houses himself. But as his eyesight weakened he could not continue doing this.

Because he was concerned about retirement and the distinct possibility that he might not be able to work much longer, he invested in rental property.

But, as the economy, especially the housing market, went into the tank, he soon found himself "upside down" on the mortgages of those properties. With an abundance of houses on the market, he found that his rents went down to the point he was having to subsidize them to make his house payments.

Depressing difficulties

Keith also had a problem with depression. After about 10 years of marriage he and his wife separated due to his inability to control the depression.

He also found it difficult to form a relationship with any other woman out of his concern for dragging a

See **MAN INFORMS**, page 4

Do fired Navy COs suffer from Bathsheba syndrome?

The following article is reprinted by permission from Stars and Stripes, an independent newspaper serving the U.S. armed forces since 1861. The article originally appeared March 14, 2012, under the headline "Do Fired Navy COs Suffer From 'Bathsheba Syndrome'?" See Stars and Stripes' Web site at stripes.com.

By Wyatt Olson

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan—The U.S. Navy has sacked more than 150 commanding officers for misconduct in the past 10 years. Five commanding officers (COs) have already been fired this year [2012], including the dismissal March 12 of the commander of an amphibious transport dock that had not yet even been commissioned.

So how can the Navy abate this steady tide of offending COs? Perhaps by asking, "What would David do?"

That's King David, he of Old Testament legend and famed for toppling the giant Goliath. But the all-powerful leader of ancient Israel is also known for a stunning moral lapse in which he sent one of his soldiers to certain death in order to possess the man's wife, Bathsheba.

That might seem an unlikely cautionary tale for the military to embrace, but the so-called Bathsheba syndrome has gained currency in the U.S. Navy in the past couple of

years as it attempts to curtail commander misconduct.

Ethical failings of leaders with power

"The Bathsheba Syndrome: The Ethical Failure of Successful Leaders," published in a business journal in 1993, asserts that the ethical failure of powerful leaders is often not the result of an individual's low morals, but the byproduct of success.

"Any time someone is promoted into a leadership position, it can engender a sense of privilege, a sense of power and ability to 'cover my tracks,'" said Dean Ludwig, a co-author of the article that coined the term and now a professor in the Department of Business and Leadership Studies at Lourdes University in Ohio.

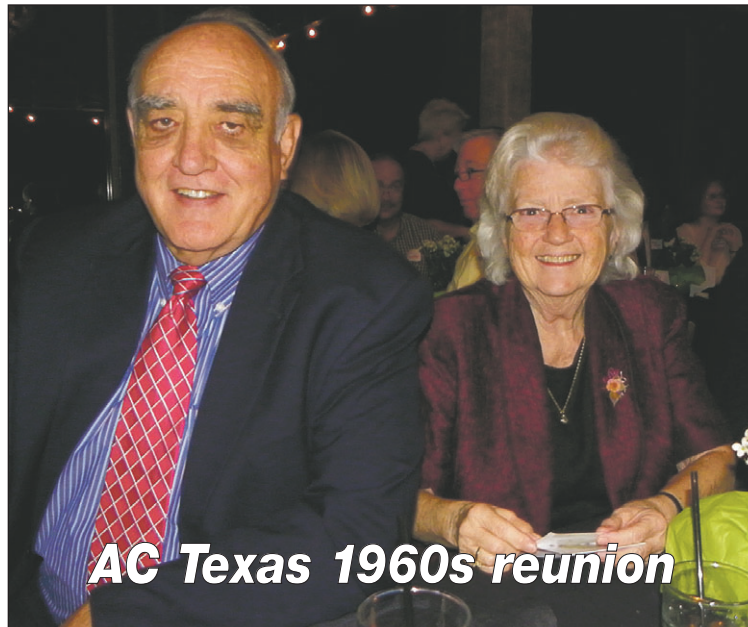
"It's very common that leaders can fall into that trap, believing they can get away with things for that reason," he said.

Although the article was geared toward private business, Navy leadership has come to embrace the concept as at least a partial explanation of command misconduct.

Part of command course

The Bathsheba syndrome is now integrated in the Navy War College's ethics portion of the Major Command Course, a one-week program for officers going into O-6 command level,

See **SOMETIMES**, page 6



AC Texas 1960s reunion

AC BIG SANDY REUNION—Daniel and Helen (Burchill) Botha of Rockwall, Texas, attend a reunion Oct. 27, 2012, of Ambassador College, Big Sandy, students from the 1960s and '70s. The Bothas, he originally from South Africa and she from Australia, live a short distance from the reunion location in Rockwall, near Dallas. Former AC students and their spouses and guests numbered about 60. Although most attendees had a connection with the Big Sandy campus, the Bothas attended AC in Brickwood, England, in the '60s. A larger Big Sandy reunion is scheduled for September 2013, also in the Dallas area, and is expected to draw as many as 300 participants. See "Notes and Quotes," page 40, for more information. [Photo by Dixon Cartwright]

New book from Oxford University Press analyzes fragmentation of the Worldwide Church of God

By Dixon Cartwright

David V. Barrett, a British author who has written much about religions, Christian and otherwise, has a new book out.

It's *The Fragmentation of a Sect*, a hardback published by Oxford University Press in January 2013.

It's based on Dr. Barrett's doctoral dissertation in the sociology department at the London School of Economics.



David V. Barrett

The sect of Dr. Barrett's title is the Worldwide Church of God. The fragmentation is the WCG's offshoots.

The publisher says it is the first sociological study of the WCG's splits, and it seeks to analyze what can happen to relatively new churches after their founders die.

One of the first reviews of Dr. Bar-

rett's book is by Mike Snyder of the United Church of God (ucg.org).

"For many," Mr. Snyder notes, "reading the book will likely be a painful experience as, while the book is not an exposé, it does chronicle shortcomings of [the] WCG and other offshoot leaders."

Dr. Barrett wrote a related tome in 2001, *The New Believers*, focusing on "sects, 'cults' and alternative religions." It concluded with a case study of the WCG and its splits.

Dr. Barrett lists specific goals he had while researching. They include:

- How the conflicts of authority faced by members affected them.

- How and why groups of members prioritized conflicting authority types, choosing one above the others available.

- The different forms of legitimation of authority used by leaders and their churches.

- Why some members choose to remain in a situation where the demands of their beliefs and their organizational

affiliation are in a state of conflict.

- How offshoot churches consciously emphasize and maintain the barriers that define and reinforce their separate state, their divergence from orthodoxy, or, within their own construct of reality, their adherence to the orthodoxy.

- What can happen to religions after their founder dies.

- Factors that affect choice of affiliation among churches.

Dr. Barrett based a major part of his research on a questionnaire of church and ministry leaders and other members that appeared in *THE JOURNAL* and other publications and on Web sites.

The Fragmentation of a Sect is 302 pages, with photos and line drawings. It is available from Amazon.com and other sellers, including the Oxford University Press Web site, for \$55.

See also "Book Includes Section on WCG and Derivatives," *THE JOURNAL*, Jan. 31, 2001, and "Author Requests Help With His Study of the WCG Offshoots," July 31, 2008.

The Journal invites readers' Feast reports

THE JOURNAL: NEWS OF THE CHURCHES OF GOD invites readers to send in reports of their 2012 Feast of Tabernacles observances.

Members of the Churches of God and other Sabbatarian fellowships met last year at several hundred Feast sites, with most observances beginning the evening of Sept. 30.

You still have time to get your report in for the next issue of *THE JOURNAL*.

Mail your information to Festival Reports, P.O. Box 1020, Big Sandy, Texas 75755, U.S.A. Or E-mail it to info@thejournal.org. Or you may fax it toll-free to 1-888-488-6603.

Photographs as prints or E-mail attachments are also welcomed.

Please mention the dates of your observance and the name of the church fellowship or affiliation, if any, or other sponsor of the site.

Some say the old AC campus is haunted

By Dixon Cartwright

BIG SANDY, Texas—*THE JOURNAL* received a few reports recently of alleged hauntings on the former Ambassador College campus near Big Sandy.

Since 2000 the grounds have no longer been AC or the property of any of the Churches of God.

They are owned by the International Air-Land Emergency Response Team—or ALERT, for short—a training school for young men and a part of the international Christian ministry of Bill Gothard of Oak Brook, Ill.

Redwood Building

The haunting stories center on the former Roy Hammer Library, known also in the old days as

See **REDWOOD BUILDING**, page 38

Leader of new church believes he's a prophet

By Dixon Cartwright

The leader of a new Church of God thinks he may be a prophet. The fledgling church, which is part of the founder's 17-year personal ministry, came into existence on Dec. 28, 2012, when Bob Thiel, Ph.D., announced the founding of the Continuing Church of God.

For many years Dr. Thiel, of Arroyo Grande, Calif., held membership in and actively promoted the Living Church of God, begun by Roderick Meredith and associates in 1998 and headquartered in Charlotte, N.C.

Dr. Thiel recently left the LCG after differences of

See **DR. THIEL CITES PREDICTIONS**, page 11



Bob Thiel

Letters from our readers

Memories of '79

I was looking through the May 2012 *JOURNAL* [issue No. 149] article again just now about the Rader-Wallace *60 Minutes* interview and had to tell you, boy, do I remember that.

The Feast Office had just moved to Pasadena from Big Sandy, and we were on the third floor of the Admin Building with, of course, Mr. Rader's office on the fourth floor. (Mr. Armstrong was staying in Tucson then because of the receivership.)

I was Jack McKinney's secretary, Dr. Lynn Torrance's before that.

I was walking from our suite of offices on the side toward the fountain around the open atrium to our offices on the other side when I heard this commotion.

I looked up and there was Virginia Kineston (Stanley Rader's secretary) screaming and hollering and film crews and cameras and Mike Wallace and everyone one floor up really going at it.

Ah, yes, exciting times. Art and I were in El Paso moving to Pasadena when we heard (by calling back to Art's parents in Big Sandy) about the receivership.

All our personal household items were basically impounded on the moving trucks for a couple months due to the receivership mess. For a couple months Art and I ended up living in the upstairs of an empty mothballed dorm while Mike Hale lived downstairs.

Sandra Spieker Dreaden
Crestview, Fla.

Girlie men

Charles Groce, in a recent promotional letter for a sermon by John Reedy, "The Wandering Sheep," observed that "here in our Tyler area it wasn't too long ago that thousands of people were attending weekly Sabbath services and the annual holy days."

"Today, that number is at best in the hundreds. Where have all these people gone?"

I have not listened yet to the sermon, and my comments are not directed at Charles. But his question did make me think of all my missing friends from the WCG.

The truth is there are many reasons for the missing, and we all share some of the blame.

Yet a greater responsibility for this sad state of affairs must be laid at the feet of a cowardly ministry and immoral church leaders who abandoned their flocks like hirelings—scared of Joe Tkach Sr.!

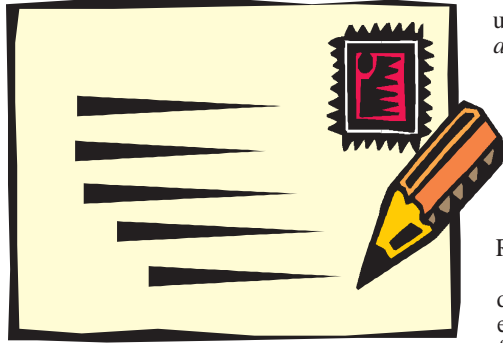
To this day these same ministers refuse to shed any tears for the missing and for treating the COG like cannon fodder. They are girlie men, and they should be vigorously opposed.

Dr. Richard F. Griffiths
Via the Internet

Eyes of discernment

I just received issue No. 151 and saw a parallel between two separate articles (one an interview with Dr. Jeff Maehr ["Final Appeal: Supreme Court Dockets Church Member's Challenge of the IRS and Income Tax"] and the other by Eric Snow ["God Used the Uncalled to Preserve the Bible"]).

That parallel is the erroneous idea that the modern versions of the Bible that we generally utilize are comprised of *all* of YHWH's breathed instructions, and that everything con-



unparalleled *mystery of the ages*. This unprecedented event will blast our credibility on the world stage to monumental heights. This is how we will fulfill the next two projects of *destiny* (Matthew 24:14; Revelation 10:11).

Tons of Exodus proof demonstrate that our God exists. Serve and prosper, friends, because this is the big one.

Enjoy a great Passover season. That's when all this began. Please write me and request the free Reed Sea Alliance Info Package.

Ron King
3023 S. University Dr.
Fort Worth, Texas 76109, U.S.A.
rsa1936@gmail.com

What we think is right

Do you obey God? Most professing Christians will answer that question with a resounding "Absolutely!"

But, if everyone is obeying God, why are there so many differing and bickering groups and denominations?

The answer is simple. Everyone wants to believe and do what he thinks is right in his own eyes, rather than what God says (Proverbs 14:12).

Someone will say, "Let's all of us in the churches meet together and earnestly and prayerfully ask God to tell us the true doctrines for a real Christian so we can be definitely sure that we are obeying God."

Someone else will say: "No need to do that. It's already been done. The early New Testament church had that same problem: differing groups believing many differing doctrines. So they all got together and sincerely asked God to show them what the *true* doctrines of the true church really were."

If you honestly want to know what God said to the church and its leaders at that time, God put it in writing in His holy, sacred Bible so you can read it. It's in Acts 15:28-29 and Acts 24.

If we follow God's instructions and commands, all problems will be

tained in said tomes is "inspired."

First, Dixon Cartwright makes the comment on page 31 (in his interview with Jeff) that "the church" seemingly considers all of Paul's recorded words as "Scripture" (per 2 Timothy 3:16).

However, it's quite obvious that 1 Thessalonians 4:17 was only Paul's *speculation* inasmuch as he is dead and gone and we're still awaiting our Master Yahusha's return.

Second, Brother Snow's own definition of "inspired" writing includes works that have miraculously survived (intact) over the centuries as well as been included in the earliest lists by the "authorities" of that day.

The Book of Enoch satisfies *both* of these criteria, yet is no longer considered Scripture by the powers that be.

My suggestion is for all to read for themselves the writings of any religious flavor with eyes of discernment, for nobody has yet been provably stationed as the editor of what is (and what isn't) YHWH's instruction to His children, least of all WCG "authorities" or disciples.

Richard Heath
Denver, Colo.

Two massive treasures

To fellow COG members and 45-year personal friends and thousands of you worldwide:

Please join a viable plan for the "end-time work" (Matthew 24:14; Revelation 10:11). What I have to say here could fatten your wallets and solve our divisive problems.

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gist and adventurer, I'm announcing we have found two massive treasures.

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resolved and we will know we are obedient to Him.

In the meantime, we should ask ourselves and each other: Do you obey God?

Paul and Micki Herrmann
Metairie, La.

Only two verses

Only two verses are needed to verify the 14th is the first day of Unleavened Bread: Exodus 12:6 and Deuteronomy 16:4.

David Rydholm
Via the Internet

Jabberwocky version of Scripture

The jabberwockies think their "interpretations" of Scripture are the correct Christian way of salvation and eternity in God's Kingdom.

But Jesus said it in plain language in Matthew 19:17, mentioning nothing about holy days, tithes, etc., etc., etc. He said: "Obey the commandments and you shall inherit eternal life!"

Art Mocarow has it right!

Leonard Sowders
Warren, Mich.

Don't argue with God, Phil

A response to Phil Griffith's article in issue No. 151, page 3 ("Can't We Trust women? Don't They Walk in the Spirit?"):

No one said Christian women are inferior, and they are not. God made womankind to fulfill the office of wife and mother, not to teach and direct men. There is nothing inferior about Luke 1:46-55.

God didn't make a slave for Adam,

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but a helper, for their mutual success in the grace of life.

Paul was not going along with the male-chauvinistic attitude that pervades Middle Eastern men. Women are not inferior, just not suited for men's offices.

People are like tools. Pinking shears are not suited to perform the job of tin snips and vice versa. Men don't make good mothers. Let us stick to the jobs God has given us without arguing with Him.

Lawrence "Oink" Mumme
Tucson, Ariz.

When it's time to move on, where do you get off?

In reading the brief report in issue No. 151 on Ken Westby's annual conference, I sense that some of the speakers felt there is little left to be said on the subject of "one God."

All appear to be convinced that their position of conscience is acceptable with God. Yet it may be time to move on. But where can they go?

The nature-of-God debate at this late date is as divisive and lacking in consensus as ever, if not more so. It seems to have evolved from a discussion of the character, function, force and activity of God to more a matter of names and labels.

We might ask whether we can func-

the institutional mind-set of corporate churches and denominations.

Being a Christian doesn't mean God bans us from being a truth seeker in all things. Once a human being connects with the Eternal, then past, present, future, time, space and the universe all begin to come together.

I almost think many Christians fear the power of the Holy Spirit and are afraid to use it because it may lead us to places we may not expect.

You are right about the whole world running on secrecy.

R.E. Walter
Lakes Entrance, Australia

Strong passwords

Some Web sites show whether you are choosing a weak, medium or strong password.

In trying different combinations, I found that an easy way to find strong passwords is to use a favorite Bible-verses reference written in this style: "Psalm37:1-40."

Very well-known verses such as "John3:16" may not be as secure.

Geoff Neilson
Cape Town, South Africa

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Columns and commentary

JoAn dialed 911. God answered the call

The writer, a longtime Church of God member and elder, is founder of the Association for Christian Development and host of its weekly Virtual Church Sabbath service. He provides a free E-mail newsletter, Keeping Watch. Write acd@godward.org.

embarrassing commotion. Maybe my distress would lessen.

It got worse. My heart raced wildly and I was fighting for every shallow little breath of air.

JoAn said, "I'm calling nine one one."

Tough 2002 weeks

The preceding weeks in 2002 had been some of the toughest of my life.

Six weeks earlier I'd had quadruple-bypass surgery and was not fully recovered. My chest wound and leg wounds (where surgeons stripped a vein to use in the bypasses) were still tender.



Ken Westby

One week earlier I had finished hosting our first One God Seminar in Seattle, looking into the doctrine-of-God issues.

We had speakers from around the nation and one from England. The last of our several houseguests had been gone just three days.

Those three days were the worst of times. Family problems, caused by nasty bureaucrats, resulted in three of our grandchildren staying with us for a few days. They all had colds or the flu.

Lost car

As soon as they moved in, JoAn was in an auto accident that totaled our car but caused no serious injury. But we discovered that during the turmoil of the past few months we'd neglected to renew the insurance on the car, so the car was totally lost.

See **GOD ALLOWS THE FUTURE**, page 13

By Ken Westby

DES MOINES, Wash.—My heart was racing as I struggled to breathe. Panic was setting in. I awakened JoAn and mumbled, "I'm in trouble."

She immediately suggested calling the emergency 911 service. (In the United States, 911 is the universal emergency phone number.)

I said let's wait a few minutes and see if I get better.

It was 3 a.m. and the thought of fire engines and aid cars rushing into our quiet little neighborhood seemed an

Maybe crucifixion wasn't sacrifice to God

The writer is a longtime Church of God member who attended with the WCG until 1994. He lives in Missouri near the Lake of the Ozarks.

What?

It was never offered to God by the high priest or any priest. Christ was not killed by the priests as sacrifices were. Rather, Christ was killed by pagan gentiles.

Christ's sacrifice occurred away from the temple, not within the temple, where the sacrifices to God were made.

It was one of the most horrible, agonizing deaths ever devised, the opposite of a humane slice of a knife with the resultant death a few seconds later as in animal sacrifices to God.

God never devised such horrible deaths of innocent animals, let alone of an innocent human being.

It was the sacrifice of a human being, a firstborn son, a horrendous evil that God said had never entered His mind.

God excoriated the Israelites for human sacrifices in Jeremiah 7:31 and

several other Old Testament scriptures.

By His stripes

You may be thinking that "by His stripes we are healed" because Christ took our sins upon Himself and paid the penalty in what He suffered in our stead.

Agreed, but that still doesn't answer the question of how the crucifixion could possibly be a sacrifice to God when it did not meet any of the criteria.

The answer is in the offering of the two goats in Leviticus 16, the one that was offered to God and the other that was offered not to God but to Azazel.

Atonement expiation

Once a year on the Day of Atonement the high priest entered the holy of holies to present expiation for him-

See **HERE'S A HANDY GUIDE**, page 13

By John Sash

LEAN, Mo.—Each year at Passover time I try to watch *The Passion of the Christ*, the movie directed by Mel Gibson.

With all too graphic realism it shows the tortured death of Jesus. It's extremely moving.

The film also brings up a problem I would like to present you with:

The crucifixion doesn't meet the criteria for a sacrifice to God.



John Sash

Weep for yourselves and your children

The writer pastors the Church of God Big Sandy and is a regular columnist for THE JOURNAL.

mourn, let's quickly address some religious concepts.

■ Believers are fully aware that God is in charge. They love the following five sections of Scripture: Deuteronomy 32:39; Job 38:4-41; Isaiah 40:12-31; Isaiah 45:5-12; and 1 Corinthians 15:24-28.

■ Believers are fully aware of the importance of faith. They love the following five sections of Scripture: Exodus 14:13-14; Psalm 18; Isaiah 41:10; Matthew 16:24-27; and 2 Corinthians 4:8-9.

■ Believers are fully aware of the importance of focusing on their heavenly citizenship. They love the following five sections of Scripture: 1 Peter 1:3-4; 2 Corinthians 4:17-18; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 3:1-3; and Hebrews 11:13-16.

Sorrow is acceptable

How do we know that sorrow can be acceptable?

Here are two reasons:

■ First, we realize that Jesus taught about the reality of mourning. He mentioned mourning in the section of Scripture that is called the Sermon on the Mount.

"Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted" (Matthew 5:4).

It is acceptable to mourn. It is precious to comfort those in mourning.

■ Second, we realize that Jesus set an example of mourning in the Garden

of Gethsemane.

"And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, 'My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me'" (Matthew 26:37-38).

If the sinless Christ experienced sorrow, then sorrow can be a healthy and valuable experience.

Sorrow for the people

Okay. We see that Jesus experienced sorrow before His suffering and death. That seems understandable.

But did Jesus ever experience mourning for the events of His community?

Notice Christ's emotional reaction:

"Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, 'If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.'

"For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation'" (Luke 19:41-44).

Jesus mourned when He saw events affecting the community. People can

See **JESUS UNDERSTOOD**, page 39



Stating the obvious

Before we discuss more about Christ's endorsement of times to



Dixon's and Alex's 2011 canon articles were shocking

The writer attends with the United Church of God and independent Church of God groups in Colorado. Write Mr. Maehr at jeffmaehr@southwestfreepress.com.

ple with these articles, and I don't like it a bit.

Gross misinformation

First, I believe there is gross misinformation in Dixon's conclusions of when the Bible canon was actual-

ly completed. The idea that the Catholic Church, in the 4th century, compiled the books into the now-established Bible canon is completely off base.

To imagine that false Christianity was the vehicle for the sources for the Bible has

See **DIXON'S CANON VIEW**, page 12

By Jeff Maehr

AGOSA SPRINGS, Colo.—I just discovered the Dec. 20, 2011, copy of *THE JOURNAL* buried in some magazines that I hadn't read as yet, and as I went through it I discovered Dixon Cartwright's article on the canon. I must say I'm shocked by his position and that of Alex Ciurana in Alex's article.

I wasn't sure whether to fine-tune my response or just bring up some glaring foundational facts that seem to be completely ignored.

I'm really trying to understand where both writers are leading peo-



Jeff Maehr

There's no good reason to blindly accept the canon

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Preserve the Bible."

Mr. Snow refers to my view as "reasoning," a term generally used in the COGs to mean reasoning contrary to the Scriptures.

Yet Mr. Snow reasons around the words of the very same canon that he thinks he believes in.

I based my arguments on the generally accepted canon. I actually quoted more verses from the canon than he quoted. He simply ignored the passages I quoted and labeled my canon-based position as "reasoning."

A key point in my article was that the COGs go to the "harlots" (false churches of traditional Christianity) to get the canon, even though the New Testament—not my reasoning—tells us not to.

I will not repeat here the verses I used to make that point, since readers

See **THE FOUNDATION**, page 6

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Man informs his relatives he plans to die in Colorado desert

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woman through his frequent bouts of depression.

As these problems came together, and out of his desire not to be a burden on anyone, Keith decided to end it all.

In late July of 2011 he called our oldest brother, Mike, and told him he had had enough. He was going to end it all.

Believing that Keith was serious, Mike immediately took off for Colorado to try to talk Keith out of it, but his attempts were fruitless. Keith told him it was over for him, that he didn't want to be a burden to anyone, that what he was getting ready to do he would do in a place where he'd never be found.

He told Mike good-bye, asked him to go back home to Alabama, then got in his truck and left.

Mike called the police and made a missing-person's report, letting them know that Keith had left in his truck and that he had a gun and was planning to commit suicide.

The police were not able to apprehend him.

Unbelievable idea

I didn't immediately believe Keith had committed suicide. He had talked about ending his own life more than once in the past 20 years, but things always improved for him and life went on.

Sometimes he would just vanish for a year or so and then reappear in another town or another state. So, when he called my older brother telling him he was going to do it, I passed it off.

But as time went on the evidence seemed to indicate he probably had ended his life. In November 2011 a sheriff's department in southwestern Colorado located his truck along with some personal belongings, but after an extensive search of the area, including with dogs and helicopters, the sheriff and his deputies could not find him.

In late December Mike and my sister decided to hold a memorial service for Keith in Kansas City, where my sister lived.

Still not believing that Keith had really died, Angie and I attended for the good of the family. It was an opportunity to get together, especially since another brother would be there as well, a brother I had not seen for years.

When we neared the time to depart for home in Texas, my sister mentioned in passing that Keith's wife had finally filed for a divorce in January 2011, and that his attempt to rekindle a relationship with another woman had failed just days before announcing his plan to end it all.

With this new and pertinent information I became convinced: My younger brother was dead.

Keeping our brothers

Over the past few years I've been studying and presenting topics to our fellowship pertaining to what it means to be your "brother's keeper." I had seen that the Scriptures give the firstborn of a family a lot of responsibility, and that all of us are to watch out for one another.

In addition, as a result of our yearly study of the five Books of Moses, it was clear to me that we are all God's children. As His children, we are all loved by Yahweh, even those who have not turned their hearts to Him. In the Hebrew culture, we realized that God's children are to be buried at death.

Thus in early January it became my ambition to find my brother's body and have it buried.

I asked my oldest brother and my younger sister if they'd like to help search for him and they both enthusiastically agreed.

Only clue

The only clue to Keith's whereabouts was the location of his truck. According to the sheriff, it was found 17 miles off the nearest paved road parked just off a field of sagebrush in a "forest" of juniper trees in southwestern Colorado.

The area was surrounded by canyons and mesas to the south and sagebrush to the north. Along the sides

of the mesas were large boulders, some the size of a dump truck. There were plenty of places where a person could end his life and never be found.

I got on the Internet to see if I could find a tracker in the area whom I could pay to search for him, but when I made the first call I was connected to the San Miguel County Search and Rescue Department, the same county where the truck was found.

Department personnel put me in contact with the person who had coordinated the initial search. That man, Eric Berg, spent nearly an hour on the

of the Hebrews. Thus they would be in agreement.

Owth ("sign") is used early in the scriptures.

"And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years" (Genesis 1:14).

Yahweh says the sun and the moon are set in the sky for signs (*owth*). One of their purposes is to keep the yearly and monthly cycles in agreement.

All plant and most animal life is dependent on the cycle of the earth

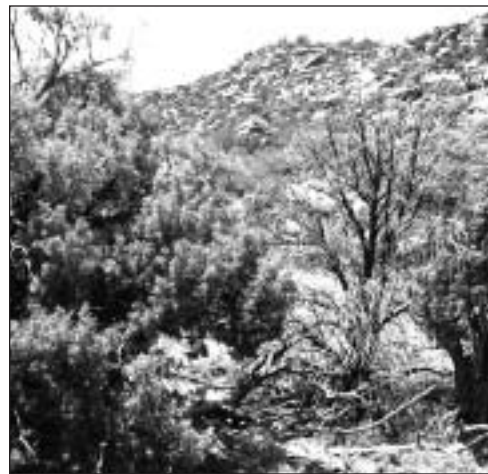
Moses said to God: "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?" God said: "But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain" (Exodus 3:11-12).

Started in January 2012

My search for Keith's remains started in January 2012, when I was told I'd have to wait till May to get into the area. What could I do till then, I asked myself.



FIRST AIRPLANE—Left: This is the pipeline cut from where Tim Kelley saw the first airplane. The sighting of two planes helped lead Mr. Kelley to his deceased brother, Keith. Right: This



is the location from where Tim Kelley saw the second airplane contrail. "My brother's remains were located in the rocks just below the trees," Mr. Kelley said. [Photos by Tim Kelley]

phone with me filling me in on the details of the area and how they had attempted to locate the body.

He also said that it would be next to impossible to find the body in the rugged terrain, but, if I wanted to give it a try, to hold off until May because it would be impossible to get into the area because of the snow-induced mud.

Thus begins my story of the search for my brother and the signs that led me to his body.

Mistaken belief

For many years I was under the belief that it was wrong to ask for signs from God. Those who asked for signs were those who had little or no faith. True believers in God would simply fast, pray and believe. Asking for signs was taboo. Only Jews and nonbelievers asked for signs.

After all, didn't Paul contrast himself with Jews, who "require a sign," and Greeks, who "seek after wisdom" (1 Corinthians 1:22-23). It was preferable, Paul said, to "preach Christ crucified."

Was Paul saying it was wrong to ask for a sign? The text doesn't support that view, nor does the Tanakh, the Hebrew Bible.

orbiting the sun. These things stay in sync, in agreement, by following the heavenly bodies.

Just think how it would be if plants and crops started their growing season at the same time some animals began their winter hibernation. You'd have a lot of starving bears. As long as the plants and animals follow the sign of the sun and moon, they stay in agreement.

Frequent sign from above

God is not stingy in regards to signs. We typically see one after every afternoon rain shower.

God said, "When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth" (Genesis 9:16).

We can look at the rainbow after a rain shower and be confident that God will not wreak havoc on the entire earth with a flood ever again. Obviously, this is a good thing and a sign that we count on.

Required sign of circumcision

Then there's the sign of circumcision. This is a sign that God requires of us, His people. As far as I know,

With the GPS coordinates supplied by the sheriff's department, I spent hours on Google Earth trying to get a feeling for the lay of the land. I searched for maps and pictures of the surrounding area but found little.

The most important thing I did was to start a prayerful petition to Yahweh each day. I tried my best to position my prayers during the time of the morning or evening sacrifice, either 9 a.m. or 3 p.m.

I also searched the Scriptures to see if it was really God's desire that His children be buried when they died. Scriptures like Genesis 3:19 came to mind.

"By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19).

Other verses showed that the patriarchs desired to be buried. In fact, many had already dug their own graves. In another passage Joseph is pleading with Pharaoh to let him bury his father.

"My father made me swear, saying, 'I am about to die: in my tomb that I hewed out for myself in the land of Canaan, there shall you bury me.' Now therefore, let me please go up and

So I knew it was God's will for my brother to be buried, and as a brother I knew it was his family's responsibility to see to it that it got done. Therefore my prayers included the reminder to God that I wanted to fulfill my responsibility as an Israelite and a brother to find Keith's body and put it in a grave.

In fact, I made great effort to remind God of what He had told us in the Scripture and to convince Him that I had a legitimate case.

Plane to Denver

May finally arrived. On Tuesday morning, May 1, 2012, I called Eric Berg at the San Miguel County Sheriff's office to let him know that it was May and I would soon be knocking on his door.

Angie got home from a weeklong visit to her mother's that afternoon, and Wednesday morning I caught a plane to Denver.

With only a short amount of time available to me, it was my intent on this trip to scope out the area, not to begin the search—unless, of course, I had some extra time.

I wanted to find camping areas close to where the truck was found, the availability of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) in the event we needed to search out in the desert, and to determine how much help we could expect from the sheriff's department.

Eric said to meet him in Norwood, Colo., about six hours from the airport, the next morning at 9:30, so I rented a car and drove to Montrose, about an hour north of Norwood, that evening to spend the night.

After a long day of travel, I was ready for some sleep, but, before going to bed, I decided to ask a special prayer, one that I hoped would give me some direction the next day.

Giving thanks

Just weeks earlier I had taught our Sabbath fellowship about the Hebrew word *yadah*, which means "give thanks." While doing the research for the teaching, I saw that the etymology of the word indicated a person with outstretched hands.

That brought to mind a recent show-down I had had with my 2-year-old granddaughter when she refused to eat her dinner and how, after I waited her out, she ate everything on her plate.

When she got down from the table, and after I had cleaned her hands and face, she stretched out her hands to be picked up so she could give me a hug.

I could see what Yeshua meant when He said we should be like little children. After giving the teaching, I decided to begin raising my hands in prayer, though I found it difficult because of my culture.

Impossible endeavor?

Nevertheless, as a child in a strange land I was getting ready to undertake an endeavor that, up to this point, everyone had said would be impossible.

So with outstretched hands I asked God to help me if indeed it was His will for me to find Keith's body, and to give me a sign as to which way to search if the opportunity arose.

I told Him that I was not really comfortable with signs, but I knew He had given Gideon the sign he had asked for. In fact, he gave it twice. As a result, Gideon had the courage to lead a small band of soldiers against the army of Median.

My prayer was specific and was for something familiar to me, an airplane. I asked God to send an airplane overhead flying in the direction I should search. I didn't specify what type of airplane, just an airplane.

Vast area

The next morning I met Eric in Norwood. He and another deputy briefed me on what they had found and what I was likely to get into.

After gathering emergency rations, we drove separately for an hour and a half to the spot where my brother's truck was found.

See HEAVENLY SIGNS, page 5

I didn't immediately believe Keith had committed suicide. He had talked about ending his own life more than once in the past 20 years, but things always improved for him and life went on.

The Hebrew word for sign is *owth* (*Strong's* 226). It means a sign, a signal, a distinguishing mark. It comes from the Hebrew root word *owth* (*Strong's* 225), which means to consent or agree.

The first time we see *owth* is in the Dinah incident when she had a relationship with Shechem, the son of Hamor the Hivite.

Dinah was Jacob's daughter. Jacob had recently relocated his family to Shechem and was thus a stranger, whereas Hamor was a native.

Nevertheless, when Hamor asked Jacob to allow his son to marry Jacob's daughter, he (Jacob, actually Jacob's sons) consented to allow the marriage as long as the Shechemites would be circumcised (Genesis 34:1-5).

Thus the first time we see *owth* used it's in regards to a sign: circumcision. In this case the circumcision would give them something in common and implied that they would worship the same god, Yahweh, the God

there's never been a boy born precircumcised. It was intended as a sign that God's people are in agreement with His covenant and that they choose to be a part of it.

Of course, for the Hebrew children circumcision was never a choice. Nevertheless the fathers were expected to make sure to not only give their young boys that sign but to rear them in such a way that they would be in agreement with the sign.

In my opinion, one of the most important uses for signs is when they are given to show that Yahweh is in agreement with you. After all, God would not bless the actions of someone who is in opposition to Him, would He?

One of the first places we see this use of a sign is when Yahweh called Moses to lead His people Israel out of Egypt. If you remember, Moses was somewhat hesitant to take on this responsibility and wondered if the people would indeed believe that he was sent by Yahweh.

bury my father. Then I will return" (Genesis 50:5).

I saw that in pagan cultures criminals would be left out as food for animals.

"In three days Pharaoh will lift up your head—from you!—and hang you on a tree. And the birds will eat the flesh from you" (Genesis 40:19).

But in God's culture even criminals were to be buried.

"And if a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day" (Deuteronomy 21:22-23).

Dignity in death

Apparently God is concerned about the dignity of all His children, even in death. Even the lowest criminal should have the honor of a decent burial—and my brother was not a criminal.

Humans are not like possums, skunks and lizards. They're not to become a part of the food chain.

Heavenly signs lead member to remains of his missing brother

Continued from page 4

Though it was only about 40 miles out of Norwood, the last 17 miles were on deeply rutted and dusty dirt roads. We finally arrived at the location, an area of sagebrush leading up to a juniper-tree-covered mesa.

It was a vast area with a deep canyon to the west, a couple of steeply climbing mesas to the south and east, and sagebrush for miles to the north.

Between the two mesas was an environmentally reclaimed pipeline cut going roughly northeast to southwest. We parked just off the cut.

Smashed computer

Eric showed me where my brother had parked. He pointed out areas Keith had apparently driven into but after deciding it was not where he wanted to die pulled back out until finally parking for the last time.

He showed me the remains of the laptop computer that Keith had smashed and attempted to burn in a small fire pit.

He showed me the scattered beer bottles he had discarded before heading off to perform his final act.

The only thing Eric couldn't show me is which way Keith went. Though tracks were found heading off to the south, there were also tracks in every other direction but north.

Figuring a person could walk for a couple of days carrying just two gallons of water (which Mike had indicated Keith took with him), Eric estimated I would have to search roughly 100 square miles.

Fresh tracks

Eric showed areas close to the truck his department had already searched, and we looked along the pipeline cut for about 75 yards as well as in the juniper trees to the west and south. We saw nothing but fresh (what he thought were) bear or mountain-lion tracks.

Since neither of us was armed, we decided we should get back closer to the vehicles.

With nothing more he could do for me, Eric drove back to Norwood, but not until reminding me that cell-phone service was almost nonexistent in the area and admonishing me to stay off the boulders and call him as soon as I got back on the main road. He didn't want two missing people out there.

Left no clues

I spent a few minutes sifting through the remains of Keith's destroyed laptop. Apparently, he had burned it to erase any evidence of his past.

Under the laptop were the charred remains of a few of his recent business cards. It appeared he had begun to use his first name—Jonathan—in his business dealings.

I picked up one that was the least charred and put it in my shirt pocket. Never straying but a few yards from my car, I walked around picking up scraps of partially burned pieces of paper that had blown out of the fire.

Maybe there was something on them that might indicate which way Keith went, but the papers all seemed to have come out of a builders' magazine. He had simply left no clues to his whereabouts.

'Show me, Yahweh'

Seeing the vastness of the area and the hopelessness of the situation, I fell on my knees and with outstretched arms asked God to show me what to do.

"I don't know where to search. I don't know if it's safe to search or even if You want me to search," I exclaimed. "Show me, Yahweh, what to do."

The previous night's request for a sign had slipped my mind, but when I got up from praying a jet airliner was passing overhead.

Interesting, I thought as I remembered that I had requested an airplane as a sign to direct me to my brother's remains. Could this be it?

I noticed there were other airplanes in the sky as well, but this one seemed to be bigger, and it had a long and distinct contrail.

Maybe this *is* a sign from God, I thought. Should I follow it or dismiss it as a coincidence?

I chose to follow it. After all, what could it hurt?

So I took out my cell phone, hit the compass app and noted that the plane was flying in a southwesterly direction, about 240 degrees.

Forgetting about the bears and mountain lions, I quickly called Angie and told her that if she didn't hear



Jonathan Keith Kelley, 1958-2011

from me in one hour to call the sheriff's department.

"I've got a hunch which way Keith went," I said.

So I began to follow my compass. Realizing that the compass heading was the same as the pipeline cut, I moved over about 20 yards to the east and followed the cut instead of going through the juniper trees.

I half walked, half ran about a mile, searching under rocks and behind trees on each side, but mostly on the east side of the cut.

But then the pipeline veered off to the left. Almost directly in front of me was a 400-foot-tall mesa lined with 10- to 15-foot boulders.

What should I do? Follow the pipeline, though it veered off the heading of the airplane, or head up into the boulders?

Another airplane

I once again fell on my knees and

My request for a sign had slipped my mind, but when I got up from praying a jet airliner was passing overhead. I remembered I had requested an airplane as a sign. Could this be it?

asked God to show me what to do.

"If the first airplane was a sign from You, then You know I've got a decision to make. Should I turn left or go straight ahead?"

Rising off my knees, I turned toward the mesa and, just as I turned, another airplane appeared to rise right out of the boulder-lined cliffs, again with a contrail behind it.

I grabbed my camera and quickly shot a picture of it, making sure to include landmarks of where I was standing. I moved a few feet to the south and took another picture just to make sure I could find the spot again.

Were they signs, or were they coincidences? Two airplanes seemed to appear right when I needed help.

If they weren't a sign I was no closer to finding my brother than before. But I had asked for a sign, and I had asked for it to be airplanes. I had only two choices: have faith or abandon the hope of finding my brother's remains.

A job for a search party

I chose faith and headed off into the boulders. I looked around and under the rocks and boulders for any sign that my brother had been there: empty

water bottles, a shirt, anything.

There were so many hiding places in those rocks it would take an army to search it all out. I kept thinking about Eric's admonition to stay off the boulders, and when I spooked a nearby antelope (what if it had been a bear?) I realized the foolishness of being there by myself and thus abandoned the search—at least for that day.

Though I had climbed only maybe 50 feet (in altitude) up the mesa, when I turned back toward the car I noticed the mountains off to the east.

I bet that would be a great view from farther up, I thought.

But that would have to be another day. I would go home, organize a search party and return as soon as possible.

A place to get lost

On the way back to Denver I decided to go up through Grand Junction instead of through Montrose. That road was much more scenic, winding through canyon after canyon.

I thought to myself that somewhere along through here would be a perfect place to just get lost and never be found again. The area was desolate, with boulders and caves in the sides of the mesas.

I was sure Keith had traveled this road. In fact, just a couple of years earlier he had driven Angie and me down the highway for 20 or so miles before returning to Grand Junction, his home.

Why did he drive all the way to southwest Colorado when he could have done it anywhere along this highway? Was he familiar with the place he was going to do it?

Maybe he had been there before but couldn't remember exactly where it was. Maybe that's why he had pulled in a couple places before settling on the place where he parked his truck.

It takes convincing

Often it takes more than one sign to convince us that God is giving us a sign. Even though we cry out to God for help and deliverance, we don't believe the God of the universe would manipulate the natural world on our behalf.

As a result, we miss God's fingers working things out for us. Who are we that God would take notice of us?

This is a problem the Israelites faced. Even though they longed for a deliverer, when the deliverance came along they could not accept it. Thus, as it says in Exodus 4:1-9, Yahweh gave them signs to help their unbelief

and to get their attention.

"Then Moses answered, 'But behold, they will not believe me or listen to my voice, for they will say, "The LORD did not appear to you."'

"The LORD said to him, 'What is that in your hand?'

"He said, 'A staff.'

"And he said, 'Throw it on the ground.'

"So he threw it on the ground, and it became a serpent, and Moses ran from it. But the LORD said to Moses, 'Put out your hand and catch it by the tail'—so he put out his hand and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand—that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you.'

"Again, the LORD said to him, 'Put your hand inside your cloak.'

"And he put his hand inside his cloak, and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous like snow.

"Then God said, 'Put your hand back inside your cloak.'

"So he put his hand back inside his cloak, and when he took it out, behold, it was restored like the rest of his flesh.

"If they will not believe you,' God said, 'or listen to the first sign, they may believe the latter sign. If they will not believe even these two signs or listen to your voice, you shall take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground, and the water that you shall take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground.'"

David knew

It would appear that the first three plagues applied to Israel as well as Egypt so Israel would believe that Yahweh was working through Moses and Aaron.

David also knew the importance of signs. In a prayer for mercy in his times of trouble, David asked for a sign that would show his enemies that David was king.

"Show me a sign of your favor," David requested, "that those who hate me may see and be put to shame because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me."

Quite a coincidence

Angie and I left for Colorado early Sunday morning, May 13, 2012. It was our plan to search Monday through Thursday morning and, if we didn't find Keith, to call our search off with the satisfaction of knowing we had tried.

I had loaded my pistol and rifle in the back of the truck in case we came upon a bear or mountain lion. I didn't know if the weapons would do any good since I'm not much of a hunter, but, like with an umbrella, you should always be prepared.

We had hoped that others would join us in the search, but, by the previous Thursday, everyone had backed out.

I had placed a call to Eric at the sheriff's department to ask if he knew of anyone in his department I could pay to go out there with us. I didn't want Angie and me to be searching alone.

Quite coincidentally, Eric was holding a search-and-rescue volunteers' meeting that evening. He said he would mention it.

The next morning a deputy called to say that, even though he could not go, his brother would probably be interested in helping. He gave me his phone number and E-mail address.

The deputy's brother's name was Joshua. I called him a number of times and sent him a detailed E-mail of what had happened so far and even included the two airplane "signs," but I never heard back from him.

Thus, when Angie and I left for

rectly but he was at his brother's house, so call him there. He was willing to help.

I was excited. When I got into the motel room I gave him a call.

He stated that he knew the area, and he could handle a gun. He would meet me in the morning at Basin Store, at the east end of the 17-mile dirt road. My stress factor dropped by about 50 percent.

Ready to go

The next morning we rose early and headed for the meeting place. We met Joshua at the Basin Store. He had arrived there early to eat breakfast and happened to tell the proprietor about his plans for the day: helping this man find the body of his brother.

When we walked in everyone in the store had just finished praying that Joshua's day would be successful.

Joshua looked to me like a boy, though he was 35 years old. He showed me his arsenal (a shotgun and 9-mm handgun) and said he was ready to go.

When we went back inside the store for one last civilized potty stop, the proprietor wished us well.

Improved road

Leaving the store, we crossed the highway and headed down the dirt road. To my surprise the road wasn't nearly as bad as it had been just two weeks earlier. The county had sent a grader to smooth the road out that very morning.

Hurray! Instead of the trip taking 45 minutes, it took only about 20. I thanked Yahweh for the good road and thought to myself that this has to be more than just a coincidence.

We drove the 17 miles of dirt road and parked at the place where I had seen the first airplane.

The finger of God

After we loaded our backpacks, Joshua asked where we wanted to search. I reminded him about the signs I had seen and said that I wanted to follow the signs, so we took off southward down the pipeline cut.

When we got to the location where I had seen the second sign, I showed him the picture of the mesa ridge with the airplane contrail rising above it.

I said: "Josh, that's the finger of God. He's pointing to my brother. That's where we're going to search."

Vanishing fear

The picture showed that the contrail met the ridge in a clump of trees, so we headed for the trees, a somewhat diagonal path, searching the boulders along the way.

Within 45 minutes we had climbed up about 300 feet. Joshua thought it would be a good idea to search from the ridge, so he left his backpack on a boulder and headed straight up.

I placed my rifle on another boulder near his backpack, and Angie and I continued the diagonal climb, searching boulders as we went. My fear of mountain lions and bears had vanished.

As we neared the ridge we saw a number of places where the rocks formed ledges with places a person could lie in. We noticed that if a person were to lie there he would have a tremendous view of the San Juan Mountains to the east.

Did Keith climb up here after drinking a six-pack of beer, we wondered.

'It's him'

Just 15 feet below the ridge I checked my bearings and saw that the clump of trees was off to our left 50 or so feet, so we continued to search below the ridge while moving south toward the trees.

I was beginning to get concerned about Joshua. It had been about 30 minutes since he took off in a different direction, and we had not heard from him. So I told Angie we should try to find a way to get on top of the ridge to

See BELIEVE, page 7

Sometimes powerful people think the rules don't apply to them

Continued from page 1

according to Martin L. Cook, an ethics professor at the college.

The concept is also included in a course for junior officers—typically lieutenant commanders—who will likely have one more tour before assuming a command in a couple of years.

Vice Adm. James Wisecup, now the naval inspector general, was president of the War College until April 2011 and became so enthusiastic about the concept of Bathsheba syndrome that he sent a copy of the article to Adm. Gary Roughead, the chief of naval operations at the time, Dr. Cook said.

“Roughead liked it enough to send it to all of the flight officers in the Navy,” Dr. Cook said. “I think it’s continued to circulate at that level quite a bit.”

80 commanders' misconduct

The Navy's interest in the Bathsheba syndrome also flows from a 2010 Navy Inspector General's Office review of the 80 instances of commanders relieved of command for misconduct from January 2005 to September 2010.

One half of those were for adultery, inappropriate relationships, harass-

ment or sexual assault.

While the review didn't discover any systemic reasons for misconduct, it did find several “significant contributing factors,” among them the Bathsheba syndrome.

In cases of personal misconduct, the review concluded, “COs either did not possess the insight into their motives and weaknesses to prevent them from

Virtuous people acting immorally

Donelson Forsyth, a professor with the Jepson School of Leadership Studies at the University of Richmond in Virginia, said social psychology experiments have repeatedly found that even morally virtuous people, put in a position they aren't properly trained to handle, will act immorally.

apply to them. “Powerful people feel that they are entitled, that they get more of the group's resources and that the rules the group has established for the rank-and-file members do not apply to them,” Dr. Forsyth said.

“When individuals gain power, their self-evaluations grow more favorable, whereas their evaluations of others grow more negative,” he said.

Power enhances 'executive functioning,' helping leaders plan more quickly and efficiently. Then there's the dark side: Some powerful people think the rules don't apply to them.

knowingly engaging in unacceptable behavior, or they felt that they had the power to conceal their misdeeds.”

The report recommended development of a career-long “leadership training continuum,” improved oversight by immediate superiors-in-command, and enforcement of existing requirements of job-performance reviews of commanders.

The Navy did not respond to repeated requests by *Stars and Stripes* for comment on the findings of the inspector-general report.

One of the paradoxes of leadership, Dr. Forsyth said, is that power has an upside and a downside. “When people feel powerful, they become physically and socially more active; they tend to act rather than react,” he said.

Power enhances “executive functioning,” helping leaders plan, decide and set goals more quickly and efficiently. “So they are more likely to reach the goals they set for themselves and for their unit,” he said.

Then there's the dark side. Some powerful people think the rules don't

“In some studies powerful people lose their ability to anticipate other people's reactions to their behavior. Their emotional intelligence drops.”

In addition, Dr. Forsyth's own research has found that individuals who feel powerful are more likely to surround themselves with “yes-men,” preferring to recruit those who agree with them from the outset rather than those who challenge them.

A naval vessel is a “floating community,” Dr. Forsyth said, “and as a result the social relations among

members likely are very different—more intense, more dense, more psychologically important—from those in other military settings.

“I would assume that this intensification of relationships can cause commanders to make mistakes in their judgment, as the work relationship becomes mixed with the personal relationship.”

How to avoid Bathsheba syndrome

Dr. Ludwig said he believes steps can be taken with officers rising in the ranks to prevent the Bathsheba syndrome should they reach command level.

“What it takes, in my mind, is reflective forethought,” he said.

That means a commander will have thought about hypothetical situations and prepared “in terms of moral fortitude” to not succumb to negative opportunities.

“If you get into that role and you've never thought about these things before, you're much more susceptible to making a mistake.”

For a review of a book about other pitfalls powerful leaders should be aware of, see “A ‘Crisis of Conscience’ Opens Eyes” by Dave Havar, *THE JOURNAL*, issue No. 92, dated Sept. 30, 2004.

The foundation for COG beliefs is only superficially examined

Continued from page 3

can find them in my original article.

The COGs pretty much take for granted that the Protestants know which canon is correct. Few in the COGs arrive at the canon they use by carefully examining for themselves which books actually belong in the canon.

It's amazing how the foundation of all COG beliefs, the canon itself, is so superficially examined. A certain fear of what such an investigation might uncover seems to be part of the reason for this.

In the uncommon event that someone musters enough individual initiative to examine how we ever got the canon, he will likely be handed a one-sided article endorsing the Protestant canon and told to read it and repent.

His minister will not patiently and objectively discuss the issue with him because his minister won't know much about how we got the canon and won't have the time or inclination to learn more than he already knows.

The inquisitive member stands a good chance of being put out of whatever COG he goes to.

Selecting quotes

The COGs tend to quote selectively from only fundamentalist or conservative scholars, sometimes from outdated works.

People remain in the dark about known serious problems with the canon that scholars recognize but don't usually publicly admit.

Reading an article or two about how we got the Bible before first attending services is not enough. Many questions never come to the mind of a novice or to those who don't keep investigating.

One needs to keep studying and read widely on all sides.

Keepers of the oracles

Mr. Snow takes two passages from the Protestant canon to defend his point of view.

By quoting the canon to support the canon, Mr. Snow engages in cyclic reasoning. He has not proved that the canon he's using is the correct one in the first place. That should be his starting point.

His first quote refers to the Jews as the keepers of the oracles of God (Romans 3:2-3). He did not produce a scripture that says Protestants are also entrusted with the oracles of God.

His reasoning is that, just as the Old Testament was entrusted to unconverted Jewish scholars, the New Testament

must have been entrusted to unconverted Catholic and Protestant scholars.

In other words, we don't need converted people to preserve the works of the New Testament canon.

Using unconverted Jews and unconverted pagans is not the same thing. For one thing, Jews were God's people and the pagans are not.

Second, in one case he has a scripture, and in the other case he does not. In fact, in the case of relying on the Protestants, the scriptures say the opposite.

Almost makes sense

Mr. Snow's argument might make sense humanly, but it's not what the New Testament says (please refer to my original article). It is just Mr. Snow's opinion.

Can Mr. Snow come up with an actual scripture that says we are supposed to rely on pagans for the New Testament? If he finds such a scripture he will have found a contradiction in the Bible.

As the OT was entrusted to the Jews, God's Old Covenant people, the NT would have been entrusted to the New Covenant people, the true church (not Protestants), just as commanded or strongly implied in verses that I quoted in my previous article.

Would it not be suspicious if the Jews got the canon from Egyptian magicians, Assyrian priests or Buddhist monks?

Of course. So why should the Church of God get the canon from

vocabulary, literary skills, writing style and other data, we can see that some books were almost certainly forged by someone claiming to be an apostle.

When scribes were copying these books, they were merely copying uninspired works. What good are hundreds or even thousands of accurate copies of the wrong text?

Nobody knows the changes they've seen

Editing to alter the originals is another problem. OT books as well as NT books have been edited, and nobody knows exactly what the originals said. In some cases the unedited works have all been lost (or destroyed?) and the only copies that remain have been edited.

Mr. Snow talks about comparing “the Dead Sea Scrolls (c. 100 B.C.) with the earliest medieval Masoretic Hebrew manuscript that includes Isaiah (c. A.D. 900)” and says there were “very few errors in over a period of 1,000 years” (*THE JOURNAL*, issue 151, page 4).

But Isaiah was written hundreds of years earlier (by more than one person, by the way) and went through a period when it was rewritten and edited before it was stable and the Dead

Further, the COGs teach—contrary to Acts 17:30—that few are called in this age, not that all men everywhere are being called to repent.

If Mr. Snow is convicted that God is calling only a few now (a traditional COG belief), he should consider the possibility that Acts 17:30 is a spurious verse.

The Trinity verse in 1 John 5:7 is spurious. If there is one spurious verse, there could be others.

Quoting one side

Mr. Snow then quotes from a number of scholars who follow in the tradition of the Great Harlot and her wayward daughters.

This merely proves my point. He can't seem to produce quotes from bona-fide men of God from the early Christian era to tell us which books are supposed to be in the canon. He has no choice but to get his canon from Satan's men or he would have no canon at all.

Mr. Snow could find many quotes from scholars to support his side, and I could find many quotes from scholars to support other views. That's why each reader needs to carefully and thoroughly examine different views for himself.

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pagan Catholic, Orthodox or Protestant scholars who cannot even agree on it themselves? None of them are servants of God.

Edits and false identities

Bible literalists talk about how texts have been diligently preserved, but that is highly misleading. It was only during certain periods of history that the books were diligently preserved. By then some books were already corrupted.

If the books were always diligently preserved, how did the book of the law (conveniently?) get lost for a long time until a single copy was (conveniently?) found in the temple (2 Kings 22)?

By carefully examining the content,

Sea Scrolls were finally written.

Every text started out as a single manuscript, and, when there was just one or a few manuscripts, corrupting them was possible and might have been fairly easy.

Calling on all people

Ironically, the next passage Mr. Snow quotes to support his view is one that few in the Churches of God really believe: Acts 17:30.

This verse states that God is “now” calling on “all people everywhere” to repent.

First, most people have never heard the gospel, so there is no way all men everywhere can repent or ever could.

If the COGs are getting their canon from Satan's men, they'd better examine it with a fine-tooth comb.

Contradictions and controversies

According to Mr. Snow, “if a later purported revelation of God contradicted an earlier one, the [later one] was rejected as false.”

First, that is not true since contradictions in Bible books do exist. But, to the extent that the books are in agreement, all it proves is that the pagan church, after a certain point in time, was able to settle on a fairly consistent body of texts.

What happened before that time is what should interest us the most. It

took hundreds of years before the “early” church finally “settled” (to some degree) on a canon, or at least on which books to argue about.

It seems odd that the COGs accept the Protestant canon with more certainty than the Protestants do themselves.

It's odd about the Septuagint

Debates about which books really belong in the canon have gone on among Christians for 2,000 years and continue. Even some of the greatest Protestant leaders, like Luther, did not agree with the canon we have today.

When NT authors quoted the OT, they usually quoted from the (Greek) Septuagint instead of the Hebrew texts.

This might seem odd because the Septuagint included many books not in the OT today, yet its use in the NT indicates that NT authors considered it authoritative.

Protestants, on the other hand, base their OT canon on Hebrew texts. They do not consider the Greek to be authoritative. Are they at odds with NT authors?

Different texts make different doctrine

Which texts we accept could make a difference in doctrine. Isaiah 7:14 prophesied that a young woman would give birth to a son. The Hebrew for “young woman” does not mean virgin, but the Greek word, which Matthew quoted, came to mean virgin.

These are important matters to research and think about. Unfortunately, scholarship is derided in some COGs even though, as Mr. Snow acknowledges, the ministers depend on scholars themselves (to determine the canon, produce commentaries, make translations, etc.).

People of the COGs are not encouraged to “prove all things” (1 Thessalonians 5:21) for themselves when it comes to the fundamental question of the canon.

The original King James Bible of 1611 included the books of the Apocrypha, which are not in the KJV today. Why those books were removed is another interesting story that readers might want to look into.

Let not one of them escape you

Using human reasoning, Mr. Snow attempts to sway us by an appeal to the purported sincerity of deceived persons in the harlot tradition.

Have we not learned that sincerity

See **A VERY SINCERE**, page 14

B.C. police work with COG members to free grandson. Not!

Mrs. Stewart is a member of the United Church of God and wife of UCG elder Ellis Stewart.

By Pat Stewart

BIG SANDY, Texas—The phone rings. My husband, Ellis, and I are at home. Ellis answers the phone.

So begin events of July 2012 that shake Ellis and me to our bones. I hope what I write here will help other unsuspecting victims of a particularly pernicious kind of scam involving law-enforcement impersonators.

Ellis: Hello.

Caller: Hi, how are you?

Ellis: Fine.

Caller: Do you recognize my voice?"

Ellis: No, not really.

Caller: Well, we are having a storm here and there is a lot of background noise. How are you, Grandpa?

Ellis: Well, hi, Wesley. How are you doing?

Caller: Well, I'm here in Canada and I'm having a problem. I came up here for a funeral of one of my friends who got killed in a car wreck. After the funeral offered me a ride back to where I was staying. Since the family knew them, I thought it would be okay, so I went with them.

On the way they were speeding and were pulled over by the cops, who searched the car and found several thousand dollars' worth of drugs in the car. We all got arrested and were brought here to jail.

There is a guy here who is willing to help me. They tested me for drugs and found none in my system and did not find my fingerprints on any of the drugs. The trial date is set for late August.

He said that if I could find someone that could help me out of this mess he could talk to the judge and get me out of here this afternoon so I could go home.

Do you think you could help me, Grandpa? I really love and appreciate you."

Ellis: Yes! What can I do?

Caller: I will have this guy call you and explain what we can do. If we can post bail, I could get out of here this afternoon and go home. This is the one and only phone call that I am allowed to make. Do you think we could keep this between us until I can get home and explain everything?"

Ellis: Yes.

Caller: Okay, I will have him call you and I will call you back as soon as I can get out of here. I really love you, Grandpa, and appreciate this."

Ten minutes later the phone rings again.

'Let's help Wesley'

Sgt. Bingham: Hello, Mr. Stewart. This is Sgt. Charles Bingham here at the Birch Bay, British Columbia, police station. I understand you're willing to help Wesley out of this mess he's in.

I've spent some time with Wesley and he seems to be an upright kid who

has just got in with some bad apples. If we can get him out of here this afternoon he can go on home and this won't have to go on his record.

Otherwise he will have to stay here in jail until the August trial date. So do you think you can help him, Mr. Stewart?"

Ellis: Yes, what do I need to do?

Sgt. Bingham: We need to get his bail posted.

Ellis: Okay, how do I do that? How much are we talking about?"

Sgt. Bingham: His bail is set at \$3,800. What you will need to do is wire the bail amount. Are you familiar with wiring money?"

Ellis: I have not wired money before.

Sgt. Bingham: You will need to go to a bail bondsman. Do you know a bail bondsman?"

Ellis: No, I do not.

Sgt. Bingham: In that case you will need to go to a Western Union office and mail cash to get this taken care of.

Ellis hands me the phone so I can write down the instructions.

Concerns understood

Pat to Sgt. Bingham: This is going to take a while. We are going to have to go to the bank and then go to Tyler, which is 30 minutes away, to find a place to wire the money. We would also like to verify the validity of all this. Can you give me a phone number where I can call back to verify this?"

Sgt. Bingham: Of course. I understand your concern. You can call our captain, Capt. Duncan, at 1-438-998-8945 and give him Wesley's name, my badge number, 140, and Wesley's case number, 7433, and he will be glad to answer your questions.

I call the number and do not get an answer. In a few minutes, the phone rings. It's the voice of Sgt. Bingham.

Verifying the information

Sgt. Bingham: Sorry I missed your

call. I was in the copy room getting the papers duplicated that we will need to process this. Did you get hold of Capt. Duncan?"

Pat: No, I did not. The phone must have been busy or something. I did not get an answer.

Sgt. Bingham: I will patch you right through to him.

Sgt. O'Connell: Hello, this is Sgt. O'Connell. May I help you?"

Pat: Yes, I want to speak to the captain to verify some information I have.

Sgt. O'Connell: Just one moment.

Capt. Duncan: Hello, this is Capt. Duncan. How may I help you?"

Pat: I want to verify information about Wesley [last name deleted], case No. 7433. We have been contacted by a Sgt. Bingham regarding his situation.

Capt. Duncan: Just a moment and I will pull his file. Oh, yes, I see. I hope you understand the seriousness of this situation. We feel Wesley just got in with the wrong crowd and got into a bad situation. He appears to be an outstanding, clean-cut guy and we want to help him out of this as soon as possible.

I understand your concern, however, and want you to know that you will receive a full refund of the mon-



WARNING—Pat Stewart, here with her husband, Ellis, hopes no one falls prey to fake policemen like those who attempted to defraud the Stewarts of thousands of dollars. [Photo by Dixon Cartwright]

ey is posted within 72 hours. We are a real police station and all this is on the up-and-up. I assure you we just want to help Wesley as soon as we can.

Our phone rings again.

Refundable transactions

Sgt. Bingham: Hello, this is Sgt. Bingham. Did you get in touch with the captain?"

Pat: Yes, I spoke to a Sgt. O'Connell and Capt. Duncan.

Sgt. Bingham: Okay, we can go

Then call me back and I will tell you the steps to send the second \$1,900.

Pat: Okay.

Missing police department

Ellis and I are very nervous and shaken at all this. I am trembling and my heart is racing. Ellis has me take something to calm me down a bit.

We decide to call our friend Dixon Cartwright, who has a fast computer connection, and ask him to look up the police station in Birch Bay, B.C., Canada, and see if a Capt. Duncan, Sgt. O'Connell or Sgt. Bingham are listed.

Then we ask Dixon to look up the U.S. embassy in the Dominican Republic to see if a Miguel Cruz is listed.

Dixon says he is on his way to meet Linda for lunch but will turn his car around and go back to his house and look the information up and call us right back.

We do not tell him who had called or why, because if the story is true we want to honor Wesley's request for confidentiality.

Dixon calls back in a few minutes and says he can find nothing on either the Birch Bay police department or a Miguel Cruz in the Dominican Republic embassy.

Dixon shows up at our door minutes later and we tell him everything. He informs us that it sounds like a scam, that he has received similar solicitations for money via numerous E-mails over the years that are obvious scams and that just about every scammer in the world uses Western Union.

"Sgt. Bingham" had informed me that Wesley's cell phone was confiscated along with his personal belongings. The sergeant said that was "rou-

tine procedure in this type of case." But I decide to try to call Wesley and see if Wesley really went to Canada.

'We are a real police station and all this is on the up-and-up. We just want to help Wesley as soon as we can.'

A girl answers

I call Wesley's residence, in California, and get the answering machine and leave a message that I want to talk to Wesley and please have him call me. I feel that someone will call me back and let me know where he is.

I do not have Wesley's cell number so I call our son, Jim, to get the number. I then call Wesley's cell number. No answer.

I call again. No answer. I try the third time and a girl answers.

I think: Is some girl at the police station answering Wesley's cell?"

I ask, "To whom am I speaking?"

She replies that she is Stephanie. (Stephanie is Wesley's special friend.)

I ask her if she is with Wesley, and she says, "Yes."

I ask her if I can please speak to Wesley, that it is very important.

She says he cannot talk on the phone while he is driving on the freeway.

I ask her to find a place to pull over because this is very important.

Wrong button

Then I hit the wrong button on the phone and get us disconnected.

Wesley calls me right back. I tell him all about the two-hour ordeal we have been going through.

He feels badly that we have been going through all that and verifies that he is in fact in California and, no, he had not gone to Canada.

Dixon must have called Linda on his way back to his house and told her he couldn't meet her for lunch because of the emergency at the Stewarts'.

So next thing we know Linda is at our door while we're talking to Wesley.

Linda suggests (and we follow her advice) that we set up a code word in case we ever get another call like that or if Wesley ever needs to call and can't talk freely.

Since Dixon and Linda missed their lunch, Ellis makes them a sandwich.

The phone rings again.

'How are things?'

Sgt. Bingham: This is Sgt. Bingham. I haven't heard back from you. How are things going?"

I don't want to let Sgt. Bingham know yet that I have discovered his scam, so I just say, "We are still working on it," and hang up.

The phone rings again in 10 minutes.

Sgt. Bingham: This is Sgt. Bingham. You kinda hung up on me a while ago. Have you been to the bank yet?"

I say, "No," and he says, "Well, are you going to help Wesley?"

I don't want to say more, so I just reply, "No."

He says, "Well, it's good to tell the truth."

I reply back spontaneously, "You ought to know!" and hang up.

Mystery in old Quebec

Dixon looks up the phone number for reporting scams involving fake Drug Enforcement Agency officers and other impersonators of policemen. I call 1-877-792-2873 and leave my name, city and phone number and the information on the recording.

I also give them the phone number (1-438-930-3767) from which the calls I received were made.

Dixon looks up the area code and prefixes of the supposed police station and finds that the numbers aren't in British Columbia but are on the other side of Canada, in Quebec.

Ellis talks to the chief of police in Big Sandy and gives him the scam information.

Believe that Yahweh has given you a sign, then act like He has

Continued from page 5

see if we could find him.

I looked up and found a clearing that would allow us to find our way to the ridge. At the same time Angie, who was just a few feet behind me, noticed a water bottle and backpack on top a ledge.

"Looks like Josh's backpack," she said, wondering if he had gone back to retrieve his and then left it higher up the mesa.

I climbed up a few feet and saw it too, just off to my right. Looking past the backpack, I saw my brother's body wedged between a rock and the cliff.

"It's him. It's Keith," I said. "Don't look."

God heard and directed

God had led us nearly directly to my brother. With more than 100 square miles of possible places to hide where you could never be found, we had found him in less than an hour and a half.

When we later climbed up on the mesa, we saw that we were in the clump of trees, the same ones from which the contrail appeared to rise out of. God had heard our prayers.

I tried to call the sheriff's department but was shaking so much that

I couldn't dial in the number. Joshua, who had heard me yell that we had found him, dialed the call for me and I gave the sheriff's people the coordinates.

I don't know whether my shaking was because of the sight of my brother's somewhat decomposed body, or if it was the thought that the God of Israel had indeed directed me to this place. I believe it was the latter.

Learning about signs

In the story of Gideon God gave him three signs. The first was a sign of God's choosing, but afterwards Gi-

deon was afraid to do what God had instructed him to do, so he took helpers with him and did it at night.

The next two signs were of Gideon's own choosing: the fleece and the dew. After those signs Gideon had the courage to face the entire army of Midian with just 300 men.

Much to learn

Though I am no expert on signs, I've learned a lot through this experience.

■ Signs and prayer are intertwined.

■ Ask for something you believe would be God's will. He must agree.

■ Be specific in your desires. ■ Signs help build faith. ■ Be specific when asking for a sign, something clearly recognizable. ■ Believe that Yahweh has given you a sign, then act as if He has.

God gave us the story of the Exodus, the story of Gideon and many other stories to show us how He wants to work with us. These stories are for our admonition. We should use them, not just read them.

I've been blessed to discover this exciting way God wants to help us in our faith. I hope you can be blessed as well. *Shalom alechem.*

Feast reports in from Branson, Chiang Mai, Lake Indawgyi

Following are reports on 2012 Feast observances in Australia, Jamaica, Kachinland, Missouri, the Philippines, Thailand and Wales. This is the first installment of reports for the '12 Feast, which was observed by most Church of God members from the evening of Sept. 30 through Oct. 9 (counting the Last Great Day, Great Last Day or Eighth Day).

PIECES OF THE PUZZLE

By Lanora Campbell

BRANSON, Mo.—With nearly 80 in attendance in beautiful Branson, everyone was excited again to fellowship with new and old friends.

Some had traveled as far as Canada, the east coast of Florida and from everywhere in between. They came from many Churches of God, but they all came together at a Feast site of the Church of God Ministries International, based in Gretna, La.

David Campbell, minister and Feast coordinator, opened the first day by giving out puzzle lapel pins, each with a different saying.

Each piece important

Here are examples: "You are a crucial piece of the puzzle." "Every piece is tried by fire." "Every piece is to serve one another." "Every piece is important."

The puzzle piece tied into Mr. Campbell's sermon: Each piece represented a part of the Body of Christ and an important role in the Kingdom of God.

The sermons fit well together, starting with the first day with "What Piece Do You Play in the Kingdom of God" by Mr. Campbell.

On the second day was "Joy Unspeakable" by Tim Hall.

On the third day were "Update on the Work" and "Being God's Representatives."

On the fourth day we heard "Are We Closer to Financial Crisis Than We Think?"

Gratitude for trials

Tom Kerry spoke on the fifth day: "Rejoice in Our Trials."

The sixth day's message was "Grace Is Divine Favor" by Bob Marshall.

On the seventh day the brethren heard "The Mind" by Tim Hall.

The Eighth Day's message was "What Kind of Ruler Are You Going to Be in the Kingdom of God?" by Mr. Campbell.

Frankie and Ronnie

After the meal on the first day Mr. Campbell invited everyone to the pool area for the baptism of Frankie and Ronnie Jones from Kansas. David talked about what it must be like to hear the angels in heaven rejoicing over two people repenting and joining the family of God.

The next day we had so much food left over from Rib Crib that David said it was "like the fishes and the loaves in Christ's time." It seemed like the more we ate the more food we had left.

Junior greeters

Tuesday was Youth Day, on which the youths wore special name tags as "Jr. Greeters" and helped meet everyone who came in for services that day.

Later in the day youths helped prepare a special project of dessert spoons made of chocolate, white chocolate and sprinkles that were individually wrapped in bags along with a packet of hot cocoa and a coffee cup to pass out to on the next day after services.

Unusual open discussion

In the evening Mr. Campbell led an open discussion during which anyone could ask any biblical question. He honestly told participants that if he didn't know an answer he would tell them so and maybe someone else could answer the question.

For some, it was the first time they could get questions answered in that type of forum.

Wednesday morning the Mount Vernon congregation prepared a pancake breakfast that included scram-

bled eggs and beef sausage.

After the breakfast and before the sermon Tom Kerry, director of operations, asked that David Campbell come forward and announced that David was already serving as a minister of God. He prayed and laid hands on him and welcomed him into the ministry of the Church of God Ministries International.

Later that evening George Palmer prepared his famous fried tacos with help from Mai Guffey.

After the meal Chuck, Ronnie and Dave entertained with country music.

Renewal of vows

Thursday was another busy day with the marriage-renewal vows of Frankie and Ronnie Jones.

David conducted the wedding, with friends, family and extended church family present. After the ceremony was a celebration with cake, punch and a light meal.

The newly baptized Frankie and Ronald had mentioned that they were starting a new life in Christ so they also wanted to start a new life together by renewing their vows. They have been married 27 years.

Doo-wop dining

Friday evening we started out our fellowship with a theme of the Doo-wop Diner in the meeting room with hot dogs in the old red and yellow baskets, chili, chips and old-fashioned pop. Of course, no evening would be complete without ice-cream sundaes and '50s music.

After dinner we joined in with a Bible-trivia game played on the 50-inch television. We had good laughs, with the men playing against the women.

Enjoying a day of rest on the Sabbath, we were starting to wind down from the cooking throughout the

On Sunday afternoon some got together at Branson Landing for a Feast tradition started in 2011 of having an old-time photo taken. This year it was at Buster's on the Landing because An Old Time Photo was closed due to the severe damage by the tornado in February.

Fifteen of us assembled for the photo. The men were in Western wear,

can be with us to complete the missing pieces of the puzzle.

Thanks to servers

It takes many hands to serve at the Feast. There are too many people to mention here, but with our whole heart we thank each one of you for your service to God and to each other.



CHIANG MAI AND BRANSON—Church of God folks keep the Feast in September and October 2012. **Photo 1:** Abigail Syltie works on a wood carving at the Chiang Mai, Thailand, site. **Photo 2:** Mai Guffey makes tacos in Branson, Mo. **Photo 3:** Gloria Sexton and granddaughter Manorah Sexton hug elephants in Chiang Mai. **Photo 4:** Ninety-six-year-old Gerda Bludau listens to a sermon at the Chiang Mai site. **Photo 5:** Feast attendees from Burma perform special music at the Chiang Mai site. See Leon Sexton's report from Chiang Mai and Lanora Campbell's from Branson on page 8 of this issue of *THE JOURNAL*. [Photos courtesy Leon Sexton and Lanora Campbell]

week and the excitement of sermons and fellowship.

After services Sabbath, some stayed around and enjoyed a build-your-own sandwich with all the toppings. There is nothing like breaking bread with people you have known and those who you have just met and yet you feel you

while the women chose to be in long-flowing Southern dresses with big hats and fans.

Our last evening together was with Bob Marshall leading a Bible study on "Intimacy with God."

As the Eighth Day ended on Monday, the children came to the stage

For some, David Campbell's open discussion was the first time they could get questions answered in that type of forum.

have known them all your life.

Like the puzzle pieces, we fit together and made a beautiful picture!

Traditional Feast raffle

Saturday evening we kept the Feast tradition of the raffle. David drew out tickets one by one and with Gary Shipman's help handed out the prizes.

The evening was a surprise because each child received the exact toy that he or she wanted.

People thought David had rigged the tickets somehow so the children would get all the toys. David said he had nothing to do with it but that he couldn't have planned it better.

After the raffle David held another open discussion.

area with their mothers and each one picked out his favorite Noah's Ark stuffed animal.

Special events for children helped make memories of how special the Feast is and how God loves all His children.

The leftover stuffed animals went to the Ronald McDonald House in Springfield, Mo.

Saying good-byes

All good things come to an end, and Monday was our last day to fellowship and say our good-byes.

The Feast wasn't quite complete this year because we were missing a few who couldn't make it because of illness. We hope that next year they

zle all fit tightly together in one body. Till next year, God be with you till we meet again.

EAST MEETS WEST IN THAILAND

By Leon Sexton

CHIANG MAI, Thailand—It is exciting when East and West meet to worship the King of Kings at the commanded assembly of the Feast of Tabernacles.

In Chiang Mai for the Feast of 2012 we had happy participants from Canada, the Philippines and other areas joining in worship and family fun.

We held the Feast for the full eight days entirely in Chiang Mai. Most of the Karen refugee Church of God members now live in the Chiang Mai

area. This makes it convenient for Western Feastgoers to spend every day with the local Karen, Burmese and Thai members.

The Empress Hotel and Convention Center is in the middle of Chiang Mai's shopping district.

Feastgoers also piled into vans and headed into the high mountains to visit one of Queen Sirikit's Royal Demonstration Farms, where she teaches poor farmers how to grow mulberries, strawberries, medicinal herbs and organic vegetables.

Feastgoers also spent a day riding elephants through the jungle and rafting down a river part of the way back to Chiang Mai.

Members from Burma and the Philippines added their own cultural flavor to the Feast, performing special music and singing traditional songs on talent night.

Tribal festivities

Legacy's Karen, Kachin and Lahu tribal students added to the cultural festivities.

Sermons were in English with Burmese translation.

The '13 Feast will be held again for the full eight days in Chiang Mai. For more information please write mail@legacyinstitute.org.

A benefit that Chiang Mai Feastgoers leave with is the strong knowledge that the family of God, united by one Spirit, is much larger than one race or group of people.

"And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 8:11).

The Spirit of the Chiang Mai Feast of Tabernacles is truly millennial.

MONUMENTS FOR THE LORD

By Lazum Brang

LAKE INDAGYI—Kachinland is largely a mountainous and land-locked country with abundant natural beauty adjacent to the western end of China's Yunnan province.

The population is more than 60 percent Christian. Kachinland has 16 ethnic groups. The official language is Jingpho.

The people of Kachinland are of Tibetan-Mongoloid origin and are warmhearted and hospitable. Christianity found its way to this land in 1867 when Roman Catholic missionaries arrived. In 1877 Baptist missionaries arrived.

The major churches are Catholic and Baptist.

In early 1970 I received *The Plain Truth*, the magazine of the Worldwide Church of God, from the U.S.A. I corresponded with Herbert W. Armstrong for many years.

Mr. Sexton's arrival

In January 1999 one of Mr. Armstrong's students, Leon Sexton of Texas, arrived in Kachinland to meet with my family and me. Through the teachings of Mr. Sexton, we the Kachin believers absolutely accepted the Bible truths.

Year by year Kachin believers ob-
See **FEASTERS WRITE**, page 9

Feasters write from the Ozarks, Llandudno and Merimbula

Continued from page 8

served God's annual holy days.

There are seven home churches in Kachinland, but they're far apart.

In 2012 a total of 16 Kachin believers celebrated the Feast in Lake Indawgyi region. The believers from the six local home churches could not participate in the Feast this year because of the terrible fightings between Kachin armies and the Burma government.

Kachinland has more than 80,000 Christian refugees, most near the China border. Thus far Kachin Church of God members are not numbered among the refugees.

Health update

From Sept. 28 to Oct. 20, 2012, my health was bad because of the change in climate. Yet I tried to preach the Feast sermons on Oct. 1 and on the Last Great Day, Oct. 8.

I am 63 years old. When I regain my health, I aim to see the scattered church members. We all need your special prayers that God will protect us from the terrible fightings.

Some of our members are elderly widows, and some of our families are very poor. My wife and I have a great responsibility to see the scattered church members.

Though we are all very poor, we constantly preach the gospel, the true salvation of God, among the Kachin ethnic groups.

High time

Na Mawn is the main headquarters for the scattered members. We have a big church compound, but we cannot do any new construction here.

Most of the groups and home churches congregate in private homes. It is high time for us to erect monuments for the Lord.

An appeal for support

The pen of inspiration tells us:

"You will soon be without a place in which to assemble to worship God. Shall we arise and build? The Lord wants you to be generous.

"The members of the Macedonian churches were in deep poverty, yet they urged the apostles to receive their freewill offerings and were willing to go beyond their power to help the saints in Jerusalem who were in greater need than themselves.

"We have in this record a lesson for our instruction."

We, the believers of Kachinland, come to you appealing for your generous and willing support through your means and prayers that our project of building a holy temple for the Lord can materialize.

Please let us unite our hearts to accomplish the work of God rapidly. *Pastor Lazum Brang, P.O. Na Mawn-01114; Lake Indawgyi Region; Kachinland; Via Myanmar (Burma).*

THE GATHERING CONTINUES

By Mike Bacon

LAKE OF THE OZARKS, Mo.—Season of Our Joy (SOOJ), tucked away at beautiful Camp Windermere adjoining one of the finger bays of the Lake of the Ozarks, expe-

rienced another record-attendance year at the 2012 festival with a 32 percent increase in registrations.

The teens' and children's programs (for which the Feast site is noted) had upwards of a 75 percent increase in



AUSTRALIA—Kerry Gubb (photo 6) and Rod Dean (photo 7) observe the Feast with Grace Communion International (the former Worldwide Church of God) in Ulladulla, Australia. See David Moffitt's report on several Australian Feast observances on pages 9 and 10 of this issue of *THE JOURNAL*. [Photos by David Moffitt]

teens and children, with new and additional activities having to be scheduled at the last minute to handle the later registrations.

Not yet!

The 2012 theme was "Here Now but Not Yet!" As organizer Tim Kelley of Hawkins, Texas, explained:

"Many of this year's [2012's] teachings will tie into this ancient Hebrew

Of special note is one older Church of God couple who stopped attending any COG for some 30 years who have found their way to SOOJ for the past two years.

The music portion is coordinated



by Lee Miller of Virginia, who orchestrates the songs, instrument players and singers into a unified ensemble.

1st-century water pouring

This year SOOJ was blessed with a professional theater-audio technician who improved the hall sound system and who—along with his wife—wrote and presented a wonderful theatrical representation of the 1st-cen-

yourself and see? Better yet, check out the festival Web site. (Just Google "Season of Our Joy.")

Do not let a label confuse you. Share your light and fruit of the Spirit with the many newcomers to the faith and discover the commonalities in the faith that bind us.

The water is warm, so step right in!

Register early to ensure your place at SOOJ in 2013! *Mike Bacon, Prescott, Ariz.*

HOW THE KINGDOM COMPARES

By David Young

LLANDUDNO, North Wales—Attendance was 179 and the weather pleasant for the spiritually dedicated who were here for the 2012 Feast of Tabernacles.

My wife and I enjoyed our Feast and went to a social of another group (the Global Church of God) about four miles away. There we were warmly greeted. The Global Church of God had about 25 there including Norbert Link.

Our group heard, among others, John Ross Schroeder.

The theme was the Millennium and the Kingdom of God and how it compares with the world today.

A good example of unity, love and friendliness was given by our group, the United Church of God, to all those

explaining why Mr. Armstrong believed Jesus was born, or "tabernacled," on the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles.

The next morning, Oct. 1, the ICG played another tape, "Feast of Tabernacles: First Day PCB" (Oct. 5, 1998) about the meaning of the Feast.

A lot of leafy branches were lying around that had been broken from the trees by strong winds just before the Feast that were handy for building temporary shelters.

UCG: Seven Feast lessons

That afternoon the UCG holy-day service was given by Richard Kennebeck, who was visiting from Texas. He told us about an American visiting Australia who boastfully exaggerated about how much bigger and better things are in America than in Australia until he saw some kangaroos and asked what they were.

The Australian replied, "Haven't you seen our grasshoppers before?"

Mr. Kennebeck spoke about seven lessons we learn from the Feast:

- Obedience to God.
- That we are temporary sojourners in this world and our citizenship is in the Kingdom of God.
- We learn that we are God's people.
- We learn to fear the Lord.
- From Deuteronomy 14 we learn to count our blessings and be thankful.
- We learn to do and actively participate.
- We learn to rejoice for healings and health and for the millennium of peace to come when the nature of animals will be changed.

This was followed by time for the congregation to talk and get to know one another.

Sad Pasadena report

It was a bit sad to learn that some of the buildings at the old WCG headquarters in Pasadena, Calif., were recently demolished to make way for new ones.

On Tuesday, the second day of the Feast, the UCG sermon was given by Matthew Sieff about parallels between an earthly kingdom and God's Kingdom.

He talked about Christ's 40-day fast and His temptation by Satan and that the saints are to be given the Kingdom, the code of chivalry and accolade from being a commoner to becoming royalty, from being a pageboy to becoming a squire at 14 years of age to the ceremonies of knighthood at 21, of wearing the red cloak of royalty at a banquet with the nobility and to answering the final question of the reason for wanting the knighthood, that being to fulfill the will of God, then, finally, being knighted:

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant!"

No dangerous 18-wheelers

On Wednesday (Tishri 17) Peter Ash gave a sermon about the "highway" from Assyria to Israel in Isaiah 11 and the "way of holiness" in Isaiah 35 being only for the righteous and that in the Millennium the highways will be elevated so everything at ground level will be safe.

There will not be any dangerous See **READERS NOTE**, page 10

There were at least 10 places up and down the Australian east coast where people could go to keep the 2012 Feast of Tabernacles, including a site sponsored by GCI (the former WCG).

concept and show how this festival, as well as many biblical stories, is simply a type of greater things to come."

A professionally designed, full-color, 29-page large-format festival-events program by John Elliott of Texas was given free to each household.

SOOJ is an independent festival site open to all. There is no fee to attend, nor are offerings taken. But donations are heartily accepted to help shoulder the cost of holding this quality feast site.

Hebrew roots, Messianics

The SOOJ servant-leadership team is a mix of former WCG and other former COG members, along with those who were once associated with other Christian denominations from across the United States.

They serve as a guiding light in the Hebrew-roots and Messianic movement, which embraces many, many of the same theological foundations as the COGs.

This grassroots movement without a corporate structure is growing nationally and internationally as evidenced by the number of younger families with kids and the increasing number of home fellowships.

tury water-pouring ceremony, a Jewish tradition that took place every day of the festival and was the backdrop for one of Yeshua's (Jesus') most important teachings.

Because Season of Our Joy is not a church, it relies on volunteers, who register in advance on the SOOJ Web site to form the crews to provide a smooth-running, professionally organized festival with state-of-the-art audio and video technology and Internet streaming.

Specially made Sukkot decorations provided the needed festive touch to a multipurpose building.

More than 70 Feast sessions

Messianics tend to volunteer and register later rather than earlier (in contrast to COG members), which adds to the leaders' workload. But that is what servant leadership is all about, right?

By the beginning of the Feast, however, our Father brings everything together for a fun-filled festival of 70-plus scheduled educational, social and recreational sessions, although the Messianics come primarily for the teachings, not the sight-seeing.

Homemade decorations light up the campground at night along with the many campfire discussions.

What is God/Elohim planning for SOOJ next year? Why not come for

there despite one or two accidents, one involving my wife, Anne.

Next year Stirling, Scotland, will be our venue.

10 SITES UP AND DOWN THE COAST

By David Moffitt

MERIMBULA, Australia—There were at least 10 places up and down the Australian east coast where people could go to keep the 2012 Feast of Tabernacles. This report is about some of them.

UCG: Reasons for the Feast

One of the United Church of God sites was at Merimbula in New South Wales, where Feast organizer Bill Edgington opened with a service on Sunday evening and spoke about reasons for keeping the Feast.

He encouraged us to look forward to the future, reminding us of Martin Luther King and his "I Have a Dream" speech given shortly before he was assassinated.

Bill also told how Jeremiah the prophet and King Solomon sought peace and unity with a "hearing heart."

ICG: Jesus' birthday

The Intercontinental Church of God had an evening taped message by Garner Ted Armstrong (from Oct. 12, 1992) called "Birthday of Jesus Christ"



LAKE OF THE OZARKS—Photo 8: Feastgoers at Lake of the Ozarks, Mo., wave the lulav during the observance sponsored by the Texas-based Season of Our Joy. See Mike Bacon's report on this page of *THE JOURNAL*. [Photo courtesy Mike Bacon]

Readers note baptisms in Ocho Rios, inspiration in Tagaytay

Continued from page 9

semitrailers but maybe hovercraft or high-speed trains, and all will be visually appealing.

It will be a time of zero tolerance—of the “give way,” not the “get way”—when people will drink the best wines and that Isaiah gives us a preview of the Kingdom of God.

Among the UCG activities was a boat cruise, and several special locations were on the schedule for Feast-goers to eat out.

GCI: Speaking of life

Further up the coast, Grace Communion International (GCI, formerly the Worldwide Church of God) met for Ulladulla Festival 2012 with their coordinator, Rod Dean.

Unlike some in GCI, most of those in New South Wales have continued to follow Christ's example and keep the Feast of Tabernacles on the Jewish dates and follow much of the old WCG beliefs and observe the dietary laws.

There was no sign of anyone with ham sandwiches, pork sausages, smelly prawns or the mouse, which the Bible condemns as an abomination (Isaiah 66:17), or any other outward signs of apostasy.

But two people who were visiting from South Australia said that only four people over there were still holding fast and had not fallen away to that church's new teachings.

On Friday night there was a youth service with lively music.

Opportunities by the worldful

On Saturday afternoon they showed a short *Speaking of Life* video from Joseph Tkach about local and international “mission” in a world full of hurt and therefore a world full of opportunities.

Quoting Galatians 6:10, Mr. Tkach said, “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men,” showing kindness and sharing the good news.

After this was an announcement that a member, Stan Miller, had died in hospital that morning.

Rod Dean talked about the wealthy who avoid paying tax and a report published about banks lending money to buy up land from the poor in Africa.

The devil went down to Eden

Kerry Gubb gave a sermon about how everyone is linked through his descendants and the massive knock-on effect of the devil against Adam and that everything is taken upon Christ through forgiveness, through the ministry of reconciliation and salvation by works, Christ's work!

The next day was Sunday, Oct. 7, the seventh day of the Feast called Hoshana Rabbah or the Great Hosanna by Jews.

Ken Slade gave a sermon about physical transformation, how from an earthly grub we are to become like a heavenly butterfly and rise to become like the glorified Jesus. He said that God is not made like us.

He spoke about God pressing Paul's reset button with blinding light to change him from being self-centered and that this tent is to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling (2 Corinthians 5:1) and that our old self-centered man will be transformed.

Then came a hymn in which the words had been changed to include “Father, Son and Holy Spirit,” which came across a bit unexpectedly and was a reminder that things are not as they used to be and that there have been some changes in the old WCG beliefs.

After the service there was a Lord's Supper, or Communion, in a separate hall taken by about 20 percent of those attending the Feast, which also gave an indication of the influence of the changes.

ICG: A study from 2000

On the Eighth Day the ICG tape by Garner Ted Armstrong presented a study (Oct. 21, 2000). Other GTA tapes were played during the Feast like his “New Covenant” TV program made in July 1995.

The GTA Tape Library has about 40 Feast tapes made by GTA. These messages are available anytime day and night from the icg.org.au Web site.

GCI: Concealed for ages

At the GCI meeting on the Eighth Day, Rod Dean went to the book of Colossians to talk about spiritual transformation and the mystery concealed for ages but now made manifest, “Christ in you the hope of Glory” (Colossians 2:10-27).

The sermon sounded a bit different to what is usually delivered on this day but was especially suited to the theme of a new beginning that the Eighth Day represents.

It was recorded on video, so perhaps anyone interested can get a copy by contacting the ICG.

GCI's hymns and songs sounded modern, upbeat and inspiring, and the special music was also enjoyable and received with warm applause. With old friends and new friends, there were plenty of stories to share from earlier times.

I am already looking forward to the next annual splurge. Another great Feast! *David Moffitt (GTA Tape Library), North Sydney, Australia.*

13 FEAST BAPTISMS

By Glenford Smith

OCHO RIOS, Jamaica—The Jamaican Church of God International continued its record-breaking

The brethren paid a special tribute to Pastor Boyne in honor of his 40th anniversary in the Church of God and for his role in establishing the CGI here.

In his brief greeting on the opening night, Mr. Boyne shared reflections on his journey and thanked God for sustaining him. He commended all who have continued to support the work that God has blessed from such humble beginnings.

take care that we don't lapse into false worship.

Citing the story of Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4:21-24, Mr. Hall showed that true worshipers worshiped God in spirit and truth.

He pointed out the incongruity of an adulterous woman on her sixth extramarital affair whose pressing concern was the right place of worship.



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10

JAMAICA AND THE PHILIPPINES—The brethren observe the 2012 Feast of Tabernacles in Ocho Rios, Jamaica, and Tagaytay, Philippines. **Photo 9:** Elders Ian Boyne (right in photo) and Paul O'Connor baptize a young woman during the Feast in

Jamaica. **Photo 10:** Members of the Imuz City congregation meet for the Last Great Day in Tagaytay City, Philippines. See the reports from Glenford Smith and Max Noble on this page of *THE JOURNAL*. [Photos by Glenford Smith and Brenda Coria]

output at the 2012 Feast of Tabernacles, chalking up a high attendance of 416 and a baptism of 13 persons at its Feast site in Ocho Rios, St. Ann.

The observance marked the 30th anniversary of the CGI in Jamaica and the 40th anniversary of Pastor Ian Boyne's call to the Church of God.

In 1982 the CGI began in his living room with five persons, including him and his wife.

The contrast between that image and the sight of a packed auditorium at the Ruins at the Falls, with more 400

The brethren were in a festive mood, which carried over into the first day, conducted by worship leader Deacon Chris Hendricks.

Special songs and dances were given by Aldith Smith, Janielle Smith, Tahlee Lee, the group Promise, Kerrian Brissett, Paul O'Connor, Donnovan Hylton, Delroy Parks, Cynthia Reynolds, Kelly-Ann Boyne, Trever Wright, Rene Miur, saxophonist Don Crosswell, Kimari Bell, Kaydene Wright and the CGI Adult Choir led by Brian Scott.

For the first time, Mr. Boyne did

“She failed to realize that her focus was on the wrong priority,” Mr. Hall said. “She didn't realize that being a true worshiper had more to do with how she lived rather than where she worshipped.”

Back in order

Pastor Roger King from the United States, who was keeping his 48th Feast, delivered the sermon in the second service on the first day. He expressed his pleasure at returning to the Jamaican site after several years.

Paul O'Connor showed that unconscious prejudices, such as 'confirmation bias' and 'selection bias,' can influence us in unexpected ways.

joyful Feast observers from four congregations, couldn't have been more telling.

(The numbers are more impressive in that the church lost a third of its membership in a 1997 split.)

Special tribute

Veteran Feast keepers and newbies from Kingston, Spanish Town, Ocho Rios and Maroon Town started off the Feast on a high with an exciting session of Bible readings, hymns and praise and worship.

not deliver the opening sermon at the Feast and in fact didn't speak until the fourth day.

Ministerial apprentices

Ministerial Apprenticeship Programme (MAP) candidate Pedro Hall, leader of the Spanish Town congregation, enjoyed the honor of giving the opening sermon, a memorable address titled “Wanted: True Worshipers.”

Noting that people have a particular penchant for self-deception, Mr. Hall stated that as Christians we need to

Mr. King explained how the Feast days show the process through which God will put things back in order and usher in His Kingdom.

He also gave “The Mirror of Nature,” in which he showed the importance of understanding what went wrong with God's creation that made the future restoration described in Isaiah 2 and 11 necessary.

Shaping our destinies

In my second-day sermon I focused on “The Power of Decision” to shape

our physical and eternal destinies.

Pastor Boyne's much-anticipated fourth-day sermon and his fifth-day follow-up were captivating doctrinal and scholarly expositions on the book of Revelation.

Mr. Boyne stated that at the heart of the book lies the issue of true worshipers vs. false and that the last days would be a time of choosing.

The mysterious book of Revelation, full of secret symbols and meanings, is in fact a “revelation,” he said. It was meant to be understood in the last days and should be read and studied in light of events prophesied in the book of Daniel.

The book of Revelation is structured around the annual feast days, he asserted, a fact that makes much of the book incomprehensible to most denominations.

Voting for the Kingdom

Deacon Paul O'Connor, another MAP candidate, presented “Voting for the Kingdom of God.”

He showed that a failure to understand our mind and its operation could cause us to vote against our professed priorities.

Drawing on the Bible and leading-edge thinking about the brain, Mr. O'Connor showed that unconscious prejudices, such as “confirmation bias” and “selection bias,” can influence us in unexpected ways.

You can decide

Deacon Derrick Alwood delivered “How to Avoid Spiritual Burnout.” His brilliant use of metaphors and stories wove a compelling tapestry of spiritual enlightenment.

“Your problems are for a purpose,” he said. “Always remember that the same sun which melts wax also hardens clay. You decide which you will be.”

Sermonette speaker Sean Goldburn delivered a memorable presentation, “Developing Spiritual Habits.” Like Deacon O'Connor, he drew from Scripture, scientific research and practical experience to emphasize the power of habits: how they're structured and how to control them.

The other sermons and sermonettes delivered valuable insights and practical instruction for overcoming.

Eliud Ramocan gave an engaging multimedia presentation titled “Resurrection Time and the Millennium Mind.”

Church development

Deacon Fenton Tracy delivered “Developing Unity in the Church.” As the Jamaican work continues to grow, it is essential for the groups to work together in Christian love and harmony.

Speakers also included Ricardo Hall, Stephen Scale, Jeremy McKenzie, Jordan McKenzie and Toronto, Ont., Canada, pastor George Ramocan, who closed the Feast with two practical sermons on overcoming.

This year, the special Herbert W. Armstrong Memorial Speaking Competition was wrested from Kingston by an outstanding new presenter from Spanish Town, Stephen Allen.

On the Last Great Day Pastor Boyne and Deacon O'Connor baptized 13 members into the church. This was the highest number of people ever baptized at the Feast of Tabernacles.

More than 100 brethren turned up on the Ocho Rios Beach to share in the baptismal ceremony.

FEAST NEAR VOLCANO

By Max Noble

TAGAYTAY CITY, Philippines—The small Church of God at Imus City, Cavite, Philippines, observed the Feast of Tabernacles in 2012 in Tagaytay City.

Tagaytay is a tourist area famous for Lake Taal, on which sits Taal Volcano.

The brethren enjoyed the brisk weather and sumptuous food, along with the inspired messages.

(See the photo from the Tagaytay City site on this page.)

Dr. Thiel cites predictions he's made that have come to pass

Continued from page 1

opinion and approach with that ministry. He said he concluded that the "LCG had insufficient love of the truth and no longer held the Philadelphia mantle."

After Dr. Thiel, who makes his living as a "clinical scientist," split with the LCG, *THE JOURNAL* asked him for an interview.

He consented, and a phone conversation between him and this writer happened on Jan. 2, 2013.

Compelled to leave

Dr. Thiel explained why he felt compelled to leave the LCG and start another Church of God group.

"In a nutshell," he said, "I'd been consulting with Living for 14 years off and on, and probably more formally for the last seven or eight years."

During that time he could not "convince the powers that be"—the three headquarters evangelists, Roderick Meredith, Richard Ames and Douglas Winnail—to take actions he believed were necessary and that he says they had agreed to before changing their minds.

The actions had to do with policies including doctrines that Dr. Thiel disagreed with, some specifically about the "falling away" prophesied in the Bible.

"Instead of getting a response to the doctrinal issues I raised," he said, "I got a letter not dealing with the doctrinal matters but denying certain statements that they had made to me."

The statements involved "improper accusations or railings against me, combined with some inaccurate information."

He decided that further attempts at reconciliation would be "futile."

Dr. Thiel's dreams

A reader sent *THE JOURNAL* a copy of the letter dated Jan. 2 that Dr. Meredith had sent LCG ministers about Dr. Thiel's situation.

Dr. Meredith wrote that Dr. Thiel has "dreams of grandeur" and thinks "he is a 'prophet.'"

In a separate correspondence that Presiding Evangelist Meredith sent to Dr. Thiel (a copy of which the same *JOURNAL* reader sent this writer), Dr. Meredith focused on Dr. Thiel's claim that Dr. Meredith had said to him that "God may consider you to be a prophet."

In his recent letter to Dr. Thiel, Dr. Meredith said he can't remember saying anything like that, and, besides, October 2008 was only a month after he, Dr. Meredith, had suffered a stroke.

"That you would take anything that I said in that time period and try to use it is not right," Dr. Meredith wrote. "I do not ever remember saying anything like that, and I can assure you that I have never thought you might be a prophet!"

Dr. Thiel said an E-mail he received from Dr. Winnail dated Jan. 7, 2013, prominently mentioned "prophet," as follows:

"When we made comments to you

that 'you *may* be a prophet' (and that could include some point in the future) that was to be kind to you."

Dr. Thiel said the LCG leaders' de-



PROPHECIES—Bob Thiel's books include *2012 and the Rise of the Secret Sect* (above) and *Barack Obama, Prophecy, and the Destruction of the United States*. [Courtesy photo]

nials of their speculation that he might be a prophet are inappropriate.

"Their improper denials should be shown to be that as opposed to giving the impression that I dreamed things up."

On the other hand, Dr. Thiel admits to being a dreamer.

"I did have one dream several years ago that seemed to be from God," he said, "and events subsequent to it have confirmed at least parts of its validity."

Grappling with the question

Still, *THE JOURNAL* asked Dr. Thiel if he really thinks he's a prophet.

"When Dr. Meredith made repeated comments [about prophets and prop-

hecy] to me throughout the years, this was a question I was grappling with," he replied.

"So I did some additional research in terms of New Testament prophets and I also learned that most people in the church don't truly understand the different types of New Testament prophets and their particular roles."

One of his concerns, just in case God might really have chosen him to proclaim as a prophet, was whether it is necessary for a prophet to have hands laid on him specifically to set him apart for that role.

"I prayed about it," Dr. Thiel said, "and one of the things I prayed about was that, when I was going to Charlotte [the location of the LCG's headquarters in North Carolina] in mid-

late December 2011, that if I were to have this type of a role that God would anoint me somehow for this to happen."

On Dec. 15 of that year an LCG elder from Asheboro, N.C., Gaylyn Bonjour, anointed Dr. Thiel for a minor health concern.

But something unusual happened during the anointing procedure. Unexpectedly to the anointee, the anointer prayed that Dr. Thiel would "be granted a double portion of God's Spirit."

That was significant in Dr. Thiel's mind because, he said, Mr. Bonjour also specifically spoke to him of the significance of the passing of the mantle from Elijah to Elisha. Was God inspiring Mr. Bonjour to divinely set Dr. Thiel apart as a prophet?

Citing examples

This writer wondered if Dr. Thiel could cite examples of predictions he has made that have come to pass.

"Most of what I have written about in terms of predictions or speculations are consistent with general Church of God teachings in terms of prophecy," he replied.

However, sometimes his prognostications get a little more specific.

"Two come to immediate mind that possibly push the envelope a little bit," he said. "One, I wrote in my *2012* book that it appeared that the United States was having problems with its GPS [Global Positioning System] system and that it was possible that it may decide it would need to rely at least partially on Europe's Galileo system."

When Dr. Thiel wrote that, the U.S. Air Force was denying it would ever rely on the European system, he said. Yet it was soon reported in the news media that America would make use of Galileo.

Sending in marines

"Another was when Julia Gillard was elected prime minister of Aus-

tralia," Dr. Thiel continued.

"The day she was elected I posted at cogwriter.com that I felt that she may do something to cause China to take a closer look at Australia for the possibility at some point in time, perhaps taking it over militarily or somehow being part of the removal of the government in Australia."

"And then that happened when President Obama and Prime Minister Gillard made an agreement to put troops in Darwin, Australia. They put marines there."

For more predictions, most of which Dr. Thiel acknowledges "aren't nearly as dramatic," see his book *2012*.

How does prophecy work?

THE JOURNAL wondered how Dr. Thiel receives his prophecies. Does he hear things? Do thoughts pop into his head? Does he have visions? Does he do automatic writing? What is his prediction-receiving system?

"Just prayer and study," he said. "I do not claim that I've heard voices, if that's what you're asking."

People who feel inspired to prophesy don't just hear voices. Sometimes they have profound feelings of intuition that they attribute to God or an angel.

Indeed, the Bible talks about the value of visions: Without them, people perish (Proverbs 29:18, KJV).

It's *THE JOURNAL*'s understanding that many Bible readers misunderstand Proverbs 29:18 and that the New King James Version, unlike the old King James, does a better job translating it from the Hebrew:

"Where there is no *revelation*, the

people cast off restraint."

So the Hebrew wording of Proverbs 29 isn't talking about people with imagination or foresight as usually thought. It means people who receive direct supernatural revelation from God.

"I wouldn't say thoughts come into my mind that I didn't know where they came from," Dr. Thiel continued.

"I would say that I pray daily, and one of the things I pray would be related to Proverbs 3 verses 5 and 6, to trust the Lord with all your heart and not lean on your own understanding and in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths."

"So I pray about what I'm going to write about, and then I write."

Four more years

Dr. Thiel took the opportunity to crush a rumor he had heard about himself. He said some people are saying he claims to be one of the Two Witnesses (Revelation 11).

"Contrary to certain assertions by people," he said, "I have not claimed to be one of the Two Witnesses. As a matter of fact, I posted at cogwriter that I do not make that claim."

"I'm not saying it's not possible. But God's not going to reveal that probably for at least four years."

Predictions for 2013

THE JOURNAL asked Dr. Thiel for any predictions he'd like to mention for 2013.

"Well," he said, "other than the Great Tribulation cannot happen [in 2013] and despite the fact that one Church of God-related blogger thinks it might, that would be one off the top of my head."

THE JOURNAL has heard that Dr. Thiel is offended because Dr. Winnail, an LCG elder and employee who lives near his church's headquarters in North Carolina, customarily refers in his sermons and writings to non-Church of

God people as Christians. Is that a worry of Dr. Thiel's?

"It was not a significant concern in the sense that I don't think he meant it the way he said it," Dr. Thiel replied.

So how does Dr. Thiel define Christianity?

"A Christian is one who has God's Spirit."

But what if Dr. Winnail is trying to believe the best about everybody? If someone claims to be a Christian, who are we say to he's not a Christian? Would that be a reasonable stance for Dr. Winnail?

"You could consult with him on it, but I'm fairly certain that is not his position."

THE JOURNAL decided to rephrase the question and try again.

Let's say, Dr. Thiel, that we choose to define someone as a Christian who simply says he's a Christian; he self-identifies as a Christian. Who are we to say he doesn't have God's Spirit? Why isn't it proper to take people at their word on that sort of thing?

Dr. Thiel: "The Bible says he who knows Him and keeps not His commandments is a liar and the truth is not in him."

THE JOURNAL: But you have already said the definition of a Christian is one in whom is God's Spirit.

Dr. Thiel: "But this is another portion of Scripture that's giving additional information."

THE JOURNAL: In other words, unless that other scripture is fulfilled, it's not even possible for that person to have God's Spirit. Is that what you're saying?

Dr. Thiel: "I'm saying you can read what was written in Scripture."

The whole 100 yards

Some blogger somewhere apparently criticized Dr. Thiel about his criticism of American football, not to be confused with everybody else's football: soccer.

"That [football] is a complex subject and possibly why some of the negative letters came out about me," he said.

"I've read the Bible. I've read the writings of Herbert Armstrong. I've read where it says do violence to no man."

"I've studied early Christianity. Early Christians would not watch gladiator games, not because they were getting eaten by lions, necessarily. They just didn't feel it was appropriate."

Dr. Thiel explained that American football, being a violent sport, is not appropriate for the ministry of a church to encourage.

"But that was not why I left," he said. "It's just that it's an issue I don't consider consistent with Philadelphia [Revelation 1 and 3] love."

Mantle on the move

The interview moved on to the subject of mantles. Since the days of Elijah and Elisha, as recounted in 1 Kings 19, a mantle has been a symbol of authority passed from one anointed man of God to his successor.

THE JOURNAL asked Dr. Thiel if he believes only one church group at a time is qualified to wear the mantle of authority from God in the Christian age.

(Some Church of God groups and their members interpret the seven congregations of Revelation 2-3 as prophesied eras of true Christianity that have stretched down through the last 2,000 years or so.)

"If you accept hierarchical governance the way it's discussed in 1 Corinthians 12:28 and Ephesians," Dr. Thiel said, "the mantle, if you will, would reside with the highest ecclesiastical authority."

"And, since prophets are above evangelists, etc., then that would say that, unless a different type of prophet rose up or someone who was truly an apostle rose up, then the mantle would be with the highest non-self-appointed legitimate Church of God leader."

Who's on second?

He explained that, in line with Ephesians 4:11, prophets come in second in the hierarchy, after apostles and just above evangelists.

Dr. Thiel believes the Philadelphia mantle fell in the 1920s onto the shoulders of Worldwide Church of God founder Herbert Armstrong, who died in 1986.

But who wore it before Mr. Armstrong?

Dr. Thiel explained that he had researched the matter and discussed it on multiple occasions with former Denver Church of God (Seventh Day) president Robert Coulter.

"There is a possibility that [CG7 elder] A.N. Dugger had it," Dr. Thiel said, "and he claimed to have apostolic succession, by the way."

Whoever possessed the mantle, "I believe that somewhere within the old CG7 [in which Mr. Armstrong served as an elder in the 1930s] there was somebody who was the [anointed] leader."

So Dr. Thiel is saying the mantle goes with a person, not with a church organization, just like in the days of Elijah and Elisha. So do you mean, Dr. Thiel, that you think it's possible that you have the mantle or are receiving the mantle?

"Yes," Dr. Thiel replied.

However, he believes the LCG still has more Philadelphian members than any other COG group. He doesn't believe any of the groups, including the LCG, are made up of a majority of Philadelphians. The LCG has a sizable plurality of Philadelphians, but apparently not more than 50 percent.

Is there a time for division?

How important does Dr. Thiel think See **CHURCH FOUNDER**, page 39

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Could soul-sleep and afterlife doctrines stand some tweaking?

Mr. Overton is editor of The Gilmer Mirror. Ms. Smith is an oil-industry landman. Both are 1970s graduates of Ambassador College, Big Sandy.

By Mac Overton and Linda Moll Smith

GILMER, Texas—In recent years several books have come out popularizing the idea, as the title of one says, that *Heaven Is for Real*. That book is the story of a 4-year-old boy and his experiences “in heaven” after he purportedly died for a short time while undergoing an emergency appendectomy.



Mac Overton

Almost all such books are autobiographical descriptions of death-and-back experiences, also known clinically as near-death experiences (NDEs).

In spite of the weight of similarly compelling tales of inexplicable events, fantastic places and esoteric knowledge, many scientists and physicians have dismissed NDEs as merely “dying-brain symptomatology.”



Linda Moll Smith

Been there, came back

What makes *Proof of Heaven*, a recent entry into the reality-of-heaven literature, intriguing is that it is written by a renowned neurosurgeon who was also a skeptic of the near-death experiences recounted by his patients.

He routinely discounted the veracity of the NDEs that he encountered.

But then the author, Dr. Eben Alexander, experienced one for himself. He fell ill with a meningitis attack from a mutant strain of E. coli, lapsed into a coma and, based on a lack of higher-brain activity, was deemed clinically dead for seven days.

According to conventional scientific wisdom, Dr. Alexander should never have recovered. But his mind

and consciousness returned suddenly, to the amazement of the medical team monitoring his life-support care.

Growing and overcoming

Dr. Alexander’s vividly conscious experiences in the “afterlife” while undergoing his NDE inspired him to decide to share it with the medical community and the world with a view to overcoming doctors’ prejudices against the possibility of such occurrences.

To set the stage for this review, we initially quote from the cover of the trade-paperback edition of *Proof of Heaven*:

“Thousands of people have had near-death experiences, but scientists have argued that they are impossible. Dr. Eben Alexander was one of those scientists.

“A highly trained neurosurgeon, Alexander knew that NDEs feel real, but are simply fantasies produced by brains under extreme stress.

“Then, Dr. Alexander’s own brain was attacked by a rare illness. The part of the brain that controls thought and emotion—and in essence makes us human—shut down completely.

“For seven days, he lay in a coma.

“Today, Alexander is a doctor who believes that true health can be achieved only when we realize that God and the soul are real and that death is not the end of personal existence but only a transition.”

Soul sleep

Dr. Alexander’s experiences fly in the face of those of us in the Churches of God, Seventh-day Adventists and perhaps others who believe in the theology of “soul sleep”: that when you die you are unconscious, indeed non-existent, until resurrected.

He reported that “my NDE had convinced me that there is a secret part of ourselves that is recording every last aspect of our earthly lives, and that this recording process commences at the very, very beginning.”

In this, this former agnostic’s views are amazingly similar to the Church of God’s “spirit in man” teaching, the churches’ explanation of what is commonly called the “soul.”

A wing and a girl

Though Dr. Alexander wrote his

son he met, who guided him as his “angel,” was “the Girl on the Butterfly Wing,” someone he did not recognize.

He said the fact that he did not know the girl who was his guide was one reason he questioned the validity of his own NDE, until about four months



after his release from the hospital.

Dr. Alexander reveals that he was adopted as a child and as an adult established contact with his birth family. It was in meeting with his birth sister after his recovery that he realized the butterfly girl’s identity.

Texas to Boston, Mass., for treatment.

After awaking from a long period of unconsciousness she told her mother she had met a being she identified as “Jesus” who told her she would be all right and that she would go back to her body and remain with her family.

If the COG “soul sleep” doctrine is true, there should be evidence of it.

Defining ‘dead’

Some might argue that people undergoing an NDE aren’t really dead.

Dr. Alexander explains that under old medical standards it was considered that a person was dead when his heart quit beating. When brain waves were discovered, however, lack of brain-wave activity became clinical proof of death.

The procedure called cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) saves thousands of lives a year by restoring breathing and heartbeat before brain death occurs. This is the procedure that saved Herbert W. Armstrong when he “died” in the 1970s.

But, when the meningitis hit Dr. Alexander, he had no measurable higher-brain function. His brain, except for the cerebral cortex, which controls certain autonomic functions, had shut down completely.

What are the possibilities?

So is it possible that people are conscious immediately after they die? Should we consider the evidence even if it goes against the grain of our particular interpretation of the Bible?

Among Bible-believing Christianity there is much debate about the afterlife, including but not limited to discussions about the mortality or immortality of the soul, the reward of the righteous, the fate of the unrighteous and timetable(s) for judgment.

Please send your comments about this review and discussions of near-death experiences and the doctrine of soul sleep to *THE JOURNAL*, attention Mac Overton or Linda Moll Smith, at info@thejournal.org or P.O. Box 1020, Big Sandy, Texas 75755, U.S.A.

Especially if you have had a conscious near-death experience, the writers would like to hear from you.

‘My NDE had convinced me that there is a secret part of ourselves that is recording every last aspect of our earthly lives, and that this recording process commences at the very, very beginning.’

Then, as his doctors considered stopping treatment, Alexander’s eyes popped open. He had come back.

Out of this world

“Alexander’s recovery is a medical miracle. But the real miracle of his story lies elsewhere. While his body lay in a coma, Alexander journeyed beyond this world and encountered an angelic being who guided him into the deepest realms of super-physical existence . . .

“Alexander’s story is not a fantasy. Before he underwent his journey, he could not reconcile his knowledge of neuroscience with any belief in heaven, God or the soul.

memories of what happened to him before reading other NDE books (including the ground-breaking *Life After Life* by Dr. Raymond Moody), he came to realize that, while every NDE case is unique, there are also certain common threads in most all of them. These include:

■ Going through a tunnel and emerging into darkness, but then finding light.

■ Meeting with one or more deceased people whom the person experiencing the NDE had known in life and who gave comfort and guidance.

He knew she looked familiar

But in Dr. Alexander’s case the per-

His sister showed him a photo of another birth sister, one who had died a few years before he connected with his biological family. The deceased sister was the Girl on the Butterfly.

This account is similar to other reported NDEs. In *Heaven Is for Real* the little boy was able to tell his parents about a sister he met in a realm beyond the physical. His parents had never told him his mother had miscarried a girl baby before he was born.

In another such story, the daughter of a coworker of one of the writers of the *JOURNAL* article you’re reading suffered severe injuries in a car accident when she was 15 (she is in her early 30s).

She was transferred from East

Dixon’s canon view would be DOA in any real COG debate

Continued from page 3

no basis in fact in evidence that I’ve seen to date.

There are some very good sources for refutation of that belief and proof that the canon was completed with John in the late 1st century and supported after that by Polycarp.

(See “Restoring the Original Bible” by Ernest Martin at askelm.com as well as Fred Coulter’s material on the canon for some convincing evidence. While I don’t agree with a lot of what Ernest Martin taught, his archaeology seems sound.)

Diet of worms

Second, if we begin to accept as “inspired Scripture” whatever we might want, this opens up a huge can of worms that destroys God’s position over us and ushers in the “every man did that which was right in his own eyes” approach.

It is impossible for us to determine “inspired Scripture.” While I firmly believe that the Bible is *not* complete as yet, it isn’t for us to determine this today. God will add to what is already written to complete it for the Millennium.

Impeded view of God

We cannot discard the foundation. We compare what is written to what God has provided us in His Word, and if there’s a difference we know which to believe. We don’t simply accept some writing and believe it is equal to Scripture. That is very dangerous.

Dixon made quite a few statements, such as:

■ “Since I see problems with our view of the Bible, specifically the canon, I think we are not able to have an unimpeded view of God.”

This clearly suggests that the Bible as we have it “impedes” our view of God. Then, logically, all we are left with is personal choice to choose what is acceptable and what is not. Can’t you see the danger in that belief?

■ He made many similar statements denigrating the Bible’s authority and suggesting we can’t believe what we read.

Pick and choose?

He wrote:

■ “. . . A child of God can find much in the Bible, Old and New Testaments, that is profitable for him to

The canon was put together for “political” reasons? Please, Dixon, listen to yourself. Do you really believe the Catholic Church would have allowed the canon as we have it if it had any say whatsoever in the books or messages?

The canon as we have it condemns Catholics’ practices almost totally.

Compare the book of Enoch as we have it today and you’ll see information that conflicts with the Bible. Do we accept this book as “inspired” and reject the Bible?

What of the other apocryphal books? Just pick and choose what we want?

God’s hands are tied?

This position claims a simple premise: God is not able to communicate His will to His people in writing, and

New reformation

Dixon wrote:

■ “Christians should do their individual part, one day at a time, to reform the Christianity they individually practice.”

Really? “Reform”? I’d say this reform began rather quickly in the NT church and expanded shortly after the apostle John’s death, culminating in the false Christianity we have today, wouldn’t you, Dixon?

Yet you advocate the same process the apostles clearly condemned and warned about.

Does obfuscating mean deceptive?

Dixon wrote:

■ “We can slowly but surely re-

spired scriptures? Let’s see. There are Ellen G. White, John Smith (Book of Mormon) and how many others? Muhammad? What is inspired and what isn’t? Do we choose what we feel good about, regardless if it conflicts with the canon we have now?

Is God great enough to secure His Word?

Truthfully, Dixon, this concept would be DOA in any real debate within the COG. I believe God is so great that He *can and did* secure His Word for those willing to believe Him and who are building that relationship based on faith, trust and understanding of their Father and His glorious Son.

We are seeing yet again another step toward ecumenism in the COG that I wrote to *THE JOURNAL* about many months ago. We are being attacked in our foundational beliefs. Divisions, such as this view of the canon causes, will continue till we return to the faith once delivered.

Dixon and Alex both need to research the canonization history and report that to *JOURNAL* readers. If we have to begin dissecting and discarding portions of the Bible, and adding to it what we feel is appropriate, we are of all people most miserable.

Editor’s note: *THE JOURNAL* appreciates the critiques of Dixon Cartwright’s canon-related articles that have appeared in this newspaper beginning in late 2011. Mr. Cartwright plans to publish a response to the critiques in a future issue.

Meanwhile, see another view of the canon beginning on page 3 of this issue.

This position claims a simple premise: God is not able to communicate His will to His people in writing, and He couldn’t empower His chosen to preserve a record of His plan.

consider in his walk with God.”

So we can now pick and choose what we want out of the Bible? We are the ones who set a value on what we read?

This obviously suggests we can discard that which isn’t conducive to our “walk with God.” It may be a walk with a god, but not *the* God.

He wrote:

■ The canon is “a list of recommended writings compiled and edited by humans for not only religious reasons but political reasons.”

He couldn’t empower His chosen to preserve a record of His plan.

If we discard aspects of the Bible as we have it today, as Dixon seems to encourage, then we cannot trust *any* of it, logically, as God’s own *inspired and revealed* Word for us.

“We,” again, become the determining power as to what we accept and believe or what we don’t.

This is slapping God in the face and truly minimizing His power and authority over us.

form Christianity—in our case Church of God Christianity—by being aware of the situation: realizing that because of the obfuscating nature of the canon we have much to learn about God.”

So just exactly *who* will teach us where this “obfuscation” is and what the *real* truth is? If we can’t rely on the “obfuscated” (read “deceptive”) canon, inspired by God, then we should trust and rely on ourselves to do so?

How many extrabiblical writings are out there that are accepted as in-

God allows the future to be partly open and partly settled

Continued from page 3

A combination of the stress, my weakness from heart surgery and then catching whatever the grandkids had put me into a serious health crisis.

I struggled down the stairs just in time to open the door for the first fire-engine company to arrive. JoAn was a few steps behind me.

Immediately the emergency medical technicians (EMTs) had me sit down and told me to try to relax as they began asking questions and unpacking their gear.

Then the second engine company arrived with more rescue personnel. I hadn't been in the living-room chair but a minute when it happened.

Going, going

Needless to say, I'd never "died" before and didn't know quite what to expect. But, when I felt the blood beginning to drain from my brain, I could get out only two short phrases to alert the team of men surrounding me: "I'm going! I'm going!"

It felt like a black curtain was being quickly pulled down in my head. That was it. My heart had stopped. I had flat-lined.

The next thing I remember was opening my eyes on the floor looking up at our living-room ceiling. Atop me was a burly fireman pounding his fist on my chest.

My immediate thought was please don't break open my breastbone, still held together with staples from the surgery. Well, that was the least of my worries.

I was back alive! The men helped me sit up. I vomited. They loaded me onto a wheeled gurney and rushed me to a hospital. During my week there I was treated for pneumonia, examined and recommended for a pacemaker and defibrillator implant.

God was merciful and spared my life. If JoAn hadn't called 911 when she had, I wouldn't be writing this.

JoAn's nice

The most upsetting part to me was that my dear wife had to watch all this. Later she told me what happened after my heart stopped, as well as the private thoughts of her heart as events unfolded.

She said as soon as I fell out of my chair the room full of firefighters and EMTs sprang into frenetic action, throwing tables aside, clearing the room and feverishly unpacking gear as one of them began pounding on my chest.

JoAn said it was a surreal moment.

She said sadly to herself: So this is how it ends.

Her next thought was: Was I nice to him since I woke up?

Thanks to God's great kindness, she could share those thoughts with me and I could thank her.

Yes, she had been nice and has always been nice to me. In those bleak and dark 3 a.m. moments, JoAn and I were sending our desperate cries to God for help. He heard and answered.

God answers the 911 line

I don't know if one can quite be the same after such a brush with death. When I think of it, I'm amazed anew over God's closeness and willing readiness to hear and answer our cries for help.

"Yahweh our God is near us whenever we pray to him . . . Seek the LORD your God, you will find him if you look for him with all your heart, and with all your soul" (Deuteronomy 4:7, 29).

When we think of God, we need not think of Him as residing one billion light years from our galaxy. Why not think of Him as near?

Because God is near

The whole notion of heaven as a place far away is not necessarily a biblical one. Heaven, or God's abode, could just as easily surround the earth.

Of course, God is not restricted to the speed of light, so it matters not "where" God is at any moment. What matters is that His attention is directed toward you.

as passionately as they could because they don't think God is near and listening. Or they don't see how their prayers could make any difference.

They pray, but they often do so out of sheer obedience and without a sense of urgency and without much confidence that God hears or will answer.

A 911 type of prayer, however, requires a sense of urgency and expectation.

Is the future settled?

Perhaps our prayers lack urgency because in our hearts we doubt we can influence God.

Much of Christianity teaches that God's sovereignty means His exhaustive control of all events. We hear that events are predestined by God and the future is settled.

If that is so, what difference could prayer really make?

Some theologians like to answer that question by replying that "prayer changes us, not God." But this saying contradicts the scriptural record and doesn't reflect the urgency that Scripture gives to petitionary prayer.

The principle of probabilities

God has chosen to willingly restrain His power. He does not control all human events. He has chosen to

The Bible is full of examples of prayers that have changed minds, even God's mind. Consider a few of them.

911 pray-ers and their prayers

■ How about God's answer to Jacob's emergency prayer for God's blessing upon the impending meeting with his violent and revengeful brother Esau? (Genesis 32).

■ Yahweh was in the process of judging Israel by fire for the nation's blatant complaining, but Moses prayed for God to stop. God did, "and the fire abated" (Numbers 11:1-2).

■ After the rebellion of Korah, the people were being justly punished by plague and began dying. Moses prayed and directed Aaron to make atonement for their sins, "and the plague was stopped" (Numbers 16:41-48).

■ Did God answer the 911 prayers of the young men thrown into the furnace? (Daniel 3:16-17).

■ How about Daniel's urgent need to have God shut the mouths of a den full of lions? (Daniel 6:21-23).

■ Did God answer Samson's dying request? "O Sovereign LORD, remember me, O God, please strengthen me just once more" (Judges 16:28).

■ We could recount the desperate prayers of Elijah and Elisha and the

we ask Him. How else can we understand James' assertion (4:2) that "you have not because you ask not"?

Biblical characters prayed boldly because they believed their prayers could change things, even God's mind. They understood they were working *with* God to determine the future. (See John Sanders' fine book *The God Who Risks.*)

Jesus prayed

We don't always get what we specifically want, but we can receive what God wants for us. There is no better example than the impassioned prayers of Jesus on Passover eve.

Three times Jesus prays the same prayer: "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup [of suffering and death] pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want" (Matthew 26:39, 44).

Jesus loved life. He didn't want to die. He was not suicidal. Yet he understood there were purposes of God greater than even His son's life.

Even in panic matters of life and death, we must temper our requests with "Thy will be done."

Nowhere else to turn

When we find ourselves face to wall with the reality that we have nowhere to turn but God, it's comforting to realize that, like His Son Jesus, God is gentle, kind, merciful, just and quick and powerful to act (Matthew 11:28-29; Jeremiah 9:24).

The future changed

Indulge me with one more biblical example that I've come to identify with ever so closely.

It is the case of King Hezekiah, who was sick to the point of death. God sent Isaiah to give Hezekiah the bad news that "you are going to die; you will not recover."

Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and burst into tears as he expressed his devotion to God and wept bitterly for God's help and mercy.

Isaiah was halfway out of the palace when God stopped him and said, "Go back and tell Hezekiah: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears. I will heal you."

God added 15 years to Hezekiah's life. God changed His prophecy at the prayer of Hezekiah, a mere man.

God is just as open to our prayers now as He was in King Hezekiah's day. In my case, I don't know if God will give me 15 more years (He's already given me almost 11), but I praise Him for His mercy and kindness.

The whole notion of heaven as a place far away is not necessarily a biblical one. Heaven, or God's abode, could just as easily surround the earth.

To pray is to bring God into our immediate, personal world. Righteous believers confidently advise us to "make our requests known to God" (Philippines 4:6; 1 John 5:14-15).

When you are in trouble and those whom you may perceive as your enemies are all too close and getting closer, God is closer. As the psalmist put it: "Those who devise wicked schemes are near, but they are far from your law. Yet you are near, O LORD, and all your commands are true" (Psalm 119:151).

Sense of expectation

Many Christians, I fear, do not pray

engage in free relationships with those He made in His image.

We human beings have key roles in deciding things. God has allowed the future to be partly open and partly settled.

If an unjust judge will relent and hear a widow's persistent plea, how much more is our loving Father affected by our persistent pleas? (Luke 18:1-6).

Prayer has many forms including praise, confession, intercession, worship and meditation. My focus at this writing is the 911 emergency prayer for help: petitionary prayer.

prophets and the pleas of the synagogue ruler Jairus, who cried to Jesus: "My little daughter is dying. Please come" (Mark 5:22-43).

■ Or when Peter is thrown in prison and the 911 prayers of others help determine his fate: "The church was earnestly praying to God for him," and with quick results as Peter exclaimed, "The Lord sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's clutches" (Acts 12:1-12).

Go ahead and ask

There are many things God would not otherwise do but will do because

Here's a handy guide for sorting out the goats of Leviticus 16

Continued from page 3

self and Israel (Leviticus 16).

Hebrews 9 says Christ fulfilled this by entering the holy of holies and offering His own blood.

Several sacrifices were offered on Atonement, and each represented an aspect of Christ's sacrifice.

The high priest sacrificed a bull as expiation for his own sins and a ram for a burnt offering. Then he received from the people two goats that were for the people's sins and one ram for a burnt offering.

Lots were drawn on the two goats. One goat was to be offered to God and the other to Azazel.

The goat was not named "Azazel." Rather, it was to be offered to Azazel. Azazel was the name of the satyr demon who inhabited the desert, the wilderness outside the camp of Israel and away from God's protection.

In other words, Azazel was Satan.

Both goats were offered for the sins of the people. The first was offered to Yahweh for the sins of the people. The second goat was also offered for the sins of the people, but it was offered to Azazel, Satan.

The goat offered to Azazel has long puzzled scholars. A Worldwide Church of God scholar, Dr. Herman Hoeh, was intrigued by it.

The second goat had the sins of the

people laid upon its head by the high priest. It was then led outside of the camp of Israel away from God's protection and let loose in the desert, the habitation of Azazel, Satan, to be an offering to him.

This goat was certain to meet a horrifying death from ravenous beasts.

Both goats

Like you, I believe Christ's sacrifice was the fulfillment of the sacri-

If the crucifixion was the fulfillment of the second goat offered to Azazel, then the crucifixion was not a sacrifice to God. It was a sacrifice to Satan.

fices of the Old Testament, which includes both the Passover and the sacrifices on Atonement. I will go further and propose that Christ's sacrifice also was the fulfillment of the second goat offered to Azazel, Satan.

The high priest laid the sins of the people upon the head of the second goat. Christ had all our sins placed upon His head. He bore our sins just as the goat sent to Azazel bore our sins.

Caiaphas prophesied that one man, Jesus, should die for the nation. The high priest ordered the goat to be de-

livered to Azazel outside the camp of Israel.

Likewise, the high priest and chief priests delivered Jesus to the gentiles to crucify outside of the camp of the temple.

The high priests turned Jesus over to Satan and his beast, pagan Rome, to crucify, just as the high priests turned the second goat over to Azazel to face a horrible death from wild beasts.

Gentiles are symbolized as wild

If the crucifixion was the fulfillment of the second goat offered to Azazel, then the crucifixion was not a sacrifice to God. It was a sacrifice to Satan.

beasts throughout the Bible. Christ suffered an excruciating death, devised by Satan, at the hands of his beast, Rome.

The goat was forsaken by God. Christ suffered outside the camp of Israel (Hebrews 13). In His dying moments Christ cried out "Why, God, have You forsaken Me?"

Why would God sacrifice to Satan?

If the crucifixion was the fulfillment of the second goat offered to Azazel, then the crucifixion was not a sacrifice to God. It was a sacrifice to Satan.

Why would Satan require a sacrifice, and why would God give it?

Simply because God loved us so much that He gave His only begotten Son so we could be set free from Satan's hold of death and have life.

Pharaoh, a type of Satan, held Israel in bondage and demanded the death of the Israelites' firstborn sons. Every male child was a firstborn son, since every previously born son had been drowned. God has never sanctioned

If the crucifixion was the fulfillment of the second goat offered to Azazel, then the crucifixion was not a sacrifice to God. It was a sacrifice to Satan.

child sacrifice, but child sacrifice has always been part of Satan's religions.

Death angel passed

Egypt pictured the slavery to sin, to Satan, and the resultant death.

At Passover the death angel passed over and spared the homes of the Israelites because a ransom had been given. The ransom was symbolically the Passover Lamb, Christ.

Christ paid for our sins by the suffering He endured in our stead. God does not require payment, but Satan does.

God's forgiveness is free and unmerited. God is merciful, long-suffering and forgiving.

In Ezekiel 18 God tells the wicked to repent and they will live. No death penalty was required. God warned Israel she would die if she sinned, but there was always forgiveness if she only repented.

Not so with Satan. He has held the power of death over us ever since he beguiled Adam and Eve. He demands the death penalty. He has the power.

A ransom to Satan

Similar to Pharaoh, Satan owns us, and it's his Egypt. Mankind has been in bondage to sin and death. God gave His only begotten Son, our Passover, our Atonement goat, as a ransom to Satan to be tortured and killed in order to set us free from Satan's bondage of death.

God doesn't require a death as payment for the forgiveness He so freely gives upon repentance. Only Satan demands death. God's offering of His Son and His Son's willingness to be offered as a ransom to Satan have set us free from Satan's bondage.

Christ is not only our Passover, He is the second goat that bore our sins and was offered to Satan as our ransom on Atonement.

This is something to consider on Passover and Atonement.

Essay

The master key: Will God reveal His true chronology before the end?

The writer was raised as a Catholic, like most kids in Quebec in the '50s. He read the Bible for the first time when he was about 14 and spent the next 40 years trying to absorb its content. He lives with his wife and three children in Montreal.

By Yves Peloquin

MONTREAL, Que., Canada—When an author publishes a \$90 book on an old Egyptian dynasty, the reading public views it as the work of a scholar.

But if an honest, self-taught researcher and writer sends you a free copy of his work that concerns Bible chronology, you will invariably jump to the last page of his book.

There you will note when he predicts the start of Daniel's 70th week or some other end-time events. Then you'll wait for that date, and, if nothing happens, with some degree of contempt will conclude that it was the work of another dishonest false prophet.

Do you systematically attribute more value to a work written 9 to 5 than the one written between 7 p.m. and the early hours of the morning?

Why is it more acceptable for the scholar to wrongly identify the Pharaoh who condemned Moses than the sincere seeker who has spent many years trying to figure out Daniel and failed?

Why not keep an open mind?

Have you ever considered that, even though dozens of solutions to the Bible's chronology have failed so far, that fact should never be the one criterion you use to reject any new one?

The nature of the problem of Bible chronology makes it impossible to have more than one correct solution. Daniel's 70th week will be reached one day even though it will have been wrongly expected at many other times.

Most of you readers of *THE JOURNAL* have probably been deceived in the past by people who pretended to solve the Bible's chronology, and some of you might even have given money to help spread their good news.

Remember the Worldwide Church of God in 1975? Or the expectation generated in May 2011 by Harold Campion's predictions?

Besides these two examples, many

other people have proposed more-detailed chronologies. To name a few, there were the likes of Edwin Thiele and the Revs. James Ussher and Martin Anstey.

Does God leave us ignorant?

Paradoxically, most of you—to protect yourselves from being duped again—have decided to reject any new proposal, even though you have an inner conviction that the end will happen during your own lifetime or that of your children.

If you really think the end is that close, you must wonder why our Heavenly Father is leaving us ignorant of His plan.

But is He? Do you know how long it was before the double destruction of the First Temple and Jerusalem after God had warned the people through His prophet that such a calamity was coming?

Forty years. In effect, God mandated that Jeremiah would tell the people beginning in the 13th year of Josiah (who reigned 31 years), through the reign of Jehoiakim (11 years) and through the reign of Zedekiah (11 years). That's 40 years. (See Jeremiah 25:1-3.)

The destruction that ravaged Judah

Learning and sharing the truth are my only motivation.

If I am ever proved wrong I sincerely hope nobody will have suffered from believing what I have written.

The clues are there

The Bible's internal chronology can be resolved without the need to relate to any external date. Beginning with year 0 A.M. (*anno mundi*, "in the year of the world"), which we associate with the creation of Adam, the Bible gives us all the clues to properly figure out when each event happened.

Essentially, the Bible covers 10 periods over a span of 6,000 years that can be summarized by the following biblical topics:

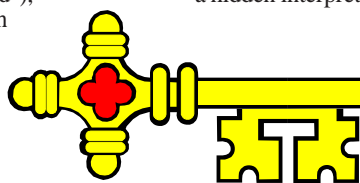
- Creation and the patriarchs.
- The years from Abraham to Jacob.
- The Exodus.
- The judges.
- The kings and First Temple period.
- The exile and the First Temple's destruction.
- The postexile and Second Temple era.

40 years symbolized by Ezekiel's 390 and 40 days. None has been convincing until now.

Ezekiel's awesome feat

The following observation is therefore indisputable:

Even though Ezekiel spent a lengthy 430 days lying on his sides to act out a sign in the privacy of his house, no one has ever come up with a hidden interpretation that could explain (and justify) the prophet's amazing feat. Think about it. For more than a year (390 days) he lay on the same



side, barely feeding himself each day. When he turned onto the other side he kept his new position for more than a month (40 days) without eating at all.

During the whole divinely revealed assignment, Ezekiel was literally tied up and prevented from talking.

Here is something everyone has overlooked: Ezekiel was, while he was lying on his sides, simultaneously performing more than a dozen symbolic acts, and each one of those por-

Coherence, harmony, symmetry

For the first time we can see at a glance the awesome and beautiful design that God hid behind the scriptural narrative. Here is a small sample:

■ From the Exodus (in 2523 A.M.) to the Ark entering the First Temple (in 3013) is 490 years.

■ From then until the return of the 42,360 from exile (in 3503) is 490 years.

■ From then until the death of Yeshua (in 3993) is 490 years.

■ From the binding of Isaac (in 2123) to the Exodus (in 2523) is 400 years.

■ From then until Saul became king (in 2923) is 400 years.

■ From then until Israel's exile (in 3323) is 400 years.

■ From the entering of the Promised Land (in 2563) until the destruction of the Second Temple (in 4033) is 3 × 490 years.

From then until the start of Daniel's 70th week (in 5993) is 4 × 390 years.

Synchronizing the calendars

It is only at the end—once the entire chronology puzzle has been solved and each event is properly positioned on the timeline from 0 to 6000 A.M.—that an external Gregorian date is needed. And it's needed for the sole purpose of synchronizing the A.M. calendar with the Gregorian calendar.

Even this last task brings its own surprise. If, for instance, we use the birth of Yeshua (in 3960 A.M. in my chronology) and we equate it with 3 B.C. (determined from somebody's unrelated research), we learn that God completed the creation of the world in 3963 B.C. Is it merely a coincidence that the earth's radius at the equator is exactly 3,963 miles?

Paradoxically, while most people's interest in religious matters has steadily declined, it seems that in recent years more and more people have contributed to a deepening of our understanding of the Bible.

Finding who can help

In all likelihood Daniel 12 describes what is happening now. Let's hope we will have the wisdom to find and recognize those who can help us understand, no matter who they are.

(Daniel 12:4 seals the book "until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.")

Readers can download my chronology ("Ezekiel 4: The Master Key to Unlock the Bible's chronology") at ezekielmasterkey.com as a PDF.

It takes nerve to pretend to have found the real chronology of the Bible, as I claim. Not many people would dare predict anything after the various fiascoes.

was nothing compared to the scale of destruction predicted to take place in the last days.

The nerve

It is perfectly reasonable to expect advance warning. In the absence of any prophets to tell us, resolving the Bible's chronology will help us determine where we stand on the 6,000-year calendar of God.

It takes nerve to pretend to have found the real chronology of the Bible, as I claim. Not many people would dare predict anything after the fiascoes such as the ones mentioned earlier.

Only a fool would venture out on that road without strong evidence and without proposing an approach never tried before.

As an indicator of my sincerity, I can tell you I have nothing to sell and will never have. I am not part of any end-time movement, and I would be very suspicious before joining one.

■ Daniel's 70-weeks prophecy, first part.

■ Yeshua (Jesus) and the Second Temple's destruction.

■ Daniel's 70-weeks prophecy, second part.

What's reasonable?

Many think it is impossible to resolve the Bible chronology without the help of external references.

But is it reasonable to think God would have inspired the authors of the Bible to include more than 300 chronological durations and wouldn't have made sure those were enough to determine the right overall chronology?

There is an overlooked master key hidden in Ezekiel that can give us a tool to rightly construct the Bible's chronology.

This key is understood by properly interpreting Ezekiel 4-5.

Several solutions have been proposed to explain the 390 years and the

trayed an independent set of events that had taken place or would take place over a period of either 390, 40 or 430 years.

In other words, the priceless contribution of Ezekiel 4 to the Bible's chronology is found by rightly identifying the prophet's 12 symbolic acts and properly matching them to the 12 pairs of events they were meant to portray.

Time markers

This discovery is fundamental because it allows us to build the Bible's chronology around an elaborate network of time markers. With this self-checking mechanism, it is almost impossible to err with the chronology, just as it wouldn't be possible to solve a jigsaw puzzle by putting the pieces in the wrong places.

Another discovery that my chronology highlights is the huge number of patterns that show the unmistakable characteristics of an intelligent design.

John R. 'Takeoff' Hull's book hits the soar spot

By John Dickerson

LINCOLN, Ark.—*Takeoff*, by 88-year-old John R. Hull, is an account of a man's life as he takes us on a journey through his love of aviation and his adventures in the Radio/Worldwide Church of God.

Subtitled *Career Adventures in General Aviation and the FFA*, the book is by a longtime Church of God member who talks about his experiences in the RCG/WCG as well as his years of flying and working in the Federal Aviation Administration.

The title, *Takeoff*, refers to a nickname Mr. Hull earned as a young fellow thanks to his obsession with airplanes.

He mentions in the first chapter his love for planes and disdain for automobiles, not even learning to drive a car for many years.

He was fascinated with American hero Charles Lindbergh and his solo flight across the Atlantic in 1927.

There is a way of escape

The author relates his humble beginnings in a mill town in North Carolina, where few would escape a tedious, humdrum life. He was deter-

mined to escape and pilot airplanes.

After the bombing of Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, changed America forever, John joined the Civil Air

and his training as a pilot and airplane mechanic.

He owned Hull Aircraft Service for a while, then began a lifetime career as



TAKING OFF—John Hull (right in left photo) congratulates his student Garner Ted Armstrong on April 21, 1965. On that day near Big Sandy, Texas, Mr. Armstrong made his first solo flight under the instruction of Mr. Hull. **Right photo:** John and Betty Hull. [Photos courtesy John Hull]

Patrol. At age 18 he attempted to join the Navy but failed the color-blindness test. But somehow he was able to join the Marines.

He recounts stories of the Pacific Theater during World War II.

The story tells about his marriage

a Federal Aviation Administration general-aviation inspector.

Teaching Garner Ted

In 1957 Mr. Hull began to embrace the teachings of Herbert W. Armstrong through the *World Tomorrow*

radio program and the Radio Church of God's *The Plain Truth* magazine.

He became an integral part of the Radio Church of God and taught Garner Ted Armstrong how to fly.

When turmoil in the WCG erupted in the 1970s, Mr. Hull left the church to support Garner Ted Armstrong's Church of God International (CGI).

Mr. Hull, who was born in North Carolina and lived in Texas for many years, later left the CGI as well. He lives in retirement in Blythe, Calif., and Smith, Nev.

The book is an interesting story of a man's life. I had a little trouble with technical aviation jargon, but the reader, especially a Church of God member, can find much of interest.

Order information

Takeoff is available in hardback (\$35) and trade paperback (\$25), 610 pages, from Xlibris. See xlibris.com or call (888) 795-4274.

The above versions of the book and a Kindle version for \$10 are available at Amazon.com.

See also johnrhull.com.

A very sincere doctrine isn't necessarily true

Continued from page 6

is not enough? The 9-11 terrorists were no doubt sincere. So were the prophets of Baal. They were so sincere they were stabbing themselves with knives in a passionate appeal to their nonexistent god (1 Kings 18:28).

Elijah had them slain, which was their just reward, according to the OT canon (verse 40).

Mr. Snow seems to have forgotten that many preachers are not sincere (2 John 1:7) and that we should not follow their errors even if they are sincere.

Mr. Snow believes that I am on the road to "rack and ruin," but I do not fear that doing honest research will lead me to spiritual ruin.

For another view of the canon see Jeff Maehr's article beginning on page 3 of this issue of *THE JOURNAL*. See also several related articles beginning with issue No. 146, dated Dec. 20, 2011.

Connections: Member to Member

Issue No. 140

PUBLISHED BY THE JOURNAL: NEWS OF THE CHURCHES OF GOD

March 13, 2013

We love you, Mr. Sam

By Darlene Warren
BIG SANDY, Texas—I don't get out a lot, but when I do it's usually for a quick trip to Walmart. Everything I need I can get at Mr. Sam's store: groceries, ammunition (what's up, Mr. Sam?) and camo.

(Samuel Moore Walton founded Walmart in 1962. He died in 1992.)

Making a trip to Walmart is like time-traveling yet still being home for supper. Just yesterday standing in the checkout line at a local Walmart I was sandwiched between two young mothers ahead of me and a 40-something man behind me.

I got in this particular line because, even though I had only a few items in my buggy, the line seemed to be less busy than the express line for 20 items or less.

I began to regret my decision as the drama unfolded before my eyes. The girls were shopping together (they looked like sisters), and either each of them had just given birth to quintuplets or else they were doomsday preppers. (Not that there's anything wrong with that. We, of all people, can relate—what with the whole Petra/

wings-of-a-great-eagle scenario of the past.)

The last items the cashier scanned were about 40 jars of baby food.

Back to the story

Everything was going along just fine. The last of the bagged Gerber jars rounded off the top of their shopping buggy, and the credit card was swiped. The machine didn't accept it, so another card was brought forth. It wasn't accepted either. There was a barely audible sigh coming from the man standing behind me.

Another card appeared. Another rejection. Louder sighing and clearing of the throat followed.

When the fourth credit card failed and comments of frozen food thawing were tossed about, I began to get a little jittery. Could I wind up a victim of a brawl between two stressed-out mothers armed with 40 jars of pureed peas and a man just trying to pay for a case of beer?

It gets better

With no other option but to start unscanning some of her purchases, the

cashier began subtracting baby-food jar by baby-food jar, one at a time.

Each time, the cashier calculated how much deficit remained.

The man behind me could no longer take it. When he offered to pay the \$6 that still overran the credit card, the cashier informed him that that wasn't possible because some of the items were WIC (Women, Infants and Children) purchases and had to be removed from the system.

Now there was no denying what was going on in the line behind me.

The murmuring was growing louder as each jar of baby food was rescanned and then shoved aside for reshelving or placed back in the buggy.

Impatience was definitely being displayed in what seemed to be an eternity. (Lest anyone think babies would go hungry that night, only a few jars had to be returned.)

The problem was that not every jar was accepted by the register. Apparently the jars with the WIC-program discount had to be treated differently from those without it. (Try telling that to a working man on his lunch break trying to buy his beer.)

My turn at the register

The girls offered no apologies as they left, but they had saved a few choice words for the man behind me to which he responded in kind.

Knowing that the crowd behind me (which had grown considerably) was not in the greatest of moods, as soon as this card-swiping saga had begun I had rearranged all my purchases so I could quickly throw my stuff on the counter for a quick transaction.

Long before the last of the baby-food jars had been reassessed to either be returned to the shelf or returned to the buggy, I had placed my purchases on the grocery conveyor belt, hoping

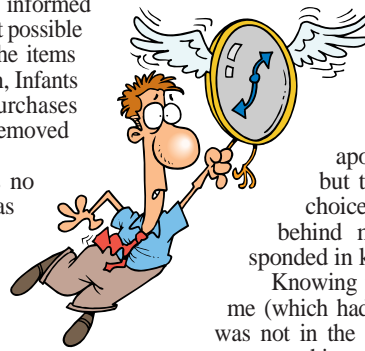
desperately not to earn the ire of those behind me (that they had placed on those who came before me).

I even bagged my own groceries and while doing so placed my body in a leaving stance, giving the man behind me as much room as he needed.

One of my purchases was a bottle of wine. In case you aren't aware when purchasing alcohol, a lot of cash registers prompt the cashier to ask the customer if he is under 40 years old. When she inquired about my age, being in a hurry I never looked up from the check I was writing. I simply responded "I wish!"

To which the man behind me informed the cashier that indeed I had been under 40 when I got in line. Did I time-travel or did it just feel like it?

Mr. Sam, if you're traveling out there somewhere and happen to crash into 2013, take my advice: If you plan to stop by your corporate legacy to pick up a few snacks for the road trip, don't get in line between mothers with their baby food and men with their beer. It could seriously hamper your time-travel experience. Believe me, I've been there. I think.



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'Under the Law' Doesn't Mean 'Under the Penalty of the Law'

Romans 6:14 tells us "ye are not under the law, but under grace." Galatians 5:18 also says believers are not "under the Law." Herbert Armstrong explained that this meant we were not under the **penalty** of the Law. Most of the churches of God continue to teach this. However, Galatians 4:4 uses the same phrase. If we apply this interpretation consistently we must believe that Christ was "born under the penalty of the Law."

That does not make sense. Also, if the penalty doesn't apply to us the law is meaningless. Why do we care about the Law?

Galatians goes on to tell us Messiah came to redeem those who were under the Law (4:4-5). Instead of being slaves we can become sons, given the spirit of Christ and adopted by the Father. What is it like to be a son and what is entailed in having the spirit of Christ?

"If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham" (John 8:39b). Even so, to be children of the Father we must do the works of the Father. "Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him" (Deu 8:6).

The way and the work of the Father is the keeping of His commandments, specifically the Ten Commandments.

"He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked" (I John 2:6). Those who claim to have the spirit of Christ should conduct themselves as Messiah did. Not because they are under the Law, but because they are intent on following the example of Christ and walking in the ways of the Father. We need the Law to help understand this.

The Levites were responsible to administer the Law. If someone does not accept Christ as Messiah, their only hope of forgiveness is through the Law. If one repents and follows Messiah, he is covered by the mercy of the Father, who accepts the blood of Christ as payment for sin. As an adopted son of the Father, the believer is responsible directly to the Father. He is not under the Law as administered by Levi.

This only happens though after, repentance and rejection of the way of the flesh that caused the sin. "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). "And everyone

who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure" (I John 3:3). The believer determines to change, then rids himself of unacceptable conduct. He/she emulates the Son and the old way is forgiven. "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light . . . the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin" (I John 1:7).

The Helper is then given so we can consistently and with a willing mind obey. "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him" (John 14:23). Messiah with the Father will continue Jesus' life through the believer.

"But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter" (Rom 7:6). To be the child of the Father we serve Him according to the full intent of His Law as Messiah did, not just the specific letter of the law. Not only do we not murder, we walk in the spirit and reject even character assassination (Mat 5:21-22). Not only are we faithful to our mates, we don't even think about alternatives (Mat 5:27-28).

Messiah was born under the Law and

lived within its instruction. He will graciously pay our debt to it if we repent, reject our self-centered way and walk selflessly according to His standard. The believer is not under the Law, because he serves a different priesthood and a higher standard: that of Jesus Christ. The administration has changed. "For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also" (Heb 7:12, NASB). The Law, though, is a covenant and cannot be changed (Gal 3:15, Deu 29:9, 31:24-26). The believer is not stuck under that package deal, the law, administered by Levi.

Messiah taught to seek that which was from the beginning. The administration of Levi was not from the beginning. His way, which is His Covenant, is forever (Ps 78:10, 111:9). It must be our nature to walk in His way, obeying the Law of God (Heb 10:16).

Don't wait for someone ordained of men to figure out and explain to you what is the Law of God and what was added later. Develop your own relationship with the Creator by a careful examination of His ways, His laws, His covenant.

★ www.creators covenant.org or www.creators covenant.com ★

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This page is part of CONNECTIONS: MEMBER TO MEMBER, the advertising section of THE JOURNAL

From Jerusalem to the Sea of Glass

After the angel of Revelation 14:6-7 has delivered his worldwide dreams and visions, which will warn the whole world of Christ's imminent return and the need to repent, God's people will flee from the nations of Israel which have acted as Babylon, and arrive in Jerusalem with their God-given instructions, Isaiah 52:6, 'I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence.' [Read our previous article, 'Come Out of Her, My People.']

Joining others who already recognise the importance of Jerusalem, they are soon ready to publish God's message, but in those months the US and Britain will have been brought low and international travel for civilians will cease. Those who will wish to join them, cannot. Revelation 14:8, 'And another, a second angel, followed, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, which hath made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.' ERV.

Then, with the world's policeman removed, the Jews will immediately appeal to the German-led EU to honour its coming protective treaty, and the emerging Beast will oblige, rushing a token force to the nation of Israel to deter further Arab invasion, but with ulterior motives, Daniel 11:23, 'And after the league is made with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small number of people.'

At this point, there will remain less than three years to the return of Christ for His Saints, at the end of which, Matthew 24:29, 'Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give its light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.' The 'tribulation of those days' are years of world war and turmoil as the four horsemen of the Apocalypse ride. (Seals 1-5, Revelation 6:1-8)

Around the world, Israel will be invaded and enslaved, so that less than one tenth finally survive, Isaiah 10:5-6, 'O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.' Jeremiah 30:7, 'Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.' Isaiah 6:13, 'And though a tenth remains in the land, it will again be laid waste. But as the terebinth and oak leave stumps when they are cut down, so the holy seed will be the stump in the land.' NIV.

From Jerusalem though, a message of hope will go out from God's Church, encouraging the Jews and those Israelites who failed to repent after the dreams and visions, to now recognise their sins, Jeremiah 3:14, 'Turn, O backsliding children, says the Lord; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one from a city, and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion.' Those now deep in slumber in God's Church, (Matthew 25:1-10) will repent then, and during the following 3½ years of the Great Tribulation, the Seventh Seal, after the resurrection! Revelation 7:13-14, 'And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.' They join the great multitude of all nations who repent then, encouraged during the last 3½ years by the two witnesses, (verse 9) and will serve God before His

throne, after the second resurrection, for the First Resurrection takes place at the Sixth Seal, before the Great Tribulation!

Revelation 14:15-16, 'And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud (cf. Matthew 24:30) thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.' [This first-fruit harvest is the resurrection]. Revelation 6:16, 'And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.' [This also is the resurrection]. But, Revelation 14:17-19, 'And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. [This angel brings the Great Tribulation.] And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.'

The 'tribulation of those days', including the persecution of the saints at the 5th seal, and the last 3½ years of the Great Tribulation, are detailed in an exposition of Daniel 11 entitled, 'The Kings of the North and South', and also in the End Time Series, on the Ozwitness website.

Halfway through those last 7 years, though, the Beast will arrive at Jerusalem in full power, with His army, Luke 21:20-21, 'And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.' Matthew 24:21, 'For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.'

God's church will then flee South, to Tekoa, warning believing Jews to join them before the Beast's armies completely surround Jerusalem, Jeremiah 6:1, 'O ye children of Benjamin, gather yourselves to flee out of the midst of Jerusalem, and blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a sign of fire in Bethhaccerem: for evil appeareth out of the north, [Haifa] and great destruction.' (Jeremiah speaks to Israel and Judah in the future, here, for, 5:15, 20, at that time, ancient Israel itself had been carried away almost 100 years previously.)

They will be closely pursued by the army of their enemy, the Beast, who has hated their warning broadcast from Jerusalem, into the mountains of Judaea, West of the Dead Sea, Revelation 12:15, 'And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.' But armies mean nothing to God. Zechariah 9:16, 'And the Lord their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land.'

The events of the Sixth Seal are arriving! Luke 21:25, 'And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring'. Joel 2:30-31, 'And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come.'

At these signs, the pursuing army will become fearful, but the Saints remember Luke

21:28, 'And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.' These are the events they have read of in Matthew 24 and Revelation 6, leading up to the resurrection, Revelation 6:12, 'And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood.'

All will fall to the ground as the earth first trembles and then begins to shake, rocks falling down upon the distant army below. The darkened sky will be suddenly rent apart with a great tearing sound and the clouds roll back like waves, revealing an awesome blue light surrounding a great throne, upon which sits the appearance of the glory of the Lord (Ezekiel 1:26-28).

At this sight, a great cry of joy erupts from God's people, but confusion and fear strikes the pursuing army, as the awesome figure descends towards the cowering troops, Psalm 18:9-11, 'He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.'

As the tremors calm, God's people rise from their knees to see what seems to be a great storm of hail and fire poured out upon the army below, verses 12-14, 'At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed, hail stones and coals of fire. The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail stones and coals of fire. Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.'

But that is not the end. The earth itself is torn apart, and with a great roar the army is swallowed up in a cloud of dust. As the people stare in horror, the dust gradually clears, but not a sign of the distant army remains, Revelation 12:16, 'And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.'

While the people stand in silent awe, the earth is filled with the sound of a great trumpet blown by the Lord Himself, Zechariah 9:14, 'And the Lord shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south.' Angels will be seen descending from the throne above, taking those Saints by the hand whose bodies change before the eyes of the onlookers into glowing forms, still recognisable but somehow quite different, and ascend with them to the Sea of Glass in the clouds, along with all the others being resurrected, worldwide, Matthew 24:31, 'And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.' 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17, 'For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord', 1 Corinthians 15:51-52, 'Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be

changed.' As W E Vine explains in his Expository Dictionary, at the resurrection, "the last trump is a military allusion, familiar [then] to Greek readers, and has no connection with the series in Revelation 8:6-11:15."

Tears appear in the eyes of some there, as the realisation dawns upon them that they are not changed, or taken by the angels to the Sea of Glass. Where they go then, and how Christ rescues them, will be explained in our next message, 'Christ Goes to Petra'.

This is the resurrection God's firstfruit Saints have long awaited, of course at the very time of the firstfruit barley harvest in Israel, just 3½ years before Christ's final return at the Feast of Trumpets. Then, at Christ's return with His Bride, an angel, not God, will blow the trumpet, Revelation 11:15, 'And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.'

All the resurrected Saints are gathered by the angels to the Sea of Glass, still visible in the clouds, from where, with Christ, they are carried to God's throne in heaven. Revelation 14:1-3, 'And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.' Hebrews 12:22, 'But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.'

Here they will be prepared for their future role as the Bride of Christ, and Kings and Priests on the earth, educated by Christ Himself, just as were His 12 disciples over their few years with Him, so that they too will experience the maturity we recognise in the Apostles after Christ's ascension.

Will the marriage take place just a few days later, at the Feast of Pentecost, or at one of the other three Feasts of Pentecost which they will experience in Heaven? We aren't told, but it has to be one of them, Revelation 19:7-9, 'Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.'

These years of intense learning will provide all the knowledge His Bride needs, to carry out the various roles for which they have qualified, Luke 19:17, 'And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.' And Revelation 22:12, 'And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.'

Finally, some of us will need considerable equestrian education before returning with Jesus Christ, just before Armageddon! Revelation 19:14, 'And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.' At last, the time of preparation is over. Christ's rule on the earth is about to begin!

To be continued.

<http://ozwitness.net/>

Click on the 'Media' tab for the Abib film about the Firstfruit harvest

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CONNECTIONS runs classifieds: help wanted, for sale, pen pals, prayer requests and more. Send ads (including prayer requests and obituaries) to CONNECTIONS, P.O. Box 1020, Big Sandy, Texas 75755, U.S.A., or to Darlene Warren at rldladnier@aol.com.

Who Was in the Garden of Gethsemane?

O Z P H X G P T H O M A S A X I N H Q K
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Andrew	James the Younger	Peter	The angel
Bartholomew	Jesus	Philip	from heaven
Chief priests	John	Simon	The crowd
Elders	Judas	Temple guards	The Father
James	Matthew	Thaddaeus	The servant
			Thomas

Connections: Member to Member

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Why do you tithe on money?



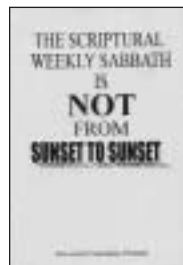
Few of us have taken a closer look at the Scriptures to see what it really says about tithing. Honestly, where does the Bible say, or even hint, that we are to tithe on the money we earn? What truly is Biblical "increase"? Few doctrines have been as badly misrepresented as the doctrine of tithing. If you now tithe on money, on your paycheck, then you owe it to yourself and your family to get the facts. Read this detailed

study of tithing which has been freeing people from the false teachings on tithing for over 20 years. (Suggested donation, \$3 ppd)

A sunset-to-sunset weekly Sabbath is not in the Bible!

It is an old story: assuming a belief comes from the Bible, when in fact the Bible says nothing of the sort. Most of us came out of Protestantism because we saw exactly that. The truth, the Scriptural truth, is the sunset-to-sunset weekly Sabbath doctrine is just ANOTHER ONE of those beliefs that has no Biblical basis whatever! Shocking though this may be, it is the provable truth. For nearly 20 years the book, *The Scriptural Weekly Sabbath is NOT from Sunset-to-Sunset*, has shown the vital truth on this crucial subject. The Biblical facts and history do not lie.

Read the facts for yourself. Is Lev. 23:32 really proof of a sunset-to-sunset weekly Sabbath? Could it be an ancient Babylonian method of reckoning the day gradually replaced the observance of the true Biblical day? This book is a must read. Order yours today. (Suggested donation \$3, ppd)



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Resources

Put excitement back into your Bible studies. (Free instructions on how to do a concordance Bible Study with friendly, knowledgeable people.) Write to Paul Robinson, 10 Jackson St., Umatilla, OR 97882. Or Email: willdriflowers@yahoo.com.

Virtual Church, Ken Westby, every Sabbath, 11 a.m. Pacific, 1 p.m. Central, 2 p.m. Eastern, (916) 233-0562, www.godward.org.

Buy Silver Coins, Jack Mitchell, www.silverinternational.net. (903) 593-9965.

Art Mekarow, P.O. Box 1197, Montgomery, TX 77356, art@mekarow.com, www.GodsPuzzleSolved.com.

Building Bridges Not Walls, Reconciliation Group.org.

The Church of God is not prepared, www.ChildrenOfGod.net, P.O. Box 30332, Little Rock, AR 72260.

Personals

Widower, retired teacher, conservative, fit, long-time COG member, seeks single COG lady 50-62 for long-term relationship. Friendship first. Write Gordon Winkelman, 9571 E. 5th St., Tucson, AZ 85748. Pictures, please.

Hello. My name is Janine Lindstrom. My husband and I are deaf or hearing-impaired and live in Oregon. We would like to meet other deaf brethren (nationwide or overseas) who are Sabbath keepers through letters or E-mail. Also, there are two other deaf brethren (one is single and one is married) in Oregon with whom we get together once in a while for Sabbath services and for the holy days. If interested in getting acquainted, you can E-mail me at janinel@spring.blackberry.net. Hope to hear from you soon.

Free/trade

Free: About 20 copies of the Ambassador College yearbook, *The Envoy*, from the 1970s through the 1990s. I'm giving them away, but you will need to pay postage. Mrs. Clyde Mottin, 514 Milan Ave., Ravenna, NE 68869. Phone (308) 452-3340.

Pen pals

Sabbath-keeping Christian from India (68), would appreciate pen pals from all over the world. Hobbies: reading Christian books and literature. P.V. Henry, Pullickal House, Njaralloor Kara, Kizhakkambalam, Kerala-683 562, India.

Seeking pen pals, preferably of the Chosen Few, identifiable as individuals with nonaligned viewpoints. Please write to Richard Heath, 518 W. 9th St., Pueblo, CO 81003.

Hello. My name is Janine Lindstrom. My husband and I are deaf or hearing-impaired and live in Oregon. We would like to meet other deaf brethren (nationwide or overseas) who are Sabbath keepers through letters or E-mail. Also, there are two other deaf brethren (one is single and one is married) in Oregon with whom we get together once in a while for Sabbath services and for the holy days. If interested in getting acquainted, you can E-mail me at janinel@sprint.blackberry.net. Hope to hear from you soon.

Obituaries

Stig Robert Erlander died Sept. 30, 2011. Stig was born in Minneapolis May 24, 1928, to Erland and Elvira Erlander, recent immigrants from Sweden. He attended grade and high school in Minneapolis. He joined the U.S. Navy in 1946 where he was stationed in Adak, Alaska. In 1948 he returned to Minneapolis and attended the University of Minnesota and graduated in 1951. Then back in the Navy again, stationed in Philadelphia, Pa., he designed catapults. After his service he returned to college, where he earned his Ph.D. in biochemistry from Iowa State. He went to Purdue University for his postdoctorate. He then was employed at the Northern Regional Lab of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Peoria, Ill. In 1966 he took his family to Pasadena, Calif., where he taught chemistry at Ambassador College. Becoming chairman of the Science Department at Ambassador, he and his staff engaged in several research projects. At Ambassador he published numerous papers in outside scientific publications on cereal chemistry, health and nutrition and exotic topics such as "super water." His prolific publishing continued for many years after he left employment at Ambassador. Hundreds of references to his publications and other activities are listed by Google. His next employment was teaching chemistry at the University of Pasadena, a chiropractic school. He and his wife, Leatrice later, started their own business, a retail store, Erlander's Natural Products, in Altadena, where he supplied clothing and other products made of natural fibers for those who have allergies to synthetics. His son, Stig Paul, preceded him in death. He is survived by his wife, Leatrice Gloria, a daughter, Linnea, and a son, Mark. The Erlanders have four granddaughters, Tiara, Sarah, Clarissa and Celeste. He is fondly remembered by his family members and many others from whom they learned much about science and wine-making, and whom he helped with health issues.



Stig Erlander

Annette (Bergin) Emerson, 91, of Springfield, Mass., passed away in ADD DATE. She was preceded in death in 2001 by her husband of 54 years, Asa A. Emerson Jr. Both were church members. She leaves a sister, Mary Barton of Springfield, three children, Ron of Springfield, Anne Marie of Myrtle Beach, S.C., and Eileen of Lansing, Mich., nine grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Obituaries

Johnny Daniel Orr, 85, died in November 2012. He was born in California and served in the US Navy during World War II. Johnny started attending with the Church of God in 1964. He attended the Sacramento congregation, then went to Modesto the first Sabbath a congregation was established there. In 1989 he moved to Arkansas and then to Missouri, where he remained active with several Church of God groups. He passed away with 48 years in the church.

Jerry McCauley of Depoe Bay, Ore., died of natural causes on Dec. 26, 2012, at age 79. He was born Dec. 11, 1933, in Kirksville, Mo. Jerry graduated from Mexico High School in 1951. He married his high-school sweetheart, Mary Ann Isgrig, on Jan. 12, 1955, in Columbia, Mo. They proudly raised four children: Dan, Patricia, Carol and Douglas. Jerry graduated from the University of Missouri in 1955 with a degree in entomology. He served in the U.S. Army as a trainer for Nike Ajax surface-to-air missile systems at Fort Bliss, Texas, reaching the rank of 1st lieutenant. When his service was up, Jerry went to work for his father's janitorial supply business, Atkins-McCauley Chemical Company, in Columbia. In 1958



James McCauley

Jerry began offering a new commercial odor control service that he eventually called Aire-Master. In 1963 Jerry established Aire-Master as a separate company and relocated to Springfield, Mo. He grew Aire-Master into a nationwide franchise system and manufacturing business. Jerry retired as president of Aire-Master of America in 1997, naming his son, Douglas McCauley, as his successor. Jerry became chairman of the board and remained so until his death. He and Mary Ann spent their retirement traveling between their homes in Oregon and Missouri. They eventually moved to the Oregon coast permanently. Mary Ann McCauley died from a stroke in 2008. Jerry was respected and loved by his family, friends, business associates and employees. He had a joyful spirit and an outgoing concern for others. Jerry loved to make people laugh, he gave many people an opportunity to be successful, and his Christian faith guided him in everything he did. Jerry served as an ordained elder in the WCG (now GCI) for over 30 years. Jerry was preceded in death by his parents, Jacob and Jeanette McCauley; wife, Mary Ann McCauley; son, Dan McCauley; and daughter, Carol Bosserman. Jerry is survived by daughter Patti Kilgore of Depoe Bay, son Douglas McCauley of Depoe Bay and granddaughter, Larisa Bosserman of Fargo, N.D. Send donations to Jerry McCauley Memorial Fund, Springfield First Community Bank, 2006 S. Glenstone, Springfield, MO 65804. See therainingseaon.org aquarium.org.

Jackie Hammer Carnes of Dallas, Texas, died Dec. 21, 2012. Mrs. Carnes was born March 4, 1928. She is survived by two sisters, Shirley Armstrong of Flint, Texas, and Molly Antion of Pasadena, Calif., and a brother, Tony Hammer of Dallas. Survivors also include three sons, Rod Carnes, Ricky Carnes and Randy Carnes. Mrs. Carnes was preceded in death by her husband, Guy Carnes. She was buried in Lilbert, Texas.



Jackie Carnes

Viola Walther passed away Nov. 25, 2012. She was preceded in death by her husband, Dr. Richard Walther. She is survived by two children, Mark and Diane, and four grandchildren.

Obituaries

James Noble Pope Jr., 77, of Thornton, N.H., passed away Nov. 15, 2012, at his home after a brief illness. Born May 3, 1935, in Jersey City, N.J., he was the son of James N. and Rebecca (Ogelesby) Pope. Jim was raised in Mountain Lakes, N.J. He attended MIT and Columbia and received his degree in electrical engineering from UNH Durham. He met his childhood sweetheart and future wife, Eleanor, at a vacation spot in the Poconos. They kept in touch throughout the years before they began dating and eventually marrying. They were married for 30 years before her death. While working overseas for the Department of Defense, he met his second wife, Sheena (Manvel). Jim was blessed to meet and marry his third wife, Marjorie (Coulson), five years ago. Jim's hobbies included telecommunications, computers, electronics and emerging technologies. He was known by his family and friends for his political beliefs, which he freely shared. Jim was a religious man and held his beliefs close to heart. He raised his children to appreciate Christian values. He was a generous and kind man, trying to make others happy when he could. He was predeceased by his first and second wives and a brother, Edward O. Pope. He is survived by his beloved wife of five years, Marjorie, of Thornton; eight children, Charlotte and husband Witold Palacz of Somersworth, N.H., Cyndi and husband Brian Beede of Ashland, N.H., James Pope and wife Sara of Denver, Colo., Clark Pope and wife Heather, also of Denver, Charles Pope and wife Laura of Bloomington, Ind., Stephanie Pope of Thornton, Lia and husband Bill Jackson of Roanoke, Va., and Regan and husband Wayne Johnson of Holland Patent, N.Y.; and 17 grandchildren, Elena, Alexandra, David, Eleanor, Charles, Zoe, Sophie, Richie, Anna Grace, Liam, Katrina, Heidi, Shana, Andria, Adriana and Dylan. Jim is also survived by many nieces and nephews and many friends. He is also survived by his sister, Elizabeth Philbrick of Wentworth, and his brother, Robert D. Pope of Somersworth.



James Pope

Jerry Ashcraft Sr., 68, of Red Springs, Texas, passed away Nov. 28, 2012, in a Tyler hospital. Mr. Ashcraft was born Oct. 5, 1944, in Tyler, the son of the late Curtis Lee and Bertha Lee (Hammock) Ashcraft. Mr. Ashcraft was a lifelong resident of Lindale and Red Springs and was a member of the Masonic Lodge and Church of God. He owned Tyler Marble Co. for 40 years. He then owned Lions RV Park until 2008. He is survived by his wife, Sandra "Mickey" Ashcraft of Red Springs; son, Jerry "Bubba" Ashcraft of Red Springs; daughter, Sandra "Sandy" Jones of Big Sandy; sister, Ann Laura Langdrige of Tyler; five grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.



Jerry Ashcraft

Glenn Roberson, 67, died Feb. 10, 2013. Glenn will be remembered fondly for his years of service at SEP in Orr, Minn., and at Ambassador College in Big Sandy and Pasadena. He also worked for 10 years for LeTourneau University in Longview, Texas, and the last several years for Good Shepherd Medical Center, also in Longview. Glenn was at work at GSMC when he collapsed. He was a special man, loved by all who knew him. Glenn is survived by his mother (in her 90s), brothers, a sister and many other relatives. He has family in New Mexico, Texas and Virginia. He has two dogs he called "his boys." They will greatly miss Glenn.

See OBITUARIES, page 38

The Church of God is not prepared for The Return of Jesus Christ

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Now and New World Order

Part 19

In this article I talk about the prominent part certain people have played down through history. Many of the people I am talking about happen to be Jewish and as such are, for the most part, adherents to the religion and culture of Judaism and, in most cases, are Zionists: supporters of the establishment of the modern state of Israel. In no way do I, by commenting on what I see are nefarious actions on the part of some people who happen to be Jewish, mean to imply that any human being is evil or otherwise defective simply because he happens to be Jewish.

Conspiracy of the 6-Pointed Star

By Texe Marrs (2011). Shows how a class of elitist, Satan-deceived Jews rule the world: Stephen, in the Bible, boldly told Jews of their idol worship with the star of their god (Acts 7:43). Graham wrote in her book *The Six-Pointed Star* of its 6 points, 6 triangles and 6 sides of the inner hexagram to form 666. It is displayed often in Mason lodges (dominated by a few elitist Jews in high positions). It appears above the eagle on US \$1 bills. Solomon's 666 inferred extreme wealth (1 K 10:14). In his apostasy he allowed worship of Ashtoreth or Astarte, a star goddess (11:5).

God hated their feasts (Isa 1:14), as Purim in which they went wild, got drunk and resembles Mardi Gras. [Hanukkah is the Jewish version of Christmas. The 10 tribes of Israel loved idolatry and were exiled by God. All 12 tribes for the most part act like Gentiles now, worshipping false gods (Rom 11:7-8, 25-26.)

Most Jews are misled by the Cabala that claims Leviathan the serpent will ascend out of the abyss and conquer for the Jews as their Messiah. Harold Rosenthal, who is himself Jewish, said "Most Jews do not like to admit it, but our god is Lucifer." [Of course, Lucifer deceives the whole world (Rev 12:9)!] Rosenthal and others note that Judaism as a religion is full of superstition, sorcery and witchcraft. Has vain repetition and head-bobbing in prayers for a trance-like state. While they present a white-washed appearance like the Pharisees.

The serpents or twin snakes are symbols of the god Aesclepius and with a winged rod adorn hospitals and signify doctors. The serpent was adored in Babylon, and in Mexico as Quetzalcoatl. Cabalists regard him as Lucifer, equivalent to God, or the god of freedom and liberty, opposed to God of the Bible deemed harsh. The serpent gave man the tree of knowledge that opened men's minds, forbidden by God. A common depiction, as a recent Jewish greeting card, is a giant snake encircling the earth. Eating its tail like the ancient Ouroboros used for many company logos.

The Manhattan Project for atomic bombs was hatched by the Jewish elite there (that led to bombing two Japanese cities, mostly civilians). [Of course, the citizens of the state of Israel would want such WMD, living among hostile nations.] More Jews live in New York, or even Florida, than live in Israel today. Both US General Wesley Clark and Clinton's Secretary of State Albright were forced to admit they were Jews.

Just 6000 Jews began the state of Israel in 1948, illegally displacing the native population of Palestinians who according to DNA may be closer kin to the tribe of Judah than most Jews. [More than 80% who claim to be Jews are not (Rev 2:9). Palestinians have squatters' rights but were not promised that land by God.]

Rabbis say only they know the hidden or coded meaning of the Torah, thus control ordinary Jews [as Pharisees did, though relative few in number to other Jews]. While Jews are known to be monotheists believing in one God, the Cabala claims the word for God is plural so refers to a remote and unknowable God, and his counterpart. The latter male and female, and recently embraced by thousands of rabbis and millions of people, including Hollywood celebrities. Satan is allowed this world under his control (Luke 4:5-7), but his time is short. The Roman god Janus with two faces and the Masonry double-headed eagle represent the dual god nature.

Jews are proud that Moses controlled snakes, and they believe even Leviathan will be under their control, the beast from the sea (Rev 13:1). Many Jews have a serpent on their grave marker to protect them in life and death and so depicted on synagogues. They even claim (in the Talmud) it is all right to charm snakes on the Sabbath, to use magic to control them. S-shaped or even snake-shaped jewelry are worn in this

snake worship. The Israeli Defense Force helicopters have tri-headed serpent insignia.

Cabala means curled-one, for the serpent deity, teaching wisdom. Hasidic, Orthodox Jewish men wear black and let their hair hang down in curls like snakes from skull caps to honor Leviathan, as Pharisee 'vipers' (Mat 23:33).

Many Jews desire Gnosis, to know the ancient mysteries. The Cabala indicates the wicked will go the route of Hell or the abyss yet will end up in Paradise. But Jesus said the Pharisees or Orthodox Judaism is based on man-made traditions. That their converts are twice the child of hell than their teachers (23:15). [Despite Jesus' harsh words in Matthew chapter 23, He did not say they would ultimately perish. But will have their one and only chance for salvation in the 2nd resurrection.]

Marrs shows many uses of coded messages in hand signs, gestures and body signs by famous people, particularly for the camera in posed shots. As the ubiquitous devil sign by rock stars, US presidents, their wives and kids.

Top bankers are 85% Jewish, while Wall Street executives are 95% with Jews as CEOs. They have control over the media as Yahoo, Facebook, Google, Apple, Microsoft and Hollywood. Many Jews have names for precious metals or jewels as Goldstein, Silverman, Diamond, Crystal and Rubenstein (ruby). Jesus said not to lay up treasures on earth (Mat 6:19-21).

Jewish Bernie Madoff made-off with \$65 billion by a Ponzi scheme bilking investors, even some Jews. In prison now, but the money is still in Israeli banks off-limits to US investigation. He had conspired with a few other Jews to gain this vast sum and was President of the American Jewish Congress and pal of Edgar Bronfman Chairman of the parent group, the World Zionist Congress.

Elite Jews had caused the financial meltdown in 2007-8 in financial institutions as AIG, Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, Lehman Brothers and Bear Sterns. The people in charge (as the Federal Reserve) to keep such things from happening were Jews as Alan Greenspan, Ben Bernanke, Henry Paulson and Timothy Geithner. And many CEOs and executives got away with bloated severance pay and other perks, while their firms sank. They get away with it because many judges are Jews, and the Talmud tells Jews to favor other Jews. [Of course, any ethnic group might do that if in charge.]

Jesus accused the Jews [led by the few Pharisees in charge] of turning the Temple of God into a den of thieves (Luke 19:46). And said no one can worship both God and mammon or money (16:13). While top Jews claim to be atheists, those Jews really worship the god of money. Mark Twain wrote "The Jew is a money-getter, and in getting his money he is a very serious obstruction to less capable neighbors who are on the same quest."

Joan Rivers on her radio talk show cursed Jews who convert to Christianity. She said "I'm Jewish. I don't work out. If God had intended us to bend over, he would have put diamonds on the floor." Jews as the Oppenheims control diamonds, including blood diamonds from conflicts for Kay, Tiffany's and Zales Jewelers.

Israeli men massacring Palestinians is honored in Israel. Rabbi Yaacov Perrin praised Baruch Goldstein who machined-gunned 40 unarmed Moslem worshipers by saying "One million Arabs are not worth a single Jewish fingernail" reported in the *NY Times*. [Again, the few elite Jews deceiving common Jews.]

Jews sought to ban religion from the US government at its conception [aiding Catholics who were banned, too].

Jews who took over Russia preached against capitalism, but the rich ruling elite lived in luxury. Karl Marx, much adored by Jews, wrote: "What is the basis of Judaism? A practical passion and greed for profit. To what can we reduce his (the Jew's) religious worship? To extortion. What is his real God? Cash!" And further "What is the worldly religion of the Jew? Huckstering. What is his worldly God? Money." [Though many non-Jews are on the same quest.]

Bernie Madoff is only one of many Jewish financial thugs in the US (and he was chairman of the NASDAQ Stock Exchange). Citibank stole \$200 billion, yet got bailed out by US taxpayers. Scott Burns wrote in the *Austin American-Statesman* about the amount of Madoff's crime then estimated to be only \$50 billion, compared to 10 million ordinary crimes in 2007 costing 'only' \$18 billion ac-

ording to the FBI Uniform Crime Reports.

Russian Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn wrote that 66 million Russians (mostly professed Christians) were killed by Jews in the Communist Revolution (1917+), others tortured and put in gulag camps. He was imprisoned for years since even 'thought' crimes were punished. Synagogues were protected and anti-Semite laws enforced. While Jews claim Hitler's Holocaust was atrocious at 6 million, many researchers claim the figure is exaggerated. Jews with US help are constructing gulag camps around the world.

Many US 'Christian' preachers favor Israel. Billy Graham said he got advice from Rabbi Tannenbaum in New York every day. Yet while talking to President Nixon not aware he was being taped said "The Bible talks about two kinds of Jews. One is called the Synagog of Satan. They're the ones putting out the pornographic literature and obscene films." Nixon's and Graham's main topic was Jewish control of the media, about the "terrible Jewish clique that is totally dominating the media." Also mentioned were Christians expelled in Israel. (Since the Jews' Talmud claims Jesus was a bastard, a liar, and so on.) The main reason Nixon was ousted was due to his stand against Jewish influence in the US.

His VP Spiro Agnew was outspoken against ruling Jews and became more bold telling in public speeches of their US media control and disastrous foreign policy in US affairs. He named many specific people and publications. "They are all Jews!" For a while he got away with these tirades, but abruptly he was forced to resign office.

Back in 1945 Truman dropped atom bombs on Japanese civilians though Japan was ready to surrender. US Army-Air Force Major George Jordan told in his book *Major Jordan's Diaries* (1952) that FDR and Truman conspired so Communist USSR could get atomic bombs, too. Jordan worked alongside his Russian counterpart Colonel Kotikov to do this, so Russia exploded its first atomic bomb in 1949. Jordan followed orders, but was outraged.

Just months after the Pearl Harbor attack, Soviet spy Harry Hopkins working for FDR and Truman got their permission to ship to Russia military equipment even before US priority! Soviet control in the White House was so great that Senator McCarthy said 200 Communists were on the payroll in the US State Department. Top Jews controlled US policy so both Israel and the USSR got atomic bombs. Truman also favored Communists in China under Mao (trained by the US Skull and Bones Club and made a Mason by US Jews) so over 50 million Chinese were killed. Finally, Truman was criticized so much by Americans who wanted him impeached that he set up the Truman Doctrine to halt Communist expansion, though it angered his Jewish advisers.

Truman allowed captured Germans after WWII to die of starvation under Russian [and US] control or use them as slaves. He had general Patton assassinated for opposing this Marshall Plan and wanting to go back to the USA to expose the scheme. Only next President Hoover kept Germans from extermination. Truman fired Douglas MacArthur for being against dropping atomic bombs on Japan. Secretary of Defense James Forrestal was abducted and drugged in an insane asylum for being against Truman's policies, and was later thrown out a 16-story window.

The 1948 UN resolution provided two states in Israel, one each for Jews and Palestinians, but none yet for the natural born people. This majority does not rule within Israel, but is growing since Moslems do not practice abortion and birth control as Jews. Truman became out of favor with the Jews so was allowed only his modest home in Missouri after his presidency. There he said he made Israel into a nation for US Jews to have a homeland, but wondered why they don't go there!

If Obama hired any other particular ethnic group to lead with him, he would be strongly criticized by other groups, yet 10 of his top-ranked officers are Jews though they make up only 2.5% of the US population. Obama is aptly *Rothschild's choice*.

Edmond de Rothschild is honored on Israel's 500-shekel note as the *Father of Israel*. The latest US presidents were photographed donning skull caps and joining Jews worshipping at the Wailing Wall. They have Jews in their ancestry. [While the Rothschilds do much evil now, such

as fomenting wars for profit, they will have a chance for salvation. Like Hitler (a Rothschild) will in the 2nd resurrection. King Manasseh set the example for that by doing incredible evil, and later repenting (2 K 21:1-17; 2 Chr 33:1-16.)

Elite Jews led 911 events

Chess champion Bobby Fischer was a Jew at least by his mother and castigated Jewish control. "America is totally under control of the Jews." His mother likely told him what the Communist Jews did while she lived in Russia. He later said "There is no United States as people think of it. It's just a puppet in the Jews' hands . . . The US government and American Jewry are virtually interchangeable . . . Jews are a criminal people, and the Jews completely control the United States, and the Jews are using the U.S. as a vehicle to take over the world." Due to Jewish influence, he died poor in Iceland, site of his world championship. [So top Jews (misled by Satan) can be cruel to average Jews.]

Gerald Celente on Fox TV 2009 said "Wall Street is Washington DC and Washington DC is Wall Street"—fascism, corporate control over government. The US, thanks to the 911 attacks, has installed a military base at each Iraqi production oil facility. The US built pipelines there to Israel so it is well supplied, and Iraqi oil is now shipped to India and China. Rothschild is now dictator over this oil bonanza. Israel's PM Benjamin Netanyahu said "911 was good for Israel and the Jews."

Of 1100 suspects for 911 arrested, 100 were Israelis. Angry witnesses saw 5 of them celebrate the Twin Tower destruction, photographing themselves in front of it. Months prior to 911 the Israelis were criticized for cruelty to Palestinians, tanks bulldozing farms and homes, and people tortured in prisons. But after 911, Islamic terrorists were blamed and Israeli atrocities forgotten.

A 2009 British *Sunday Times* issue reported "Number 85 Broad Street in lower Manhattan is where the money is. All of it . . . a political force more powerful than governments." This is where Lloyd Blankfein, who is Jewish, works as CEO of Goldman Sachs, the premier bank and investment house. The mortgage and real estate meltdown was from its marketing trillions in ponzi scheme investments and then sold them short. Yet it received \$200 billion from the insurance firm, crooked AIG, for losses it did not have. So it made much money both ways! It also colluded with its partner firm of Morgan Stanley to drive up oil prices when nations were hurt from the original scam. [So Satan directed the relative few to influence their employees to do evil.]

JFK in his 2nd term tried to lessen Jewish influence and force Israel to get rid of its nuclear force. This led the Israeli Mossad to assassinate him with aid of the CIA and FBI. LBJ took over and allowed Israel free reign.

An Internet source gives details of Jack Rubenstein (Ruby), who was Jewish, who killed Lee Harvey Oswald. His final words were recorded: "I did this that they wouldn't implicate Jews . . . Protect American Jews from a pogrom that could occur because of anger over the assassination." Walter Cronkite said "I can't think of any group—with the exception of Israeli intelligence—that would have been able to keep the JFK assassination under wraps for so long." It seems Jack Ruby was Bill Clinton's father. Which would explain Clinton's remarks after retiring his presidency speaking before a US Jewish group. He said he loved Israel so much he would volunteer to fight for it (despite being a US draft dodger himself).

The Jew Mordechai Vanunu worked on Israel's nuclear plant. He became disgusted by Israel lying about their nuclear weapons and finally spoke publicly, so was sentenced to 18 years in prison, mostly in solitary confinement. [Another case of a Jew speaking out against being misled by other Jews in charge.] In 2004, he claimed JFK was assassinated by the Israeli Mossad for trying to get rid of its nuclear force, and that Rothschild is the true power behind Israel and ordered the killing.

Pakistan's Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto was killed for saying on a 2002 British TV show that 911 was an inside job. And that she knew Osama bin Laden was killed; how, who did it and why. Of course, the show was censored for airing. Her father Ali Bhutto was PM and helped Pakistan with its first democracy. But Kissinger warned him not to continue its nuclear program (since Israel wants to be the only one in the area with nuclear bombs).

Every prime minister of Israel has been a high level Mason, including Golda Meir of the women's version. Rabbi Geoffrey Dennis wrote in *Jewish Myth, Magic and Mysticism* (2007) "Judaism is one of the oldest living esoteric traditions in the world. Virtually every form of western mysticism and spiritualism known today draws upon Jewish mythic and occult

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Now and New World Order

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

teachings—magic, angelology, alchemy, numerology, astral projection, astrology, amulets, altered states of consciousness, alternate healing and rituals of power—all have roots in the Jewish occult.” [Judaism continues Mystery Babylon.]

Edward Gibbons told in his classic *Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire* that Jews murdered tens of thousands of innocent people atrociously. [Jews were not the only ones to do so.]

John Sack wrote *An Eye for an Eye* (1993) because he was disgusted by his Jewish religion allowing vengeance on Germans after WWII. Allies let them lead 1255 concentration camps including women, children and babies to starve, beat, torture and murder. The *NY Times* and TV’s *60 Minutes* both corroborated his story. After his book came out, the most notorious commandant Jew Lt. Salomon Mored was indicted in Polish courts for crimes against humanity, but he fled and resides in Israel. The Polish prosecutor claims Israel pursues such people when the roles are reversed. London’s *Daily Telegraph* newspaper added that Stalin picked Jewish commanders knowing they would show little mercy.

US invading Iraq allowed Jews to gain the throne of Babylon, sweet revenge. A photo from the Chabad Lubavitchers’ website shows Chief of Chaplains for NY State’s Army National Guard Jacob Goldstein seated on the solid gold throne where Saddam once sat. The Jews rule in Iraq now from the US embassy there, the biggest in the world with 16,000 employees, to oversee the oil industry. Baghdad’s history museum was looted by Jews and artifacts taken back to Israel. Including ancient documents telling that the exiled Jews practiced the same pagan rites as Babylon. [The rest of the world does, too.]

The Rothschilds own the Temple Mount so could get rid of the Moslem part. Some holy weapons in a war will ‘inadvertently’ destroy the Dome of the Rock.

The double-headed eagle on Albert Pike’s book *Morals & Dogma* represents the Babylonian god of money and forces (Dan 11:38), Mammon-Ra. He wrote in it of the “*Jewish Utopia World Government of the Jews, by the Jews and for the Jews forever.*” Top Jews are known as Zionists and propose Jerusalem be the seat of the UN and world capital.

Roman Emperor Nero married a Jewess, converted to Judaism and horribly persecuted Christians. Illuminati Jews incited the French Revolution with torture and beheading. For years the Jewish involvement in the Russian Revolution was kept secret, but later admitted in the Lenin Museum in Moscow.

The New Age movement was inspired by top Jews [misled by Satan]. Hinduism and Judaism have many things in common. Jews started the Jehovah Witnesses and the Mormons, with Freemasonry rites. Add Lucis Trust, Theosophy, World Goodwill and the Maitreya Foundation. A few Masons like to boast *Freemasonry is not a religion, it is religion* though most deny the fact publicly.

In the end times Jerusalem is called Sodom and Egypt (Rev 11:8). It is very wicked already with high numbers of murders, rapes, incest, pedophilia, robberies, pornography, gambling, homosexual brothels and sex trafficking. Love Parades advocate a sexually free lifestyle. [Many cities are corrupt when evil men wax worse (2 Tim 3:13).]

Israeli citizen Israel Shamir was disgusted with Israel’s idea of Jewish supremacy over other races. He calls Israel “*a Ku Klux Klan state run by madmen.*” Black Ethiopians there rioted when they learned their donated blood was trashed as inferior. Shamir wrote that even religious Jews do not know of the Jewish (Zionist) world organizing plans. The average Jew does not act religiously.

Ethnic cleansing of Palestinians: Israel’s PM Ariel Sharon is called the *Butcher of Lebanon* for his military stint ordering troops to massacre Lebanese men, women and children. Israelis [deceived by their top leaders] practice 20 Palestinian eyes for every Jewish eye. In 1998 an Israeli retired general told that in the 1973 war with Egypt, thousands of Egyptian POWs were led to the desert, machine-gunned down and bulldozed over.

Jewish thugs started the nation of Israel and were supported by US gangsters as Meyer

Lansky. They use bribes and sex to corrupt US politicians to do their bidding. [Again, top leaders, whether Jew or not, follow Satan’s influence to influence those they represent.] The Las Vegas gambling casino industry was founded by Jewish gangsters [but kept prosperous by American costumers.]

Marvin Crevald of Hebrew University 2006 said “*We Israelis possess several hundred atomic warheads and rockets and can launch them at targets in all directions, perhaps even at Rome. Most European capitals are targets . . . We have the capacity to take the world down with us.*”

Michael Piper wrote *The Golem* book about the Jewish beast. Jewish medieval lore has Golem created of clay with magical power that defeats Jewish foes, but becomes a threat to its Jewish creators. Called the Samson Option since it would destroy Israel’s enemies, but also ‘Samson’ and the Jews, too. Israel speaks of its nuclear weapons as holy instruments of God.

Admiral William Fullton said US forces (with its nuclear force) would not go along with the plan to attack Iran with nuclear bombs, saying “*We are trying to put the crazies back in the box.*” (But conventional means are not ruled out.) In the 1920 *Golem* movie, a rabbi uses a magic word and the pentagram or 5-point star (of the US?) to bring the created giant man to life. Later the hexagram or 6-point star is shown on Golem’s face indicating Judaism.

In Jimmy Carter’s memoirs he tells that peace between Jews and Arabs could have happened if PM Menachem Begin was not a racial bigot, believing Jews superior to others, and God sent them to own the land. Jews want Gentiles to intermarry, but Israel is an apartheid nation, and non-Jews are not welcome. [Similar view as Hitler’s Aryan supremacy.]

Even the Zionist *Israel My Glory*, supposed to be a Christian ministry, cites examples from the Talmud that Jesus is hated as a bastard and son of harlot Mary. In the Talmud Maimonides says if you see a Gentile drowning, don’t help but go ahead and drown him [Jesus said the good Samaritan acted better than Jews (misled by the Pharisees)]. US Supreme Court Justice Ruth Ginsburg claims “*The Talmud is my sacred guide for daily living.*”

When DNA testing showed many Jews were not really of Judah, popular US Jewish writer Christopher Hitchens joked that Jews today are *Semi-Semites*. If many Jews are not really God’s Chosen, then should they have the right to the land of Israel? Jesus said the kingdom of God would be taken from the Jews (Mat 21:43 [though Judah (Sephardic Jewry) is of the 144,000 in Revelation chapter 7]).

The Jew Nathanael Kapner is now a Christian and reports on Zionist Jews, in this case controlling US local newspapers so there really are no local ones since they are owned by companies hundreds of miles away. So most any news Americans hear about is from the Israeli point of view.

The Nuremberg trials after WWII were a sham, and several US prosecutors resigned. Elite Jews manipulated and forced confessions of Germans by torture and executed with little evidence. Oddly, the Jews always claim 6 million Jews were in the Holocaust, but this figure was in *The American Hebrew* newspaper of 10-31-1919 before WWII! The 6 million mentioned over and over in the text regarding a supposed holocaust going on back then. (Please view this online!)

Holocaust stories are found to be fiction as *Surviving with Wolves* and the *Diary of Anne Frank*, the latter written with a ball point pen not invented yet! Elie Wiesel told many such tales and when outed said “*Some stories are true that never happened.*” Simon Wiesenthal told tales, even that in a concentration camp he tried to commit suicide, but Nazi guards saved him! Head of Israel’s Mossad Isser Harel said “*Balderdash . . . nonsense, Wiesenthal did nothing of the sort.*”

Researchers have found that gas chambers, soap made of human fat and human skin lampshades never happened. Ernst Zundel was sentenced to years in a German prison (though he lived in Canada) for speaking out against the Holocaust. The German judge ruled “*Truth is not a defense.*” His attorney was sentenced to 3.5 years of prison! Even the curator of the Auschwitz Camp museum said in a televised interview that Soviet Communists [Jews] con-

cocted gas chambers after WWII as being there.

Tiny Israel is riding the US as Beast, with help from some American Jews in control of most everything American as media and banking. Wall Street is almost 100% Jewish. US media is 96% owned by Zionist Jews. Rush Limbaugh is a crypto-Jew living in a ritzy Jewish enclave in Florida. The 1996 edition of the *Jerusalem Report* told of *The Immortal Rothschilds* with wealth in the trillions.

Helen Thomas of Hearst News told what she had learned in many years as a White House correspondent. “*Congress, the White House, Hollywood and Wall Street are owned by the Zionists. No question . . . We’re being pushed in a wrong direction every way.*” Within a day, Abe Foxman of the Jewish American Defamation League told every group who gave her an award to rescind it, and Hearst fired her.

Foxman has said “*The New Testament is a lying, hateful, harmful book ultimately responsible for the deaths of six million Jews in WWII.*” Conveying the idea from the Talmud: “*Jews must destroy the books of the Christians, especially the New Testament.*” *The Washington Post* told that a New Testament was destroyed in Israel when a missionary gave it to an Israeli. The culprit faces a jail term if caught since it is against the law there to give out the NT. No man spoke openly of Jesus for fear of the Jews (led astray by the Pharisees, John 7:13).

Pilate found Jesus innocent, but allowed the Jews (led by Pharisees) to have Romans crucify Him. Pope Benedict XVI recently exonerated the Jews for Jesus’ death, writing that an *aristocracy of the temple* was to blame. “[He] meets regularly with Jewish Rabbis and ordered all Catholic priests to cooperate fully with their *elder Jewish brothers.*”

The New Babylon (2009)

Inside the Rothschild Empire—Modern Day Pharisees by Michael Piper: A relative few Jews speak out against Zionist Jews, as one of Piper’s friends now deceased wrote *The Life of an American Jew in Racist Marxist Israel*.

Mayer Rothschild guided his life by the Talmud, origin of the NWO idea. Auguste Rohling translated the Talmud from Hebrew finding: Jews are part of God Himself, other people are Goyim or cattle and of the devil. Jews live in a state of war with other peoples. Non-Jews are to serve Jews, Jews to show no mercy to them. God ordained that Jews charge usury from non-Jews to injure them.

Karaites arose from Jews in Babylon who opposed the Talmud and honored the Torah as supreme authority, so were vilified by other Jews.

Zionist Jews led the US into wars for Jewish interests. The US is now the engine of Rothschild power, so the US constitutes the New Babylon.

Norman Cantor wrote in 1994 that archaeological finds are revered in Israel, but it has no auto emission controls and spews raw sewage into the Mediterranean, fouling its own beaches. A severely debtor nation unable to sustain itself, it needs mass funding (from the US).

Jews who wept in exile at Babylon were zealots, while most fell in love with it. When Cyrus offered Jews to return to Jerusalem, most did not want the desolation and hard labor (similar to most Jews regarding the state of Israel today). Jews in the whole world numbered 125,000, later grew to 150,000 just in Babylon. Within 5 decades Jews ascended to the top there in business and became advisers to kings. A Jew once said “*We are not princes, but we govern them.*”

Senators John McCain and Joe Lieberman went to Lord Jacob Rothschild in London to get their orders directly to fulfill their roles in the NWO. The Council on Foreign Relations is the US part of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, the foreign policy-making arm of the Rothschilds, the real force behind the British Empire. The Rothschilds had control over both presidential candidates McCain and Obama. Obama’s birth certificate had to be obscured.

In 1835 the *Niles* (Ohio) *Weekly Register* reported “*The Rothschilds govern a Christian world. Not a cabinet moves without their advice. They stretch their hand with equal ease, to St. Petersburg, Vienna, Paris, London and Washington.*”

Rothschild is known as King of the Jews, even King of Kings as Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. German writer Theodore Fritschin in 1922

noted there existed a super or shadow government. “*Jewish high finance and its paid lackeys, allied and spread throughout the entire world.*”

Zionist Jews in charge want to rule the earth, and if not to blow it up. Israel has nuclear weapons (3rd most in the world) set for Europe, and would rather themselves be blown up than not to rule. “*We have the capacity to take down the world with us.*”

The *Jewish Encyclopedia* claims “*The technical language, rites and symbolism of Masonry are full of Jewish ideas and terms . . . In the Scottish Rite the dates of all the official documents are given according to the Hebrew month in the Jewish era and use is made of the older forms of the Jewish alphabet.*” A former French member of the council of Freemasonic Grand Orient Lodge of Paris noted that Masons lamented the dominance of the Jews in it.

Werner Sombart’s book *The Jews and Modern Capitalism* credits them as being “the first to place on the world’s markets the staples of modern commerce.” They were instrumental in creating stock exchanges and bank notes, free trade, advertising and competition—factors of capitalism [Rev 18:3].

■ Rothschild rule of the world

The *Western Morning News* of Britain noted upon the death of Nathan Rothschild in 1915 “*Every great stroke of policy by the nation in the last half century has been preceded by the brief but all-significant announcement: Lord Rothschild visited the prime minister yesterday. It was one of the signs which those behind the scenes looked when big decisions were pending.*”

A Rothschild signature was necessary to end a war. The family funds ‘opposing’ political parties, and their secret is to win with whatever party. All nations are played in their international game. Manipulating nations in the press by 3 classes of journalists: Those in the pay of Jews directly so the writers are bought off; those bearing a particular idea or nationality as fronts for the Jews—wolves in sheep clothing; and those openly with a Jewish banner.

As far back as 1878 the Rothschild conquest of the world was fact. Aided by usury, issuing bonds by nations instead of living within their means. To break the NWO, nations must get out of debt. Professor Roland Usher wrote in 1913 “*Russia, Turkey, Egypt, India, China, Japan and South America are probably owned so far as any vast nation can be owned in London or Paris. Payment of interest on these vast sums is secured by the public revenues of these countries, and in the case of the weaker nations, by the actual delivery of the perception in the hand of the agent of the English and French bankers.*”

President Henrik Krueger of South Africa said “*If it were possible to eject the Jew monopolists from this country, neck and crop without incurring war with Great Britain, then the problem of everlasting peace would be solved.*” [The elite Jews in financial control work from “The City” of London.]

Even Meyer Karl Rothschild said in 1879 (talking to Otto von Bismarck) “*As for the Anti-Semitic feeling, the Jews themselves are to blame and the present agitation must be ascribed to their arrogance, vanity and unspeakable insolence.*” [Most Jews were under his sway, using his vast money as power over them, too.]

German author Freidrich von Scherb in 1893 wrote “*The House of Rothschild has arisen from the quarrels between states, has become great and mighty from wars [and] the misfortune of states and peoples has been its fortune.*”

While the Rothschilds do not occupy thrones, they are asked who should rule when a king dies. Their messenger service was used by leaders as quicker than other services, so were privy to communications of kings.

The German World-Service told that “*The English government is only the British façade for the Jew in the background. The English statesmen are the well-paid dummies of the Jewish-English finance-capitalism . . . Great Britain, the richest country in the world, presents a picture of the greatest and most powerful poverty in the midst of enormous wealth. A state—whose government tests every matter from the standpoint of Is it advantageous for finance or not?—therefore brought a sixth of its population so low that they live in hovels unfit for human habitation.*”

Britain imports much to the detriment of its citizens who had to abandon their farms and work in factories in the cities, then later became jobless from outsourcing their jobs overseas where labor is dirt cheap.

[Most Jews go along with Rothschilds’ schemes since they on the surface seem to have similar goals.]

—Mr. Jan Young

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Where Is the... True Church today?



Jesus Christ said, "I will build My Church." He did not say "Churches," denominations, "sects." He said the gates of hell would not prevail against that Church. Somewhere that original true Church exists today. But WHERE? WHICH? . . ." (*WHERE Is the True Church* booklet, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong).

The Revealing of the Sons of God

"... All Creation Is *Crying Out* for the Revealing of the Sons of God" (Romans 8:19-23).

Dear Brethren,
How often do we consider this world as it really is and has been for almost 6,000 years? From history and observation we can see it is a world that has been struggling to overcome the sufferings of human life by choosing to live their own way rather than God's way of life.

As the result it has been a continuous lifelong struggle against the thorns, thistles, tears, death and decay in this age that was brought about by Adam and Eve rejecting the LORD God's command not to eat of the Tree of Good and Evil, thereby choosing to make their own decisions of what is right and wrong in life (*Genesis 3:6; 2:18-19*).

An Inherent Cry: Though unrealized due to spiritual blindness, there is the inherent cry within them to be freed from the utter futility and bondage to which they have been sentenced for this 6,000 years by God because of their sins. The Apostle Paul was led by Jesus Christ to make known in his writing their cry for deliverance—

"For we know that the Whole Creation (mankind and all living creatures) groans and labors with birth pangs together until now (it is as if creation is the mother and God is the Father seeking deliverance by birth from this age of sorrow) . . . For the EARNEST EXPECTATION (Companion Bible: anxious looking with outstretched hand) of the creation EAGERLY WAITS for the REVEALING of the Sons of God (to be delivered and freed from futility and the bondage of corruption with nothing of lasting value gained in their human life)" (Romans 8:19-23).

This world is now in its death throes, writhing with convulsions and painful spasms, while gasping for breath with its many unsolvable problems that are overpowering and bringing it to its final gasp of life in the close of this age!

And, like a drowning person with agonizing cramps going down for the third time, it is holding out its hand for the revealing of the sons of God to save it from going under to its watery death.

Though they have shoved away the only hand that could have saved them from the sorrows, tragedies, sufferings and death by their choice of living their lives their own way (*Genesis 3:17-19; Romans 8:20, 22*), they like others (*Genesis 4:10; Revelation 6:10; Exodus 2:23-25*) are symbolically looking forward to the new age in which they will have lasting blessings that have been denied to them in this age.

Over the millennia futile efforts by mankind have been made to turn the world's society around from its path of suffering and death, but those efforts only slowed it down for a brief moment in time. It then picked up speed again while moving forward to its rendezvous with death much as did the pre-flood world of Noah (*Genesis 6*).

A Plaintive Cry: Perhaps the unrealized inward plaintive cry from the world can be compared to the turbulent 1960s in this nation with the lyrical lament of that time, "Bridge Over Troubled Water."

This song was created after two young Jewish men, Simon and Garfunkel, having observed the political upheavals such as the assassinations of John F. Kennedy (November 22, 1963), his brother, Bobby Kennedy (June 5, 1968), and Martin Luther King Jr. (April 4, 1968).

Then there were the social issues: race riots, the hippie movement fighting against the establishment with their vocal and violent protests of the Vietnam War; a half million young people in attendance at Woodstock in 1969 with their total expressions of freedom in all illicit areas, etc. All together they had begun tearing this nation apart at its seams.

Lyrics of Hope: Because of its words of hope, this song became very popular, having appeal, resonating with many people then, and it does yet today with some in this nation.

It spoke of the hope of building a bridge over the troubling waters of a turbulent and violent society of that decade, which was termed by some respected leaders in society as the worst of that century.

The song expressed the hope of trying to save themselves and the nation. Then society could move forward with their dreams being realized in the generations to follow without fear and in peace. *It never happened!*

A Wistful Mythical Bridge: The lyrics of the song are as follows, with the words offering compassionate comfort and the futile effort of hope for that society and for the decades to follow to this time:

"Bridge Over Troubled Water"

When you're weary, feeling small
When tears are in your eyes I will dry them all
I'm on your side

Oh, when times get rough
And friends just can't be found
Like a bridge over troubled water

I will lay me down
Like a bridge over troubled water
I will lay me down

When you're down and out
When you're on the street
When evening falls so hard, I will comfort you
I'll take your part

Oh, when darkness comes
And pain is all around
Like a bridge over troubled water
I will lay me down

Like a bridge over troubled water
I will lay me down

Sail on silver girl, sail on by
Your time has come to shine
All your dreams are on their way
See how they shine

Oh, if you need a friend I'm sailing right behind
Like a bridge over troubled water I will ease your mind

Like a bridge over troubled water I will ease your mind



Building the Bridge: The unanswered question—who would build the bridge in this nation that could offer the desired freedom, comfort and peace and be acceptable to all? Undoubtedly there were a few in past centuries, such as Abraham Lincoln, who tried to stem the tide, but all failed.

In recent years there were a few men, such as President Ronald Reagan and Charleton Heston, who tried turning society around in this nation, but succeeded only in slowing it for a brief moment in time. The hoped-for mythical bridge never really came into existence, nor does it exist today.

The 21st Century: The problems of that time not only have mushroomed but have virtually exploded in this century due to an overwhelming majority of a rebellious and lawless society with politically minded leaders in the highest offices and the judiciary legally paving the way for abominable lawlessness on all fronts!

It is a world reeling out of control, with terrible problems very rapidly approaching to bring this civilization, this age, crashing to its end; *with few men left (Isaiah 24:6; Matthew 24:21-22)*!

The Revealing of the Sons of God: Scripture reveals all creation, mankind, and all creatures, and the land itself, are waiting and crying out for the revealing of the sons of God, the true and faithful resurrected elect of God's Church, who under the guidance of Jesus Christ will free them from their laborious and futile struggles and enable them to find the harmonious brotherhood with the peace and happiness they never really found in this unresponsive evil age (*Galatians 1:4*).

Thankfully this soon-coming new age is on the horizon in which righteousness will begin to be firmly taught (*Isaiah 26:9; Psalm 111:3; Isaiah 30:19-21*).

And it will be brought about by the return of Jesus Christ, who will establish His Kingdom and government on Mount Zion in Jerusalem.

Jesus Christ will then extend his loving and caring hand to the survivors of this age, offering once again the opportunity to symbolically re-enter the Garden in Eden (*originally located in Jerusalem*) with the choice of eating from the symbolic Tree of life (*Deuteronomy 30:15-20*). Having made the right choice, they will then be

released from the shackles of futility and the bondage of sin.

Encouragement for the Elect: The Apostle Paul wrote of the need for preparation of the true and faithful people of God to be there in this coming age with the encouragement to overcome all problems with the desire to be there for this creation:

"Whatever we may have to go through, now is less than nothing compared with the magnificent future God has planned for us. The whole creation is on tip-toe to see the wonderful sight of the Sons of God coming into their own [promised inheritance from God]."

"The world of creation cannot as yet see reality, not because it chooses to be blind, but because of God's purpose (Master Plan and Time Table) it has been so limited—yet it has been given hope. And the hope is that in the end the whole of created life will be rescued from the tyranny of change and decay, and have its share in the magnificent liberty which can only belong to the children of God."

"It is plain to see with anyone with eyes to see that at the present time all created life groans in a sort of universal travail. And it is plain, too, that we who have been given a foretaste of the Spirit are in a state of painful tension, while we wait for that redemption of our bodies which will mean that at last we have realized our full sonship in Him" (Romans 8:18-25, Phillips Translation).

What a wonderful world that will be when Jesus Christ and His Bride will be here teaching the right and good way (*Isaiah 32:1, 16-18*), while wiping away the tears of the repentant in that world to come (*Revelation 21:4*).

Those of mankind who will have made the right and good choices to become part of such an awesome and wonderful world will come to know and worship the true God and Jesus Christ and will then begin realizing such awesome and wonderful blessings that will exceed their wildest imagination. **"Thy Kingdom Come" (Matthew 6:10).**

Needed Questions: Jesus Christ built only ONE Church!—not many (*Matthew 16:18*). Are you in that Church? How do you know? Have you proved it! Are you taking your salvation for granted? Will you be one of the Sons of God to be there for the deliverance of this whole creation?

These questions can be answered by a real, intensive, prayerful study of YOUR Bible along with the original unedited *MYSTERY OF THE AGES*. My prayer is that YOU will come to make the right decision.

Your caring and entreating friend and servant in Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior,
—Don Billingsley

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The Ezekiel WATCHMAN God's *Warning* Message

“... The end has come it has DAWNED for you; Behold it has come! ... a day of trouble is near; ... Now upon you, I will soon pour out My fury ... So you, son of man: I have made you A WATCHMAN for the house of Israel; therefore you shall hear a word from My mouth and WARN them for Me” (Ezekiel 7:6-8; 33:7).

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet BEFORE the coming of the great and dreadful Day of the LORD” (Malachi 4:5).

By Alton B. (Don) Billingsley,
Church of God, Faithful Flock

The Death Throes of the House of Joseph

America is reeling from the recent slaughter of 20 small children and six adults that took place in a school located in Newtown, Connecticut. During a meeting on December 16, 2012, with the bereaved families, President Obama stated: “We can't tolerate this anymore. These tragedies must end. And to end them, we must change...”

Tragically, the violent slayings will not cease because of the curse of sin that has virtually enveloped this whole country. Scripture supports what former Governor Huckabee of Arkansas said in his following comments:

Internet: “Last summer, after the deadly shooting in an Aurora movie theater, Huckabee went on Fox to say, ‘We don't have a crime problem, a gun problem or even a violence problem. What we have is a sin problem. And since we've ordered God out of our schools, and communities, the military and public conversations, you know we really shouldn't act so surprised ... when all hell breaks loose.’

“First, on Friday, mere hours after shooting [Newtown, Connecticut], Huckabee appeared on Fox to muse, ‘We ask why there is violence in our schools, but we have systematically removed God from our schools. Should we be so surprised that schools would become a place of carnage? He added, ‘Maybe we ought to let [God] in on the front end and we wouldn't have to call him to show up when it's all said and done at the back end.’”

Two Church evangelists, Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson, had the courage to say basically the same after the twin towers were destroyed by terrorists with the loss of almost 3,000 lives on 9-11-01, but apologized later.

CNN (14 September 2001) Falwell: “If we decide to change all the rules on which this Judeo-Christian nation was built we cannot expect the Lord to put his shield of protection around us as he has in the past.” Amanpour: “So you still stand by that.” Falwell: “I stand right by it.” This statement attesting that he still blamed so many was made one week before his death.

Satan the Devil: It is admitted by some there is evil in this land; and it is due to the influence of Satan the devil affecting the mentally-ill crazies, the dope-heads, and the copy-cats to kill the innocent in virtually every place. A few years ago a church member shot and killed his pastor and others during a church service in Wisconsin.

No Place to Hide: There is no safe place, and no place to hide from these Satanic influenced killers! Many are terror stricken at the thought of what could take place in their schools, colleges, shopping malls, the streets, or in their neighborhoods.

End-time Prophecy: The ancient prophet Habakkuk speaking of his time then, but as can be seen in *duality*, he describes fully the unsolvable problems of the House of Joseph as they are seen today:

“O LORD, how long shall I cry (verse five speaks of the continued warnings by the promised Elijah of the end-time via his recorded works on our websites) ... why do You show me iniquity and cause me to see trouble? For plundering and violence are before me (continued robberies and slayings in greater frequency); there is strife (unions and people against state governments, etc.) and

contention arises (this nation is divided and vocal). Therefore the law is powerless (unable to stop the growing lawlessness), and justice never goes forth (from the decisions of the judiciary). For the wicked surround the righteous (the few struggling to obey the laws of God); therefore perverse justice proceeds.”

God's Corrective Measures: Just as God corrected Israel with the Chaldeans during the time of Habakkuk, so will He soon with the revived Roman Empire (*Habakkuk 1:6-10*). This prophecy is dual in meaning and by studying it this can easily be seen to be true.

The Elect People of God: With the ever-growing prevalence of crime: robberies, burglaries, thefts, beatings and murders, the question needs to be asked as to whether you and I, individually, are under the protective care of Jesus Christ and His holy angels?

PROTECTION: There is a promise from God for protection, but it hinges on whether there is a right and an ongoing relationship with God and a reverent fear of disobeying Him: **“The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who FEAR Him, and DELIVERS them” (Psalm 34:7; II Kings 6:8-17).**

This Scripture does not say the Elect will never be confronted with danger, but the promise is to deliver them once any are found to be in a bad situation just as was Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego and Daniel were delivered (*Daniel 3:12-28; 6:1-23*). In addition: consider Noah, because of his WALKING WITH GOD, mankind exists today (*Genesis 6:5-13*).

DROUGHT: Another grave problem—that of drought—is becoming very serious; even the mighty Mississippi River is drying up! It is having a real impact on the bread-basket states in this country. Food prices are expected to rise four percent, if not higher, this new year because of it. News reports continue to make known it is tightening its grip on an already stressed farming land and could soon lead to real problems:

**SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN:
“U.S. Drought 2012:
Pick Your Poison”**

“As harvest season gets under way, farmers find that drought-stressed crops are susceptible to toxins and contaminants, further reducing yields. By Brian Bienkowski and the *Daily Climate*, Monday, October 1, 2012.

“CORN infected with the fungus *Aspergillus flavus*. The worst drought to hit the United States since the 1930s has farmers coping with a number of impacts, from cyanide poisoning in cattle to fungal infestations in corn...”

“But for many farmers, the year has been a bust. The nitrate and aflatoxin worries pile onto a growing season already marred with low production. Through September, the U. S. Corn Belt was still ‘slightly’ or ‘abnormally’ dry in most areas, according to the USDA. Compared to 2011, corn and soybean yields are down 13 and 14 percent, respectively.”

FAMINE: The long-ago prophesy of *famine* to befall the house of Israel as an end-time beginning punishment for its accelerating sins appears to be already in its beginning stages! God through His prophet Joel speaks to us of **THE DEVASTATING FAMINE:**

“Alas for the day! For the Day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as destruction from the Almighty. Is not the food cut off before our eyes, joy and gladness from the house of our God? The seed shrivels under the clods; storehouses are in shambles; barns are broken down for the grain has withered” (Joel 1:15-18).

Now that the end can be seen to be closing in on us, Jesus Christ is **SOUNDING THE TRUMPET EVEN LOUDER AS AS FINAL WITNESS** through His use of the **RESTORED WORKS**—radio broadcasts, telecasts, and the many writings of books, booklets and articles of Mr. Armstrong—all that Christ led him to do during his life! And they can be found on our website (www.cog-ff.com).

Soon the door will be completely closed and the voice and writings of God's end-time Elijah will be **STILLED** and **HEARD** no more!!! This

will bring about the *famine* of the Word: **“Behold, the days are coming,”** says the Lord God, **“That I will send A FAMINE on the land, NOT a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, BUT of HEARING the words of the LORD. They shall wander from north to east; they shall run to and fro, SEEKING the word of the LORD, BUT shall not find it” (Amos 8:11-12).** This small Church is being used by Jesus Christ as a *CONDUIT OR INSTRUMENT* to make all of those **RECORDED WORKS** of years gone by available, which are even more timely and revealing *now* than they were then.

With all of this in mind, please note **THE FOLLOWING PROMISE** and, with it, **A WARNING** from Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong for God's people:

“Those in the true Body of Christ shall be protected until this tribulation will be over (Revelation 3:10-11)—applying to those faithful in God's Work now going to the world (Revelation 12:14; Isaiah 26:20). But YOU must make your own decision—and to neglect doing so is to have made the wrong decision! God isn't kidding! This is for real! ... The decision in now yours!” (The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy, 1975 publication, p. 60).

Further, he wrote: **“... The final generation of the Church shall be LUKEWARM—not less emotional, but more ‘liberal,’ more secular and less spiritual—less strictly biblical—“Speaking of the present ‘Philadelphia’ era, it says ... because we have kept God's Word faithfully, not liberalizing nor watering down, God will keep us from the ‘hour of temptation, which shall come upon all them that dwell on the earth’ to try and test them” (Personal from Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, Plain Truth, August 1980).**

UNLESS we are **VIGILANTLY** watching, praying, and enduring faithfully, while **CLINGING** to the **TRUTH** once **delivered** to the saints and **restored** by Jesus Christ through His late apostle, we could find the **DOOR CLOSED** to us when this calamitous time of trouble suddenly *springs upon the Church and Israel as a snare*—leaving us behind to endure all the **horrors** that will follow the **FAMINE** (*Jude 3-4; Luke 21:34-36; Revelation 3:8, 10*). We **MUST** be preparing ourselves **SPIRITUALLY** while there is yet *some* daylight.

The Mystery of the Ages

Jesus Christ led His apostle and the promised Elijah—*His teacher*—to write the last book of his life, **THE MYSTERY OF THE AGES**, to be a **REMINDER** of all of the *doctrinal teachings* Christ RESTORED within His Church through him. By the use of this original *unedited* book with the Holy Bible, His people should be enabled to recognize the strong deception that is now on His Church by Satan the devil and keep themselves from it.

The Philadelphia Remnant

To be kept informed from a Biblical perspective the meaning of the continued **record breaking disasters** in the nations of Israel and other major problems that are now coming closer together we offer freely a subscription to our magazine. It can also be read on our website (www.cog-ff.com).

The Three Elijahs

Though the book of **The Three Elijahs** is being updated it can be read on our website (www.cog-ff.com) or downloaded from it. This book makes known how these **Three Men** were used by God to perform basically the same responsibilities and for the same reasons.

God had ample reason for these three men to have the same name as Elijah. And though John and Mr. Armstrong had their own names, they were **“... to go forth before Him (Jesus Christ) in the spirit and power of Elijah” (Luke 1:16-17).** The identity of the end-time Elijah is established with Biblical proof and by his fruits.

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Are You Thankful for Your Blessings?

At Thanksgiving my extended family has a ritual we go through each year. The kids don't really like it much, and there are some adults who are kind of shy and don't put a lot into it. But we continue to do it because that's what the day is supposed to be set aside for.

We all gather before we ask God's blessing on our meal to say what we are thankful for. Sometimes typical things are mentioned, and sometimes things are said that aren't so typical. For instance this year we had part of the family nearly killed in a tornado. We also had a couple that lost their baby at birth. So it might seem like this would have been a depressing activity this year. But it wasn't, because my family has chosen to focus on God's providence as opposed to the problems that come from the trials they have had to endure.

Paul tells us that we are to rejoice in trials. We are told that God disciplines His children so they will grow towards perfection. We know that the trials we survive help us build faith. But, no matter what kind of spin we put on it, troubles and trials are not pleasant. Far too often we don't see and acknowledge the times we are protected or blessed during trials. This brings me to the point. Are *you* thankful for what God does for you, or allows you to deal with? And, more to the point, do you tell others about how God *does* bless you?

I thought about this when I was asked what I was thankful for, and I also looked at the requests I see for prayer. Not only do these requests come from COG members, but they flood in on Face Book daily. And there's nothing wrong at all in asking for our friends and brethren to pray for us in a time of trial.

But do we really shout out and proclaim to the world the blessings God gives to us? Do we even tell Him thank you? I remember when I was a teenager for some reason it occurred to me that I wasn't being very appreciative for the good that I received from God on a daily basis. So I actually made a concerted effort to tell Him how much I appreciated His intervention in the little things and the big things.

While I didn't do a scientific study on the results, I honestly believe that I have been given more than my share of protection and blessings. I attribute that to my efforts to actively maintain a thankful attitude, *and* actually telling God how much I appreciate His intervention. I don't mean a global "Thank you for the air and food You give us" but a specific 'thank you' for the daily little and big things I believe God does for me.

And, lest you begin to think I'm tooting my own horn, I must state that I let this attitude slip *far* too much of the time. It's easy to do. I start focusing on my little circle of influence. And I then make the *wrong* assumption that *my* 'things' are the most important 'things.' When I do, I also start thinking how I have to make things happen, and forget that God is there to fight my battles for me *if I let Him!*

I want to go back and tell you a couple of stories in which I *know* God has intervened for my family. My oldest stepson fell when he was about seven or eight and broke his elbow. I did the same when I was about his age. We were scheduled to leave for the Feast in about four weeks as I remember, and the break was especially bad. The doctor said that he would set it and wanted us to come back in a week and if it wasn't heal-

ing he would have to open up the elbow and put in pins and rods.

We came back and the doctor gave us bad news. It was healing but had slipped and the doctor would have to rebreak it and reset it. It was now three weeks till the Feast and my boy was going to have to endure a *lot* of pain and problems, as well as the fact that he and the rest of the family were really looking forward to the trip and this would stop us from going. The deed was done, and we were instructed to return in two weeks to see what the progress was after they set him in a plaster cast this time.

We dutifully returned, and the nurses took him back for his X rays. When they came out, they took him back to the cast room and the doctor started taking off the cast. I asked what was wrong and he said nothing. The break was totally healed. Totally. He wouldn't admit it, and made some noises about how fast kids heal, but the look in his eyes told me he *knew* it was something very special. Obviously my wife and I also both knew.

The next example is from my middle stepson. He was probably four when this happened. Some of you may remember the little kids' carousels that took a quarter and were in front of whatever your local discount big box store was. Ours was Kmart. The kids wanted to ride on it, so I put all three on board.

My middle one was always one to rush to do things and usually ended up breaking whatever it was because he didn't know how to open or use it properly. Anyway, he was in a rush to get off and jumped off before it was stopped. He fell and his foot got caught under the fiberglass apron that was around the bottom to cover the motor. It was still spinning and his foot was rolled between it and the concrete like I used to see my granddad roll his cigarettes. Needless to say, it wasn't pretty when I got him out. His foot was turned backwards, obviously broken badly.

I snatched him up and told my wife to run to the car and start it so we could get him to the

not that many were submitted. And they don't have to be things like I mentioned above. I'm in construction, and I estimate jobs and manage them (when I get one). There are dozens of times a week that I believe God intervenes in small ways to keep my tail out of the fire: Mistakes that I realize I have made, but 'luckily' something else happens to negate that mistake. Or I have a close call while driving. Or, when I'm working on a home project, something doesn't happen that should have that keeps me from getting hurt.

These same kinds of 'little' things happen daily with my wife as well. She works in a computer repair call center and constantly is telling me how somehow she 'just realizes' that she should try X, Y or Z, and, *voilà*, the problem is fixed! She looks like a hero, and her bosses think she's a wiz. All the time she realizes that God

gives her those little hints. And she knows that she has to thank Him, and tell others how He helps her.

Here's a suggestion. You do what you want with it. I'm trying to start doing it with the people I know. When something good happens, assuming it's not one of the normal daily goodies God grants us, I'm trying to remember to tell my friends about it. It seems to me that if we all, as scattered members, were to start doing something like this, letting others know how God blesses us daily, it might just help some with their faith.

We all know there are plenty of COG members (and people outside our group) who need God's help. They need His intervention, but it's kind of hard when you are in the middle of a fiery trial to remember that God *does* listen, and He *does* ride in like a conquering warrior to save us from our calamities. But it takes faith for us to see it—or wait for Him to arrive, since He knows the best time to show up.

One last story. We had a friend in the WCG who made some pretty bad decisions in her life early on. She got tied up with a fellow who wasn't as attentive or present as he should have been. He provided a place to live, but it was in a ramshackle trailer in the middle of cornfields out in the boonies. She was left there with their infant son, and no transportation. He'd be gone for days at a time.

She recounted how one time she was out of formula (she either couldn't or didn't nurse her baby for some reason) and had no means to feed him, or herself, for that matter. She tells the story of how one bottle she did have just 'magically' seemed to stay half full, no matter how long her son worked on it. He'd get full, she'd put it back in the fridge, and, when he got hungry again, she'd get it out and start all over again. At the time we were with her in the WCG she *knew* it was a miracle. Too bad she didn't try a little harder to keep that experience fresh in her mind. She's fallen away, the last I knew.

Maybe if we all spread our stories as diligently as we ask for help, we might help our fellow spiritual comrades in arms weather their battles with Satan.



We are quick to ask our brothers to pray for us, but are we quick to tell them how God has blessed us?

hospital ASAP. It was about 200 feet to the car, and by the time I got there he had quit screaming and was lying calmly in my arms. I looked at his foot and it was turned back around right, and there wasn't even any damage to his pants or socks. It goes without saying we both were praying fervently when we realized what the situation was, and we both praised God openly when we saw the deliverance He granted.

I told these two stories because I asked the question earlier about how vocal we are about the blessings we are granted. We are quick to ask our brothers to pray for us, but are we quick to tell them how God has blessed us? I don't think so.

I remember a series of articles in this paper once about blessings, but I don't remember that a lot of them were published because I suppose

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A Voice in the Wilderness

An Open Letter

To the Brethren in All Branches of the Church of God

Did you ever get a little short of patience because traffic was heavy and made you late for work? Perhaps you have your car in the shop and were supposed to get it back in two days, but just received a call that it will not be ready for a week. Maybe even your AC goes out for a few days in the middle of July and you live in one of the warmer southernmost states. Then what if you find your account short at the end of the month and you find you have to quit eating out for six to eight months to catch up? Do you complain?

This is not a lecture on controlling your temper, nor a dissertation on not complaining.

This is a plea for help for our brethren—yes—**Our Brethren**. I just returned from a trip to Kenya, where we have brothers and sisters who are hungry. They live in abject poverty. I have met very few, if any, in my life who, like these, work from 4 a.m. until late at night and always have a genuine smile on their face. I have yet to meet any so pleasant to be around and hospitable. From very small children to the extreme elders, they wanted to serve us. They gave us their best.

They were so happy to be able to keep the Feast and so appreciative that we came all the way from America to keep it with them. One young man who was always smiling was asked by someone, "What are you so happy about?" The young man replied, "It is the Millennium. We are celebrating the Millennium."

One precious couple gave us their house to stay in; I think they slept in the chicken house. Yet they always looked clean and dressed for services. They prepared meals (all on a wood fire they built outside), washed our clothes (by hand in a big pan of water) and even polished our shoes.

Just from being in the church for so many years, I know many think that two services a day is too many. These people, after two services a day (sometimes lasting three to four hours each), wanted Bible study at night, rather than entertainment. They are so full of faith—so full of zeal!

These people live in mud huts with dirt floors. Their bathrooms

are outhouses or mud holes; their showers (if they have one) are outhouses with no hot water, since there is no electricity in their area. Some just bathe in a river. They read the Bible (if they have one) by a lantern at night.

Brethren, just because you cannot see them—just because they do not live next door—do not turn your back on your brothers and sisters. I believe that *how we treat the weakest, most destitute of our brethren is how Christ will judge us at His return.*

I have heard from some Americans that these Africans do not work, so they should not eat. This is *ABSOLUTELY NOT* true! These are hard-working faithful people. I have seen them, met them, and lived with them. If you are up at 4:30 or 5:00 a.m., you will see many of them, even children, walking down a big hill with empty water jugs, and some coming up the hill carrying jugs full of water. They carry them on their head, making several trips, collecting water for the day from water holes. I would call them mud holes since one cannot see through the water. They use some for the latrine, some water to drink and some to cook and wash dishes with. Some places the outhouses have nothing but a mud hole.

Brethren, there is no way to describe their poverty. A warm shower or a cold drink of water is unheard of in these areas with no electricity. Most depend on what they can grow for their substance. So when there is rain, they have food. When there is drought, they go hungry.

We are trying to get Bibles for them, but some still do not have them. Brethren, imagine learning the truth and being excited about it and not even having a Bible to read. Some do not have mosquito nets—a real priority since there is hardly a family that has not lost a family member

to malaria, which the mosquitoes carry.

This was one of *the most* spiritual Feasts I have ever attended. This is not only because of the wonderful sermons, straight from the Bible, but also the people. I never saw so many people delighted over a bowl of rice and beans, or corn and beans. I've never seen so many so appreciative that we came all the way from America to keep the Feast with them. I've never seen a group so helpful and nonjudgmental. We could all take a lesson in Agape love from these



Upper left: Typical home of our brethren in western Kenya. Above: Church of God children in Tanzania. Left: COG congregation in Ramula, Kenya. [Photos courtesy Bill Goff]

poverty stricken people.

One young man there, Richard, who recently lost his mother (she was 51), has started an orphanage because there are so many little children whose parents have died. He cannot feed them lavishly, but he can feed them by rationing food.

One terribly sad thing that broke my heart was a precious little girl about two years old. About a year and a half ago, Richard was taking his cows to the river to water and he heard crying. After following the sounds, he found this little baby girl, approximately six months old. Her little clothes or blanket was caught on some roots of a tree going out into the water, keeping her from drowning.

Richard rescued her and brought her into the orphanage. Richard's sisters named her "Angel," saying they thought an angel sent her.

I don't know about that—it appears her mother tossed her away—but an angel must have protected her precious little life. I so wanted to take her, clean her all up, bring her home with me and buy her some pretty little dresses.

Another sad thing was an elderly man who had read in the Bible that he should attend the Feast of Tabernacles, and he was determined to go. His wife was sick and had been bedridden for some time. He took full care of her. He said he had trouble finding someone to stay with her. We asked if he had

her mother, to last ten days to two weeks. It takes 1.7 K/G per day to sustain life, and, when there is so little, they ration their food.

After the Feast, we visited others in different areas. The last place we visited, it had rained three nights straight before we left, and no mode of transportation could get to us. We had to walk uphill in mud to the next village. There were 26 people (men, women and children) who not only walked with us to say "good-bye," but two teenage boys carried our heaviest suitcases on their head. This was all uphill in

mud because they wanted to see us off, and they had to walk back. Now, that is love!

Brethren, please, I beg of you to help our brothers and sisters who are in need.

- Proverbs 21:13 says, "Whose stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard."

- 1 John 3:17—"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

Thank you in advance for anything you can give to help. A little can go a long way, and I can guarantee you that 100% of what you give will go directly to help these people.

Although we have servants who have made trips to visit these people, not a penny of your money goes for trips. All who go use their own money for such visits.

If you find it in your heart to share, the Eternal will bless you, and you will be showing Agape love for your poverty stricken brothers and sisters.

- Proverbs 19:17 says, "He that hath pity on the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given He will pay him again."

- Proverbs 22:9—"He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth his bread to the poor."

- Proverbs 28:27—"He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack; but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse."

Information about the fund that is set up for this at the bottom of this page.

—B. Bell

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Does Disdain for 'Real' Scholarship Doom the COG?—Part 1

1. Introduction

Sir Anthony Buzzard wrote on page 3 of Issue 150 of *The Journal, News of the Churches of God* that "Disdain for real scholarship dooms the COG's". He claims that the founder of the former Worldwide Church of God (WCG), Mr Herbert W Armstrong (HWA), lacked the Hebrew and Greek scholarship needed for drawing correct doctrinal views from the Bible. In particular that HWA did not see from 'the third day' of Luke 24:21b that our Lord Jesus had been crucified and buried on Friday and had been resurrected before Sunday dawn.

Luke 24:21—"But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done."

Sir Anthony insists this verse shows the Crucifixion and Burial were on Friday and the Resurrection was early on the Sunday the two disciples walked to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-32). Although his scholarly conclusion agrees with Mainstream's *Good Friday—Easter Sunday* tradition, few members of the former WCG will agree with Sir Anthony.

Since Luke 24:7, 46 with 'the third day' refer to the Sign of Jonah, it seems reasonable this is also the case for Luke 24:21b and that HWA erred that 'the third day' of Luke 24:21b refers to the third day since a watch was placed at the tomb (Matt 27:62-67). Let us make sure we get our facts right!

Mainstream's scholars mistranslated into English and even falsified several NT Greek manuscripts to support their various non-biblical doctrines. For example, the Trinity by inserting in 1 John 5:7-8 (KJV) a 24-word Johannine comma: and, as we will see, a mistranslation and falsification of Luke 24:21b to promote their Good Friday—Easter Sunday tradition.

In the case of Luke 24:21b Sir Anthony insists English translations correctly convey that Sunday was the third day of the Sign of Jonah and that therefore the Crucifixion was on Friday. Yet Luke 24:21b supports a Sign of Jonah that is only 1 night plus 1 day plus part of 1 night, or not even 36 hours. In contrast in Matthew 12:40 Jesus gave his Sign of Jonah that He would be buried 3 days and 3 nights, which is three 24-hour days or 72 hours.

Sir Anthony claims the difference resulted from the then custom of counting parts of days as full days and as an example he points to Luke 13:32 but let us read this verse in context of verses 31 and 33:-

Luke 13:31—"The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee."

Luke 13:32—"And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected."

Luke 13:33—"Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem."

In verse 31 Jesus is warned of the danger He faces but replies his work there will be finished today and tomorrow. Note that in verse 32 'perfected' (Strong G5048) should have been translated 'finished' because it has nothing to do with Jesus' ultimate 'perfection' to spirit life through his Resurrection.

Verse 33 shows Luke 13:31-33 has nothing to do with the length of time Jesus spent in the tomb based on counting parts of days as full days.

I will give below several instances where Sir Anthony misinterprets or ignores NT Greek manuscripts that deny his scholarly doctrines. He also ignores God's OT statements and those of Jesus in the NT that deny his doctrines. Indeed he seems unaware that several NT Greek manuscripts were falsified to support Mainstream's non-biblical doctrines in spite of it being well known that no two of the over 5,000 surviving NT Greek manuscripts agree fully.

Sir Anthony seems unable or unwilling to see that doctrines must agree with the entire Bible from Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:21 and that therefore inspired Bible knowledge is more

important than OT Hebrew and NT Greek scholarship. I accept that Hebrew and Greek scholarship are important but they are not infallible and will have seriously reduced application where NT Greek manuscript have been falsified as for Luke 24:21b.

The only way we have for establishing true doctrine is to take into account the entire Bible and if we find a verse that fails to meet this test then we need to examine it. In particular we can not accept that two confused disciples can override in Luke 24:21b Jesus' 3-days and 3-nights Sign of Jonah of Matthew 12:40.

This article will show Sir Anthony is wrong with his late Friday burial and early Sunday resurrection and that Mr Armstrong had been correct with Jesus' just-before-Wednesday-sunset Burial and his just-before-Saturday-sunset Resurrection and much else besides.

2. Sir Anthony's questionable doctrines

Sir Anthony put to me the following quite astonishing doctrines but lack of space allows me to refute only some. I expect most readers will be able to refute the others themselves.

(1) Holy days are not true Sabbaths as are weekly Sabbaths—refuted by Lev 23:3, 32.

(2) The Crucifixion was on Friday Abib 15 and which Friday was the preparation day to the weekly Sabbath, which that year was a high Sabbath based on Sir Anthony's strange interpretation of John 19:31.

(3) From Luke 24:21b the three 24-hour day Sign of Jonah (Matt 12:40) fits a Friday pre-sunset Burial and a Sunday pre-dawn Resurrection because Luke counts parts of 24-hour days as whole days.

(4) The gospels show that the NT Passover was partaken on Abib 15 and that the 7-day feast (Abib 15-21) was known as the feast of Passover or just Passover.

(5) Jesus and his disciples partook of the Passover meal at the same time as the nation of Judah early on Abib 15.

(6) There is only one Sabbath during the Crucifixion week and not two as HWA taught.

(7) Christians are born again now rather than at the Second Coming.

(8) Jesus was never a God and had no existence prior to his Bethlehem birth.

(9) Colossians 2:16-17 show the Sabbath, holy days and feasts no longer apply to the NT church.

Sir Anthony ignores all statements by God in the OT and Jesus in the NT that deny his extraordinary doctrinal claims, including:-

(a) Numbers 9:1-3, which restricts all of Passover to the Abib-14 Passover day so that no aspect of Passover can be on Abib 15.

(b) Jonah 1:17 with Matthew 12:40, which show God and Jesus declaring the Sign of Jonah being for three 24-hour days (72 hours).

(c) Matt 28:1-6 which shows the Resurrection was before Saturday sunset and therefore not on Sunday—see Section 3.

(d) John 18:28 shows Jesus partook of God's true Abib-14 Passover some 24 hours before the priests and people partook of Judaism's false Abib-15 Passover—Section 4.

(e) My article A4, Gen 1:26, Luke 10:18; John 3:13; 8:58; 16:28, and with Phil 2:5-7; Heb 1:8, 6:20-7:4, show that Jesus not only existed prior to His Bethlehem birth but was originally an independent self-existent God.

Indeed John the Baptist twice attested to Jesus' prior existence (John 1:15, 30) and in some Greek manuscripts also in verse 27.

John 1:15—"... This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me."

Note that John 1:15 mistranslates as 'preferred' the Greek verb 'gegonen' (Strong G1096) despite this meaning, 'is become'.

John's claim is significant because he was conceived 6 months before Jesus (Luke 1:34-36) and yet John said that Jesus 'was before me'!

3. The time of the Resurrection (Matt 28:1-6)

Matthew 28:1 relates how the two Marys arrived at the tomb at the end of the Sabbath.

Matthew 28:1—"In the end of the Sabbath,

as it began to dawn toward the first (day) of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre."

Biblical days run from sunset to sunset (Lev 23:32) and so when the 7th-day Sabbath ends a new biblical week begins at Saturday sunset. Therefore the women came to the tomb at Saturday sunset. It was not a Sunday dawn tomb visit because the Greek rendered 'to dawn' (Strong G2020) means 'to draw towards'. That is the end of the 7th-day Sabbath began to draw towards the start of the first (day) of the week. The translators choice of 'to dawn' seems a deliberate attempt to support Mainstream's Good Friday—Easter Sunday dawn tradition.

Matthew 28:1-6 relates the Angel of the LORD rolling back the stone to reveal an empty tomb! Matthew 28:6—"He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay."

This means that Jesus had risen even before sunset Saturday and so on the 7th-day of the week and not on the 1st day of the week as Sir Anthony insists.

Therefore if indeed Luke 24:21b declares that the Sunday the two disciples walked from Jerusalem to Emmaus was the third day of the Sign of Jonah as Sir Anthony insists it does, then we have a major problem because then the Bible would contradict itself between Matthew 28:1-6 and Luke 24:21b.

In such cases we must consider that Mainstream falsifiers have been at work to support their Good Friday—Easter Sunday tradition.

4. John 18:28 and true and false Passovers

We will find that John 18:27-28 is set mid-way between God's true Abib-14 Passover (Num 9:1-3) observed by Jesus and his disciples and Judaism's false Abib-15 Passover observed by the priests and the majority of Judah.

John 18:27—"Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew."

John 18:28—"Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early: and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover."

The crowing of the cock tells us John 18:28 is set pre-dawn of the Abib-14 Passover day. Let us examine, FIRST the 12 hours from the Abib 13-14 sunset to the pre-dawn of John 18:28 and SECOND the 12 hours from this pre-dawn to the Abib 14-15 sunset. Remember that God's Abib-14 Passover day (Num 9:1-3) is from the Abib 13-14 sunset to the Abib 14-15 sunset but that Judaism's false Abib-15 Passover is from Abib 14-15 sunset to Abib 15-16 sunset.

Since Jesus was under arrest in John 18:28, we know the setting of this verse is after Jesus ate with the twelve the Abib-14 Passover, after which He was betrayed and arrested.

Therefore the first 12-hour period includes the true Abib-14 Passover meal (Luke 22:13-38), his arrest (Luke 22:47-54), his being brought before the priest Annas (John 18:13) and later before the high priest Caiaphas (John 18:24). This brings us to the pre-dawn of John 18:28.

Therefore Jesus had observed God's true Abib-14 Passover some 12 hours before the dawn of Abib 14 (John 18:27-28).

Next the second 12-hour period from the pre-dawn of John 18:28 to Judaism's false Abib-15 Passover.

John 18:28 shows that Jesus is still under arrest when taken from Caiaphas to the Hall of Judgment where Pilate orders his crucifixion.

The priests refused to enter that hall to avoid becoming defiled, which would stop them killing the Passover lambs that afternoon and then they could not have their false Abib-15 Passover following the Abib 14-15 sunset.

Therefore John 18:28 is set at dawn of Abib 14, which was some 12 hours before Judaism's false Abib-15 Passover.

As a result of Pilate's order Jesus died and was buried before the Abib 14-15 sunset and was unable to partake of Judaism's false Abib-15 Passover.

That refutes Sir Anthony's mistaken claim that Jesus partook of the Passover on Abib 15

at the same time as the nation of Judah.

Sir Anthony was unwilling to concede that he had no answer to John 18:28 except for insisting the synoptic gospels made it clear Jesus partook of the Abib-15 Passover with the nation of Judah. Let us test this now.

5. NT confusions over Passover

Of course there is a problem due to Judaism having departed from God's Abib-14 Passover day (Num 9:1-3) and from His 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread (Abib 15-21) and which begins with the Abib-15 holy day (Lev 23:5-8). The clear distinction between the Abib-14 Passover day and the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread (Abib 15-21) became blurred after Judaism changed by 24 hours the time of the Passover meal from early Abib 14—just after the Abib 13-14 sunset—to early Abib 15—just after the Abib 14-15 sunset. They also called the Abib-15 high day Passover and even extended the terms 'Passover' or 'Feast of the Passover' to God's Feast of Unleavened Bread (Lev 23:6-8).

Sir Anthony seems under the mistaken impression that Judaism's change of the date of Passover to Abib 15 and their extending the term Passover to the Feast of Unleavened Bread was made with God's approval. For this there is no evidence in the Bible and therefore we must keep our focus on God's original and still valid OT commands on these.

When we do, the synoptic gospels will not mislead us. This is despite in places English translations and Greek NT manuscripts having been falsified to give the impression the changes are valid. Luke 22:1 & 7 will illustrate this:-

Luke 22:1—"Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover." This tells us that the Jews called God's Feast of Unleavened Bread, Passover but did so contrary to Leviticus 23:5-8.

Luke 22:7—"Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed." This verse misnames the day the Passover must be killed as the 'day of unleavened bread'. Of course the Passover must be killed on Abib-14 which is God's Abib-14 Passover day (Num 9:1-3). It has nothing whatever to do with the Feast of Unleavened Bread and it seems Mainstream falsifiers have been at work on this verse.

Indeed from the critical apparatus on page 232 of *Novum Testamentum Graece* (Greek NT) ed. 27 by Nestle-Aland we find at least one ancient Greek manuscript that gives instead of the underlined 'unleavened bread' the correct name, 'Passover' (Greek Pascha).

It seems Sir Anthony does not examine alternative readings after he was mistakenly convinced by mistranslated or falsified verses, such as Luke 22:7, that Jesus ate the Passover with his disciples at the same time as the NT Jews.

Jesus would not have ignored God's OT Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread commands (Lev 23:5-8, Num 9:1-3) and ate the Passover some 24 hours before Judaism's false Abib-15 Passover (see Section 4 above).

There is no difficulty provided we keep our focus on what God commanded originally and trust that He would tell us should He have moved Passover from Abib 14 to Abib 15. Since there is no indication in the Bible that God made such a change, we must adhere to His command of Numbers 9:1-3 that Passover is restricted to the Abib-14 Passover day and therefore no aspect of Passover can be on the Abib-15 high day Sabbath that begins God's 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread.

The change of Passover from Abib-14 to Abib 15 was made by the Jews and parallels their moving Pentecost from Sivan 7 to Sivan 6 (see my article A5 and study paper P4).

6. Understanding God's Sign of Jonah

Sir Anthony remained adamant that Luke 24:21b points to a burial just-before-Friday Abib-15 sunset and a Sunday pre-dawn resurrection in accord with God's and Jesus' 3-days and 3-nights Sign of Jonah provided we accept that Luke counted part of 24-hour days

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as whole days. Let us examine how God and Jesus defined the Sign of Jonah.

Jonah 1:17—“*Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.*”

Matt 12:40—“*For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*”

It can not be plainer than that, can it? In both verses an uninterrupted period of three 24-hour days is referred to by both God in Jonah 1:17 and by Jesus in Matthew 12:40. These are not three separate parts of three 24-hour days because the fish spewed out Jonah only once at the end of the third 24-hour day (Jonah 2:10).

Sir Anthony was unwilling to concede that God's and Jesus' 3-days and 3-nights Sign of Jonah is equivalent to three 24-hour days or 72 hours and therefore is contrary to his claim for a 1-night plus 1-day plus part of 1-night Sign of Jonah—less than 36 hours—between his alleged Friday Abib-15 crucifixion and burial and his pre-dawn Sunday resurrection.

It is incredible that Sir Anthony rejects HWA's biblical teaching in accord with the Sign of Jonah given by God in Jonah 1:17 and Jesus in Matthew 12:40, that the Crucifixion was on the Wednesday Abib-14 Passover day, the Burial was just before Wednesday sunset and his Resurrection was precisely 3 days and 3 nights later just before Saturday sunset in accord with Matthew 28:1-6. (See Section 3.)

7. But what about Luke 24:21b?

The passage Luke 24:13-32 relates how on the first day of the week (Luke 24:1—Sunday) two disciples on way from Jerusalem to Emmaus were discussing that Jesus had not risen from the tomb. From their distress it is clear they believed Jesus had failed to fulfil his 3-day and 3-night Sign of Jonah. As disciples they remembered that Jesus foretold He would rise on the 3rd day in accord with the Sign of Jonah. Even the Jewish authorities were aware of this sign (Matt 27:62-63).

However, if these two disciples thought that Sunday was indeed the 3rd day of the Sign of Jonah as Luke 24:21b (KJV) appears to say, then why didn't they stay in Jerusalem till sunset ended that 3rd day, in case Jesus would yet be resurrected? That they had left Jerusalem can only mean they thought the third day was past and it was already the 4th day under that sign.

As discussed in Section 3, Matthew 28:1-6 shows the Resurrection was before Saturday sunset but Luke 24:21b appears to give a different time, which would mean the Bible is self-contradictory, which we can't accept.

We know from the aforementioned Johanne Comma that Mainstream will stop at nothing to change the Vulgate, NT Greek manuscripts and English translations to support their 'scholarly' doctrines. So let us examine Luke 24:21b more closely.

Almost all English translations I checked mistranslate Luke 24:21b and there is the question whether 'today' (Strong G4594, Greek 'semeron') was originally written by Luke because 'semeron' occurs in some but not all Greek manuscripts. This should add to our suspicion that the falsifiers have been at work with Luke 24:21b. Sir Anthony's Greek scholarship will be of limited use should we indeed be dealing with a falsified Luke 24:21.

In Luke 24:21b the phrase, “*today is the third day*” contains a gross mistranslation because the English verb 'is' is an invalid rendering of the Greek verb 'agei' (Strong G71) and which means: 'brings', 'leads to' or 'passes' of time (Liddell & Scott, *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon*). Indeed in the light of Matthew 28:1-6, Luke 24:21b seems a deliberate mistranslation in support of Mainstream's Good Friday—Easter Sunday tradition.

I had suggested on page 28 of Issue 151 of *The Journal* that the Luke 24:21b phrase should be translated, “*This third day brings today*” but Sir Anthony rightly pointed out this is grammatically impossible because in the

Greek 'this third day' has the accusative case and can not be the subject of the Greek verb 'agei' for which the nominative is required.

However, for this Sir Anthony assumes that the accusative case had been originally inserted by Luke but it is possible that this was inserted by a later falsifier in support of Mainstream's Good Friday—Easter Sunday tradition. After all, why should Luke 24:21b and Matthew 28:1 give conflicting times for the Resurrection?

Nestle-Aland's *Novum Testamentum Graece* (ed 27) reveals in the critical apparatus on page 243 a number of textual variations for Luke 24:21 but there could be others seeing Luke's autograph is no longer extant.

We should not depend on the apparently falsified Luke 24:21b but rather rely on Matthew 28:1-6 for determining that the Resurrection was just before Saturday sunset.

John 19:31 reveals that the Crucifixion was on the preparation day to a 'high day' Sabbath and despite Sir Anthony's protestations this verse shows the Crucifixion could not have been on Friday Abib 15—see Section 9.

Indeed Abib 15 is a holy day Sabbath on which the Crucifixion could not have taken place according to the priests' protestation of Matthew 26:5, “*But they said, Not on the feast day . . .*”, (i.e. no crucifixion on the Abib-15 holy day).

8 Annual and weekly Sabbaths

Sir Anthony denies that annual sabbaths (holy days) are sabbaths as is the 7th-day weekly Sabbath. That he is wrong can be shown from Leviticus chapter 23

First Leviticus chapter 23 shows that both the weekly Sabbath and the annual Sabbaths are alike in that both are holy convocations on which no work may be done (Lev 23:3; 6-7).

In Lev 23:3 the weekly or 7th-day Sabbath is the translation of the Hebrew 'shabbath' (Strong H7676).

In Leviticus 23:32 the annual holy day of Atonement is twice referred to with the same Hebrew word 'shabbath' as used for the weekly or 7th-day Sabbath in Leviticus 23:3.

When John 19:31 is properly understood it too refers to the Abib-15 holy day as a Sabbath or rather as a high Sabbath.

9. The high-day Sabbath of John 19:31

HWA's teaching that the Abib-14 Passover Crucifixion day was the preparation day to the Abib-15 holy day annual Sabbath perfectly fits John 19:31:—

John 19:31—“*The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.*”

The John 19:31 parenthetical phrase, “*(for that sabbath day was an high day)*”, can only refer to the Abib-15 holy day annual Sabbath.

To justify his Friday Crucifixion—Sunday Resurrection Sign of Jonah based on the questionable Luke 24:21b, Sir Anthony finds it necessary to reinterpret John 19:31.

Since John 19:31 states the Crucifixion day was a preparation day to a high day Sabbath, this forces Sir Anthony to claim that his Friday Abib-15 Crucifixion day was the preparation day to the weekly Sabbath, which he insists was that year a high day (weekly) Sabbath.

This he claims regardless of Abib 15 being a high day annual Sabbath (Lev 23:6-7) and that the Bible states nowhere that a weekly Sabbath is a high day. It seems Sir Anthony will stop at nothing to uphold Luke 24:21b's apparent Sunday Resurrection.

Sir Anthony appeals that Friday Abib 15, like all Fridays, is a preparation day for the weekly Sabbath and that nowhere in the NT is 'preparation day' used as the day before a holy day high day Sabbath.

This view is open to challenge because John 19:31 shows that the Abib-15 holy day high day Sabbath also has a preparation day.

However, there is another major difficulty with Sir Anthony's claim that the Friday Abib-15 Crucifixion day was a preparation

day to the weekly Sabbath. Since Abib 15 is a holy day or high day Sabbath and therefore a holy convocation on which no work may be done (Lev 23:6-7), it can not be a preparation day for the weekly Sabbath. As a result Sir Anthony's Friday Abib-15 Crucifixion day does not fit John 19:31.

Therefore Sir Anthony's Friday Abib-15 Crucifixion—Sunday Resurrection Sign of Jonah is non-biblical but HWA's teaching of an Abib-14 Wednesday Crucifixion and a just before Saturday sunset Resurrection perfectly fits God's and Jesus' 3-days and 3-nights Sign of Jonah (Jonah 1:17; Matt 12:40).

10 Yet another contrary claim!

Sir Anthony next appealed to the anaphoric usage of the Greek nouns 'Sabbath' in Luke 23:54 and 56. Greek grammars claim that such anaphoric usage, where an earlier noun—here Sabbath of verse 54—is anarthrous (without a definite article) but a subsequent appearance of the same noun—here Sabbath of verse 56—is arthrous (with a definite article) means the second Sabbath of verse 56 refers to one and the same Sabbath of verse 54.

An example of such anaphoric usage is Jesus telling the Samaritan woman that, “*he would have given thee living water*” (John 4:10) and the woman responding with, “*Sir, give me this water . . .*” (John 4:15). Here the arthrous noun 'this water' of John 4:15 refers back to the anarthrous 'living water' of verse 10 and so both times 'water' refers to living water.

This is rather too subtle a point of Greek grammar to allow Sir Anthony to argue that similarly the second Sabbath of Luke 23:56 points to it being the same Sabbath of verse 54, namely the weekly Sabbath and that therefore there were not two Sabbaths in the crucifixion week.

Yet one could argue that this anaphoric use of Sabbath between Luke 23:54 and 56 refers rather to the unifying concept of Sabbath, where one is an annual Sabbath and the other a weekly Sabbath. That is that the Abib-15 annual holy day Sabbath and the weekly Sabbath are both Sabbaths in the sense that both are holy convocations on which no work may be done and which is readily shown from Leviticus 23:3, 32.

I certainly reject Sir Anthony's claim that the parenthetical 'high day' of John 19:31 refers to a special high day weekly Sabbath when it clearly refers to the Abib-15 holy day Sabbath.

We must reject Sir Anthony Buzzard's claim that lack of scholarship dooms the Churches of God and remind him that human scholarship misleads whenever it pronounces contrary to God's word of Truth as given in Leviticus 23:3, 5, 6-8, 32; Numbers 9:1-3; Jonah 1:17; Matthew 12:40, 28:1-6; John 18:28 and 19:31.

11. The 4th Millennial Day!

To God a day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like a day (2 Pet 3:8). This suggests God considers the 7-day week a type of a 7-Millennial-Day Week of 7,000 years. Just as God commands man to work six days and rest on the sanctified 7th-day Sabbath (Exod 20:8-11), so God has given mankind 6 Millennial Days (6,000 years) to try man's way before God will commence His Kingdom on this Earth during the 7th or Sabbatical Millennial Day.

For example, God told Adam in Gen 2:17, “*But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*”. Yet after Adam partook of that tree he begat Seth at age 130 and lived till age 930 years. So did God fail to keep his word? No, because 930 years falls short of one Millennial Day of 1000 years and therefore Adam did die that same Millennial Day as God had warned.

In Section 3 it was shown from Matthew 28:1-6 that Jesus rose from the tomb just before Saturday sunset. Therefore by the 3-days and 3-nights Sign of Jonah, Jesus must have been buried three 24-hour days before that, which was just before Wednesday sunset or just before the end of the 4th day of the 7-day week.

So could this have a parallel with the 4th Millennial Day of a 7-Millennial-Day Week? It seems so because the 4th Millennial Day since the creation of Adam was from King David to just after our Lord Jesus' earthly ministry and Crucifixion. After all King David reigned around 960 BC and the Crucifixion was around 30 AD, which marks the 4th Millennial day.

The Prophet Daniel refers to Messiah the Prince being cut off in the middle of the week (Dan 9:25-27—Jesus' 3½ year ministry).

Dan 9:25-27—“*Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: . . . And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, . . . And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease . . .*”

In this prophecy each week corresponds to 7 years and the middle of the week to 3½ years. Since Wednesday is the 4th day of the week, it is the middle of the week. Daniel's prophecy indicates that the Messiah would be cut off in the middle of the week—Wednesday! This supports HWA's teaching of a Wednesday Abib-14 Crucifixion.

Therefore let us reject the misapplied human scholarship of Sir Anthony and pray that he may be granted to see the biblical truth he disdained and may come to disdain the nonsense that Jesus ate the Passover early on Abib 15 and was crucified on Friday Abib 15 and was only 1 night and 1 day and part of 1 night in the tomb. That he may come to see that God decreed that the Passover day is Abib 14 and that to this belongs all rites and all ceremonies of the Passover; so that none can be on the Abib 15 holy day (Num 9:1-3). As usual man's convoluted and self-serving thinking will misinterpret God's Word of Truth.

12 In conclusion

Sir Anthony's scholarship on Luke 23:54, 56, 24:21b, John 19:31 comes with far too many errors to be taken seriously by the churches of God. If that is 'real' scholarship, then we must reject it. Besides since when did OT Hebrew and NT Greek scholarship become prerequisites for salvation? God calls mostly non-scholars whom God enables with his holy spirit to understand from Numbers 9:1-3 that all of the rites and all of the ceremonies of Passover are restricted to the Abib-14 Passover day and that therefore not one aspect of Passover can fall on the Abib-15 holy day that begins the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Yet the linguistic scholar Sir Anthony Buzzard is blinded to the truths given by God in Leviticus 23:6-8, Numbers 9:1-3, Jonah 1:17 and Matthew 12:40. One may well ask, “*How useful can be scholarship that misleads?*”

HWA correctly taught the Bible is a giant cryptic jig-saw puzzle (Isa 28:9-14) and we must search the entire Bible to find all relevant verses pertaining to a doctrine. We did this for Luke 24:21b by finding Matthew 28:1-6, 26:5; John 18:28, 19:31; Jonah 1:17 and Matthew 12:40.

It is unreasonable to have scholarship override God's Word of Truth, when it is evident that Mainstream's falsifiers changed certain Greek manuscripts and English translations to suit their Good Friday—Easter Sunday tradition. Let us instead have God's Word override false scholarship, which we know corrupted several NT Greek manuscripts.

Let us reject Sir Anthony's claim on page 3 of Issue 150 of *The Journal* that “*Disdain for real scholarship dooms the COG's*” because I found that it is rather our 1974 rejection of 'God's Garden of Eden No-Divorce and No-Remarriage law' that dooms us (read article A16 and paper P1).

The articles and papers referred to are freely available at my Homepage www.rightly-dividing.net or by writing to Henk Jens, P.O. Box 121, Belmore, NSW, 2192, Australia .

Elohim Thy God

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Elohim as a noun is a plural word. As a verb doing any action, it is singular. When Elohim is used as a noun, it may be really telling you something about God. Why is Elohim known as God?

The Lord Thy God

When God spoke to Moses in Deuteronomy 18, He called out to Moses, "Thou shall be perfect with the LORD thy God" (Deuteronomy 18:13).

Every time God referred to doing something, every time He used a verb, then God, The Elohim, referred to Himself as The LORD (Deuteronomy 18:12, 13, 15, 16).

The word "Lord" in Hebrew is "YHVH." "YHVH" does the action as His "name" but the plural noun is letting you know "YHVH" is "The One and Only God." The Israelites call Him "Hashim—The God With No Name."

The Greek God Theo

Paul, the Apostle, referred to the Greeks as "the wise" (Romans 1:14). Why? This should be the question. In Athens, Paul identified one of their gods as The Unknown God. Then he made a remarkable statement: "Whom therefore you ignorantly worship, Him I declare to you."

The Greek *Theos* is the same as the word *Elohim* is in Hebrew. Neither Israel nor the Greeks knew Him. *Hashem* and *Unknown God* are saying Israel or the Greeks did not know who The True God was. Paul even defines *Elohim* and *The Unknown Theos* in great detail so there



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is no scriptural doubt that God (*Theos*) made (singular verb) the world and all things in the world. So He is The Lord (as in Deuteronomy 18) of heaven and earth, who dwells not in temples made with hands (earthly buildings)" (Acts 17:2).

Want more? Read all of Acts 17:25-30. How much clearer do you need it? The Apostle Paul declared *Elohim* and *Theos* are "The Whole Godhead." The One God is Elohim and Theos (Acts 17:29).

When this One God *Elohim* is used as a verb, it is always singular. God Himself created all things and no one else. The Greek poets who were philosophers of that time, like Aristotle and Socrates, knew the Truth of The One God.

God and Paul scripturally told you there is only One God who is the Father of all (Isaiah 46:8). That is *Elohim*, as a verb of action mean-

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ing “One God.” Even Jesus, without exception, warned you have only One Father who made everyone (Matthew 23:9).

There is only One Father who made all things (Hebrews 3:4). The Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, always states that “God” is “One.” God will be “All In All”—not Jesus. Christ is the Mediator, Master and your only Rabbi Teacher (Matthew 23:8).

How much scripture is necessary to stop Satan from blinding mankind (II Corinthians 4:4). Christ is only in The Image of God, just as Christians will become Sons of God.

Corinth is where Athens is located. The Corinthians worshiped many gods, and Paul was preaching that they must understand there is only One God.

The Invisible God

Paul made it very simple when he wrote to the Romans, who believed like the Greeks that there were many gods.

The New Testament is overwhelming proof there is only One God Almighty, “For the invisible things of him [singular] from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his [singular] eternal power and Godhead [One God]; so that they are without excuse” (Romans 1:20).

Paul had the same problem Christians have today. Rome and the Corinthians held to two, three or more gods. Over and over again the Bible, from its beginning, held to The One God who made all things (Hebrews 3:4).

Moses and Christ were a testimony, a witness of The One God who builds all things (Hebrews 3:1-3). Christ inherited all things by The Holy Spirit of God who created all things.

Jesus was “Immanuel—God” or “In You,” like

Abraham met a theophany. “Christ—In You” is the admission that God is in His Firstborn Son as God is “In You.” How? The Holy Spirit of God was “In Jesus” which made Him Holy, and as Sons of God it is His Holy Spirit—“In You” (Luke 1:3).

Romans makes it indisputable, “For as many as are led by the spirit of God they are the sons of God” (Romans 8:14).

Paul writes you are adopted from human parents (Romans 8:15). The “Spirit—In Man” unites with The Holy Spirit of God to make you the Children of God.

As with all of The Truth of God from the Alpha to the Omega, the beginning to the end, it

all covers the whole story of the Bible. God, the singular verb “Elohim,” is reproducing Himself to be “All In All” (I Corinthians 15:28).

Elohim, The One YHVH, “Theos,” in Greek, is The Only One who is The Father of all. That does not include Jesus who said the same. Even Christ acknowledged that only God (Theos) is good. Yet Christ, also, excluded Himself from being considered good (Matthew 19:17).

Only The One God and Father of all is good and, therefore, The Holy One. Jesus, at His “resurrection,” was glorified as He was before by The Holy Spirit of God from the beginning. The Prophets and Jesus always existed by The Holy Spirit of God—“In Them” (II Peter 1:21).

Read I Peter 1:10-11. As with The Prophets, by The Holy Spirit you always exist because Jesus, as well, is “In You” when you receive The Holy Spirit of God.

“Elohim” is “God by His Holy Spirit” which does “The Work” (“work” is a verb). The noun “Elohim” is “all that God was, is or can be”—“God is The I Am.”

Ultimately, everyone will be “The I Am” and, then, God will truly be “All In All.”

‘For the invisible things of him [singular] from the creation of the world are clearly seen.’

A Biblical Look at the Mark of the Beast and the Number 666

By James Russell

Many religious teachers and scholars have taught that the mark of the beast is a number tattooed on your skin, or a personal information chip under the skin, or maybe even an eye scan! Or you may have to register with the “One World” government! Also, it has been hinted that the bar code could be this mark—but could all these be wrong? When looking at Bible prophecy, we should look to the Bible for the answers!

It is an unfortunate but nevertheless true statement that doctrinal teachings of long standing are accepted by the Churches and their leaders as having and teaching the whole truth. No one is expected to present new evidence which questions the accuracy of either—and the individual who does voice opposition to one or more segments of centuries-old Church dogma commits an act of extreme presumption!

However, there is much to be revealed from a diligent and analytical study of the Scriptures that will at times upset previously established assumptions which have been accepted for generations as a theological truism. All knowledge from the Scriptures has not yet been revealed, and foolish indeed are those who refuse to consider and weigh new Biblical evidence brought to bear even upon old and accepted beliefs.

When presenting the false teaching of the “Mark of the Beast” into God’s prophecies, we receive dissenting opinions raised by Church leaders, objecting to the presentation of the error in what is called the “Sacred” teachings kept by most Churches of God today. The usual method of theological reasoning and deduction presented in the magazine *Prove All Things* and the sameness in all the statements clearly indicated that the thinking of these objectors is cast in the same theological mold.

When theologians confine themselves “to quoting the writings of each other as their authority,” their conclusions are apt to be circumscribed within very narrow limitations, marked by a kind of intellectual inbreeding that renders them incapable of bringing forth new truths. For example, this attitude toward new Biblical revelation is responsible for the rejection by the Churches and its leaders of new truth. God’s truth from God’s word should establish our beliefs!

On the other hand, despite being subjected to the worst adage ever de-

vised, as in “there is no black and white,” everything becomes a shade of grey. The most important decisions people make about their lives are overwhelmingly black and white. You either live a life of honesty and integrity, or you don’t. You either choose God’s way or the world’s way!

For many years now, we have taught that we should let the Bible interpret the Bible. John, in Revelation, describes the last, final, warning message.

“If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his *mark* in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of *God*, which is poured out without mixture” (Rev. 14:9-10).

When connecting the dots, we see this also has to do with keeping God’s commandments: “Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth” (Rev. 3:10).

More evidence: “Here is the pa-

soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes” (Deut. 11:18).

Those who keep God’s 7th Day Sabbath and His annual Holy Day Sabbaths at their appointed time will be rewarded. “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years” (Rev. 20:4).

The mark of the beast has every sign of not keeping God’s commandments! The Protestant and Catholics observe Sunday for their day of worship, and Muslim cultures keep Friday. They do not keep God’s 7th day Sabbath! Judaism postpones God’s annual Holy Day Sabbaths, and this results in them having a mark of the beast! The sign between God and His people is

The mark of the beast has every sign of not keeping God’s 7th-Day Sabbath and His annual Holy Day Sabbaths!

tience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (Rev. 14:12).

According to God’s word, we see where a sign could also be a mark! As an example, Exod. 13:9 shows to God’s people: “And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that the LORD’s law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the LORD brought thee out of Egypt.” Also, “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes” (Deut. 6:4-8).

And “Therefore shall ye lay up these My words in your heart and in your

the keeping of the weekly Sabbath and His annual Holy Day Sabbaths on the right days!

Another sign of the mark of the beast is: “And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name” (Rev. 13:17).

Those who buy and sell on God’s 7th day Sabbath have the mark of the beast! God plainly tells us that we should not buy and sell on His weekly Sabbaths and annual Holy Day Sabbaths!

“And if the people of the land bring ware or any victuals on the Sabbath day to sell, that we would not buy it of them on the Sabbath, or on the Holy Day: and that we would leave the seventh year, and the exaction of every debt” (Neh. 10:31).

Notice now what Nehemiah 13 says: “In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day: and I testified against them in the

day wherein they sold victuals. There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the Sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem. Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath day? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the Sabbath. And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the Sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the Sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the Sabbath day. So the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware lodged without Jerusalem once or twice. Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no more on the Sabbath. And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the Sabbath day. Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy” (Neh. 13:15-22). Also see Jer. 16:21-24, 27.

God originally told Moses, “. . . This is that which the LORD hath said, tomorrow is the rest of the Holy Sabbath unto the LORD: bake that which ye will bake to day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade: and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein. And Moses said, Eat that to day; for to day is a Sabbath unto the LORD: to day ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none. And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the LORD said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep My commandments and My laws? See, for that the LORD hath given you the Sabbath, therefore He giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day” (Exod 16:23-29).

The Sabbath was given by God at the beginning of the re-creation week!

“Thus the heavens and the earth

Continued on next page

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The Mark of the Beast and the Number of His Name

Continued from previous page

were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all His work which God created and made" (Gen. 2:1-3).

When we blindly accept the words of religious teachers and scholars about the mark of the beast, we have been looking into the wrong places for answers! Only God's word has answers for spiritual matters.

The Mark of the Beast and the Number of His Name

Quoting Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong's booklet *Mark of the Beast* [© 1952]: "Better be sure whether this brand is upon you! Without it, no man will be able to buy or sell! Without it, you will be tortured even to death! But with it, you shall suffer the seven last plagues."

The mark of the beast is something very undesirable. Who gave the beast his power?

"The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority" (Rev. 13:2).

We can recognize that the dragon is Satan, the devil.

"So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast saying, 'Who is like the beast?'" (Rev. 13:4).

For those who are still in doubt as to what the mark of the beast is, let's look at his number. In Rev. 13:18:

"Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast for it is the number of a man: his number is 666."

In the New Testament, the letters of the Greek word *cuporia*, from which the word *wealth* is translated, totals 666. Out of all the 2000 Greek nouns of the New Testament, there is only one other word that has this numerical value, the word *paradosis*, translated "tradition" (Acts 19:25; Matt. 15:2-3).

Wealth and Tradition—interesting enough are the two great corrupters of society and the world today! Wealth corrupted their practice and honesty; tradition corrupted their doctrine. Here Wealth and Tradition deceive churches and therefore are used by the devil to deceive the world.

Notice now the description of those who refuse this evil mark.

"Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of GOD, and the faith of JESUS" (Rev. 14:12).

Those who keep the command-

ments of GOD are those who do not have the mark. Those who have the mark refuse to keep the commandments. The mark therefore involves the rejection of the commandments of GOD, or any one of them as we find in James 2:10.

"For if we are guilty of breaking one, we are guilty of breaking all of them." There is only one possible commandment that affects a man's job or his business, and that is the fourth commandment which says, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy" (Exo. 20:8).

The Roman Catholic Council of Laodicea, in 363 AD, passed this decree: "Christians must not Judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day, resting rather on Sunday. But if any be found to be Judaizing, let them be declared anathema from CHRIST."

Those following the Hebrew Calendar have decreed that the Feast of Trumpets (an annual Holy Day Sabbath) must be postponed, by authority of Judaism's traditional postponement rules!

Wealth and Tradition are the two great corrupters of society and the world today! Wealth corrupted their practice and tradition corrupted their doctrine.

GOD's sign, the Sabbath, is not a temporary covenant, but is for *all generations, forever!* The *Eternal* spoke unto Moses saying, "Verily My Sabbaths you shall keep; for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations" (Exo. 31:13).

"I gave them My statutes, [annual Sabbaths] and shewed them My judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them. Moreover also I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them. I am the LORD your God; walk in My statutes, [annual Sabbaths] and keep My judgments, and do them; and hallow My Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that ye may know that I am the LORD your God" (Ezek. 20:11-12; Ezek. 20:19-20).

It was for Sabbath breaking that GOD sent both the house of Israel and the house of Judah into slavery! Regarding one of GOD's annual Sabbaths, we read: "It shall be for a sign unto you upon your hand, and for a memorial between your eyes, that the

Eternal's law may be in your mouth" (Exo. 13:9).

Sunday observance and the annual Holy Day postponement rules of Judaism are a "*mark of the beast!*"

Satan has used the postponement rules in the Jewish Hebrew calendar that most Churches of God use today to try and deceive God's elect. What better Feast Day would Satan want us to postpone than the Feast of Trumpets? Naturally the Jews would not keep the true Feast of Trumpets which pictures the return of Jesus Christ as the Messiah—when they don't believe Jesus Christ is the Messiah and the Son of God!

Christ said, "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?" (John 5:46-47).

"Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love Me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do ye not understand My speech? Even because ye cannot hear My word. Ye are of your father the

right day is also the mark of the beast!

If we follow the Jewish Hebrew custom and tradition of the postponements, we will be misled into polluting GOD's annual Sabbaths or Holy Days "Because they despised My judgments, and walked not in My statutes, but polluted My Sabbaths: for their heart went after their idols" (Ezek. 20:16).

"Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But He answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias [Isaiah] prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoureth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me. But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. And He called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand: Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. Then came His disciples, and said unto Him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying? But He answered and said, Every plant, which My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" (Matt. 15:1-3, 6-14).

When blindly following the Jewish Hebrew calendar, you will fall into the ditch Christ was talking about. You will be following *anti-Christ!*

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" (2 John 7).

Islam also says that Jesus was not the Son of God! Which makes them anti-Christ also!

"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time" (1 John 2:18).

GOD says, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Pro. 14:12 16:25). It is time we begin to follow *Jesus' example and keep holy the days GOD made holy!*

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What Is It? Galatians 1:6–8; 5:10



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Building Bridges Not Walls*Dedicated to the Reconciliation of
The Sabbath Keeping Churches of God*

Jesus of Nazareth warned his followers that those who would soon come after him should be very careful about how they built the Church of God.

He warned that the coming of false prophets would cause the church to be built upon a foundation of sand, unless certain principles were followed.

Did Jesus of Nazareth warn his followers to be cautious about building their house, the house of God, upon sand?

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Church of God, The MOST HIGH GOD

Declaring the Everlasting Gospel of the Kingdom of God

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What is God?

Has anyone ever asked you, *What* is God? Think about that one. A stranger walks up to you and asks you if you know what God is. The question is for real, not a joke. The person really wants to know. How would you answer?

Maybe the first thing that comes to your mind is God is The Creator. You might reference the Bible book of Genesis reviewing what is said there about God making everything including Adam and Eve.

I hear you, the stranger responds. I am familiar with the creation story. But that doesn't answer my question, *What* is God? As a child I was raised in a religious family. I was taught God was three persons, three individuals, three parts of some sort of Whole. One person-part was God the Father, another part God the Son, and a third part God the Ghost. What bothers me, says the stranger, is the Son-part came to the earth by command of the Father-part to die. How is it the Whole survived the death of one-third of itself? Also, why is the one-third 'Ghost' person not the father of Jesus since it was Ghost who overshadowed Mother Mary?

You recognize the stranger is seriously questioning facets of the Trinity Doctrine. You might respond you haven't found anything in the Bible about God being three persons. You might say the apostle John wrote the Book of Revelation after receiving divine visions. In Chapter 4 of Revelation John writes about seeing 'One' sitting on the Throne of Heaven. The One was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone, says John. Additionally, four beasts around the Throne never rested saying: 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty' and 24 Elders were proclaiming: 'You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power for You have created all things.' Obviously, John had been shown, in vision, God sitting on His throne.

What is God, you rhetorically ask the stranger? God is the Creator, God is Almighty, and based upon what John was shown, the 'physical' image of God is red-dish-yellow in color. This mix of color is borne out by what the Children of Israel in the wilderness saw when The Lord descend upon Mt. Sinai. What they saw was *fire* (Exodus 19:18). Fire is the same basic color of the jasper and sardine stones John mentioned.

The prophet Ezekiel wrote in Chapter 1, verses 26 to 28, about the vision of a throne he had been shown. On the throne, said Ezekiel, was a shape in 'resemblance' of the likeness of a man. The color of the 'resemblance' was amber. It was the glory of The Lord appearing as *fire*.

During the Israelites' later years in the wilderness Moses reminded them that The Lord their God was a consuming *fire* (Deuteronomy 4:24). And many years later the apostle Paul told the New Testament Hebrew church God was a consuming *fire* (Hebrews 12:29).

God is spirit (John 4:24). He is not a man (Hosea 11:9). Only fools try to change the glory of the incorruptible God into an image like a corruptible man (Romans 1:23). God patterned humanity after His true form (Genesis 1:26), but in comparison we humans are only darkened shadows, phantoms, illusions of God's image (see *Strong's Concordance*, OT reference word #6754). The day will come when those who are accepted for the change to spirit will see God as He really is (1 John 3:2). For now, no physical human can look upon the true face of God and live (Exodus 3:6).

Moses had an encounter with a burning bush. The incident bears out the fire aspect of God. The voice from the bush told Moses He was the God of Moses' forefathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Upon hearing the identity of the speaker, Moses covered his eyes afraid to look upon God (Exodus 3:4-6). Moses had forgotten he already had looked directly at the fire but not died. The fire in the bush was a cover for God.

Years later at Mt. Sinai, Moses was up the mountain to receive The Lord's commandments. He asked if he could see God's glory (splendor) (Exodus 33:18). The

Lord agreed to show Moses. He would make His 'goodness' pass before Moses, but would cover the eyes of Moses because not even the dedicated Moses, who had found grace in God's sight, could see the face of God and live. Moses had to be satisfied with seeing only the backside of God (Exodus 33:18-23).

While no physical man can look upon the face of God, it must be remembered a great many people saw the face of Jesus. That is one proof that Jesus was not God, nor was he a one-third part of some greater Whole suggested by the Trinity idea.

While Revelation 4:3 provides a 'physical' description of God upon the Throne in Heaven, Revelation 1:13 provides description of Jesus after his resurrection to eternal life. Jesus is shown clothed with a garment down to the foot and girt about the chest area with a golden girdle. His feet are the color of finely refined brass. His head hairs are white as snow, and he has eyes that look as flames of fire. His face shines as the sun in full strength.

"When I saw him," wrote John, "I fell at his feet as dead. But, he laid his right hand upon me, saying: 'Fear not. I am he that lived, and was dead, and am alive forevermore.'" These two descriptions show God and son are distinct personages. Jesus is his own self. Even human fathers and sons have different visual facial appearances and physical shapes.

So you might ask now, What is/was Jesus? Jesus was, as he said many times, the son of The Most High God (Mark 5:7). He also was the son of Man because of his birth by Mary (Luke 1:32). Jesus was the one prophesied to come from God to the earth to magnify the Law of God and make it honorable (Isaiah 42:21). Jesus was The Lord's Christ (Messiah) (Luke 2:26).

Malachi 3:1, *Strong's Concordance* translation—"I am sending My messenger," says the Self-existent Jehovah of The Host. "He will clear the way ahead of Me. Suddenly, the lord whom you seek will come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight."

Hebrews 1:1-2, *Strong's Concordance* translation—"At many times and in many ways of old," said the apostle Paul, "God spoke to the forefathers by the prophets. In these later days, (He) speaks to us by the son through whom He appointed heir of all. Indeed, the ages He made."

Deuteronomy 18:18-19, *Strong's Concordance* translation—(The Lord is speaking to Moses): "A prophet like you will I raise up for them from among their brothers. I will put My words in his mouth and he will speak all that I will order him. And if (there) be a man who (for)ever will not listen to My words which he will speak, I will require (it of him)."

Unfortunately, not everyone who does hear the words of salvation likes what they hear. Good examples are the Scribes and Pharisees in the time of Jesus. Jesus plainly told them *they* never had heard the voice of God because *they* were not listening to what was being said by scripture and prophecy.

"You have not The Father's word abiding in you," Jesus told them. "Search the Scriptures. You think you have eternal life abiding in you yet, I, whom God has sent, you believe not. The Scriptures testify of me, yet you will not come to me so you might have life" (John 5:38-40).

Peter and John were witnesses to many of the things Jesus did. At one time Peter told people: "We are not following cunningly devised fables when we make known to you the power and coming of our lord, Jesus Christ. We were eyewitnesses of his majesty! For he received from God the Father honor and glory when there came such a voice to him from the Excellent Glory: 'This is My beloved son in whom I am well pleased.' That voice, which came from heaven, we heard when with him upon the holy mount (of transfiguration)" (2 Peter 1:16-17/Matthew 17:5).

Some people think it was an angel and not God speaking from the cloud on the mountain. If that were true, Peter and John were liars. Jesus, also, was a liar. He said his Father had borne witness of him (John 5:37).

Abram would take issue with the idea that it was an angel who spoke with him. When Abram was 99 years old The Lord 'appeared to him' (came to see), saying: "I am God The Almighty. Walk before me and be you perfect. I will make My covenant between Me and you. I will multiply you exceedingly." Upon hearing, Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him (Genesis 17:1-3).

The Book of Isaiah in the Old Testament is important for understanding the differences between God and the son whom God would send. Chapters 42, 44 and 45 are the keys. Beginning with 42, verse 1: "Behold My *servant* whom I uphold, My elect in whom My soul delights. I have put My spirit upon him. He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles."

42v5-8 (continuing the description of the 'elect servant')—Thus says God The Lord, He that created the heavens and stretched them out, He that spread forth the earth and that which comes out of it, He that gives breath and spirit to the people that walk therein: "I The Lord have called you in righteousness and will hold your hand, and will keep you, and give you for a covenant of the people, for a light to the Gentiles, to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness. I am The Lord. That is My name. My glory will I not give to another."

44v6, 8—Thus says The Lord the King of Israel, and his (Israel's) redeemer, The Lord of Hosts: "I am the first, and I am the last, and beside Me there is no God. You are My witnesses. Is there a God beside Me? Yea, there is *no* God. I know not any."

45v11-12, 18—Thus says The Lord, the Holy One of Israel: "Ask Me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of My hands. I have made the earth and created man upon it. (With) My hands I have stretched out the heavens and all their host have I commanded." Thus says The Lord that created the heavens, God Himself who formed the earth and made it, established it, did not create it in vain, and formed it to be inhabited: "I am The Lord and there is none else."

When The Lord changed Jacob's name to Israel, He identified Himself as God Almighty (Genesis 35:10-11). The Lord, whose name alone is Jehovah, is The Most High over all the earth (Psalm 83:18/Psalm 91:1). It was God who was with the Children of Israel in the wilderness (Psalm 78). When God makes a promise, He swears (confirms His word) by no other, because no other is greater than He (Hebrews 6:13).

Jesus was the elect *servant* of God (Isaiah 42:1), the *arm* of The Lord (Isaiah 53:1-3). He was brought (to the earth) as a *lamb* to the slaughter (Isaiah 53:7), a *token* of God's covenant with humanity (Isaiah 42:6). Jesus was a *light* to lighten the Gentiles (Luke 2:32). He is the only one, so far, begotten from the dead, the first of many *firstfruits* of God (1 Corinthians 15:20-23). Jesus was a human man as well as the son of God. He was a *prophet* of God, however Jesus was not *The* Lord God.

The above have been but a few Bible passages identifying Jesus as other than The Almighty Lord God. At no time did Jesus, an apostle, an angel, a prophet of God, or anyone else say Jesus was The Lord God in the Old Testament of the Bible. Such an identity for Jesus is a fairy tale. If Jesus was The Lord who gave commandment that people should have *no other gods before Him*, where does that leave the Deity whom Jesus said was his Father, and God, and who was greater? (John 10:29/John 14:28).

Here is the patience of the saints, (that) they keep the commandments of God, and faith of Jesus (Revelation 14:12).

For additional study on this subject, request a copy of our free booklet, *The Supreme God*.

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Jesus was just a man for 300 years. How did he become God?

By Mark Bosserman

Most of us have been exposed to the Trinity and other extrabiblical teaching, but how many of us know that Jesus didn't become God until 300 years after his death! That's another extrabiblical teaching, stemming from his incredible life and death and resurrection. Like all legends, they change over time and evolve into something completely different.

As word of the life and resurrection and miracles of Jesus spread over the known world, the Second Adam, our High Priest and Mediator became the very God he came to proclaim. Satan, the god of this world, was determined to make sure that the one God and Father of all would be placed in the background of the one who was raised up by God to reconcile man back to Himself.

We know this by the language in Revelation 21:3: "Then He the Father Himself shall be our God and we shall be His people."

Jesus, the appointed King, shall also be High Priest during the Millennium, serving our God and his God.

Is it possible that "one God" means exactly that? One, not two or three? The concept of two or three Gods took root in Constantine's council of Nicea some 300 years after Jesus' death.

"Well said, Teacher," a scribe said to Jesus. "You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but He" (Mark 12:32.)

This scribe's words are the open door for Jesus to declare his God status. But he does not do that. Instead, he agrees with the scribe that there is only one God and no other, which is what Isaiah 44 and 45 say.

"He" is a singular pronoun, and Mark 12:32 is an explicative statement. Jesus responded to the scribe's wise comment: "You are not far from the kingdom of God" (verse 34).

Jim Franks was asked to allow the doctrinal committee of the United Church of God to have meetings with the five ministers in the UCG in 2004 who wanted to have face-to-face doctrinal discussions on the nature of God.

Jim refused and would not even allow Don Ward to attend the annual One God Seminar (godward.org) to debate the long-standing tradition of two Gods taught by Herbert W. Armstrong.

Christians are to grow in grace and knowledge until their death or the Second Coming. It is

commanded that they not play prevent defense and walk backward into the Kingdom of God.

Here is a quote from the UCG's *World News & Prophecy* publication from August 2008 (in an article titled "History of the Church, Part IV," which should have inspired people to ask questions):

"The emperor [Constantine] was not a Bible student and not even a Christian at the time of the council, but he was clearly in control of religion."

Here is a comment by John Anthony McGuckin in his article "The Road to Nicea" from *Christian History* journal, winter 2005:

"The order of the day [from Constantine] was to resolve the question about the eternal and divine status of the son of God . . .

"This should be clearly understood: The issue of exactly who Jesus was and His relationship with God the Father and the Holy Spirit was resolved by a biblically illiterate non-Christian serial killer in a single day."

Brethren, in a single day three of the most important doctrines of the Bible were changed, and the consequences have people like James Malm calling me a heretic, even though I don't believe the Sabbath is Sunday and I

believe the Passover is to be observed and I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that he was flesh and blood like you and I.

But I do not believe Jesus is God the Son, as Constantine and church tradition would have us think.

Did you gasp when you read the quote from the McGuckin article above? We see that not just the Sabbath was changed to Sunday and Easter was to replace Passover, but the monumental deception of our First and Greatest Commandment was compromised by changing "Son of God" to "God the Son," a phrase that is not in Scripture.

This in turn changed the focus of our Brother and High Priest and Mediator between God and man into a second God who overshadows the only one who is truly God. The true God is the Father, the God of our fathers (Acts 3:13) and our Creator (Mark 10:6). This is so great an understanding that Jesus said that knowing the only true God sums up eternal life: "This is Eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God" (John 17:3).

I can tell you confidently that Satan's greatest victory over man is this very doctrine concerning the nature of God. If Satan can keep you from knowing who the one and true God is, he can deny you the awareness you need to keep from breaking the First and Greatest Commandment, which is "You shall have no other gods before *Us*!"

Just kidding. Here's the real First Commandment: "You shall have no other gods before *Me*." That obviously means we must not worship anyone or anything other than the Father.

"You believe that there is *one* God. You do

well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!" (James 2:19).

In other words, Jesus Christ is the Son of God, *not* God the Son!

Jesus' own words shed light on this important subject:

"Jesus said to [his disciples], but who do you think I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, 'You are the Christ, Son of the living God.' Jesus answered and said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar Jonah. Flesh and blood have not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven'" (Matthew 16:15-17).

This was the perfect opportunity for Jesus to say, "I am God in the flesh" or "I am the Eternal Word."

But he responded by acknowledging that he was the *son* of the Living God, the *son* of his Father.

To be a son, you need a father and a mother. "And the angel answered and said to [Mary], 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called . . .'"

Called what? God the Son?

No! the "Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

To come into the world as the Son of God, one must not have existed earlier as God or an angel. Otherwise the person coming into physical existence could not be a "son." If Jesus had existed earlier as "God," then he was already an eternal being and would not have been God's "son." The new baby's life would simply have been a continuation of a previous existence.

1 Corinthians 15:45-46 provides a very important insight. Talking about the two Adams, it refers to "first the natural life, then the spiritual life." Jesus Christ is the only human ever to receive eternal life! You can't be first to receive something you already had.

I don't pretend to say this is an easy doctrine that can be settled once and for all in the brief article you are now reading. But surely these scriptures will stir up your Berean spirit.

Here's an analogy:

I don't subscribe to Bill Clinton's way of talking about "words." I cannot bring myself to say, "I guess it depends on what you mean by the meaning of the word *one*."

Brethren, do you understand what I'm trying to say? To believe there are two Gods—that Jesus is God the Son rather than the Son of God—we have to alter the numerical meaning of the word *one* to allow for a second, or third, God.

But is that acceptable? Should we presume to change God's Word to fit our doctrine?

How many times have you heard a sermon in which the speaker refers to when Jesus "was the Word" or when he was "the God of the Old Testament"? The William Tyndale Bible shines light on our Trinitarian translators with his 1534 Bible translation of John 1:1-2, which reads:

"In the beginning was the worde and the worde was with God and the worde was God 2.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Go to www.tinyurl.com/wpogblog for further information, resources and links.

Since God, being eternal, cannot die, when Jesus died who died?

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And *It* became flesh.”

“It,” not “he.” Just like with “Holy Spirit,” where “him” or “he” in the KJV should be “it.” A *word* is never a he or she. It must be an *it*, which makes Deuteronomy 18:18 finally make sense:

“I will raise up for them a Prophet like you [Moses] from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and he shall speak all that I command Him.”

This is how the words became flesh.

Furthermore, many COG speakers refer to “the God family.” But where in the Bible does it say that God is a family?

God is most certainly *not* a family. God, Yahweh, the Father, is *creating* a family. Jesus is the firstborn among many in that family.

The God-family concept had to be inserted to fit the Trinity concept of three—or the COGs’ Binity concept of two—as one.

And can anything be plainer than 1 Corinthians 8:4-6: “. . . We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one . . . For us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live.”

We saw above that Constantine canonized the multiple-Gods heresy and that even the demons recognize the falseness of this doctrine and tremble. We read that Jesus himself denies being God and the apostles knew Christ was not God.

John, in Revelation 5, while standing in the awesome presence of God, forgot who Jesus was for a moment and began to cry because no one was “worthy to open the seal.”

Yet John had spent three and one-half years with this incredible human being. Philippians 2:5-9: Jesus, born King, was visited by kings, received homage and gifts, but gave up these privileges to take on the role of the servant. Therefore God (his God and our God) has highly exalted him.

I have spent hundreds of hours studying this subject, which weaves its way throughout the Bible, and I can assure you that the Bible verses I’m citing are just the tip of the iceberg.

If you, like me, have been listening and learning for 44 years, the concept of *only one God* makes much more sense and has history on its side. It is far more comprehensible and plausible than trying to make the man Jesus into some sort of eternal preexisting, nonhuman, or half human, God-man.

James Malm, Jim Franks and the COGs say God is a family, which I’ve noted above is a notion not taught in Scripture. “Yahweh” d.b.a. “God” is the only Eternal being, the only One who alone has immortality (1 Timothy 6:16), the only One who is truly good! (Luke 18:19).

The Father, Yahweh God, is the only life-giving being who created, on His own behalf, the angels, Adam, the Second Adam and us, which is why Christ said in Matthew 19:17, “Why do you call me good? No one is good but one, God”—again differentiating himself from the Almighty.

That leads me to my next point: Jesus *has* a God. He refers in John 20:17 to “my Father and your Father, my God and your God.”

If Jesus is God, how is it that he *has* a God, yet Yahweh has no God before Him because He *is* God? How is this not the ultimate paradox for Trinitarians or people who believe in two Gods?

Yet Genesis 1:26—“Let us make man in our image”—does not give clarity to who the *us* is.

Read out of context, could it conceivably be Jesus? Yes. Could it be the 24 elders? Yes. So at best this is one implicative statement. Yet it is followed in the books of the Bible by 10,000 singular pronouns describing the *one God*.

“So God created man in [His] own image; in the image of God [He] created him; male and female [He] created them” (verse 27).

Jesus quotes the above—the Genesis account of God’s creation of man in His own image—in Mark 10:6: “But from the beginning of the creation, God ‘made them male and female.’ ”

There is such a thing as the principle of “agency” in the Bible. Sometimes a scripture refers to someone as God, yet that person is obviously not God. An example is in Exodus 4, when God talks to Moses about Moses’ brother Aaron:

“So he [Aaron] shall be your [Moses’] spokesman to the people. And he himself shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God.”

If Jesus was God, then his supposed death would have to be a sham—because, brethren, the Eternal God by definition cannot die!

I make this plea to all the brethren: Think for yourself and work out your own salvation. To know the one and only God is the foundation of Christianity and the understanding of Scripture.

James Malm cites Micah 5:2-4 as proof of a preexisting Jesus:

“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the one to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting. Therefore he shall give them up, until the time that she who is in labor has given birth; then the remnant of his brethren shall return to the children of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God; and they shall abide, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.”

Yet the context of Micah makes it clear that the ruler from Bethlehem will not be God. This ruler will be born and have “brothers.” Obviously, the Eternal God cannot be born, and the thought of the Creator of the heavens and earth having brothers is absurd.

These verses in Micah 5 are speaking of God’s anointed King, Jesus Christ. The Word of God declares not that this ruler will be God, but that Yahweh will be “his [this ruler’s] God” (verse 4).

Micah 5 is clear: A child will be born in Bethlehem and the Israelites will be his brothers, and he will grow up to deliver and rule the nation and stand in the strength of Yahweh, his God.

Like Moses, Jesus is a deliverer too (Deuteronomy 18:15).

James Malm and others say it takes a God to

die for man’s sins, otherwise he would not be an effectual sacrifice for all humanity.

But where is the scripture to back up that emotional rationalization?

What does Romans 5:19 say? “For by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one *man’s* obedience many will be made righteous.”

If Jesus was God, then his supposed death would have to be a sham—because, brethren, the Eternal God by definition cannot die!

Only someone who could die—a real human being—could serve as a genuine sacrifice. The death of Jesus, the perfect man, the one who had never sinned, was a genuine sacrifice because he *could* have sinned and yet *did not*.

If Jesus was God, then he could never have sinned and his death could not have been an actual death that would have been any kind of a sacrifice.

James Malm says that denying the divinity of Christ is the doctrine of the Antichrist.

That is the doctrine of Calvin, which led to Calvin having Michael Servetus burned at the stake for believing in one God.

Your Bible says the opposite of what Mr. Malm says about the doctrine of Antichrist:

“Every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world” (1 John 4:3).

Three hundred years later the doctrine of Calvin became a creed, under the pagan Constantine’s Nicene takeover of Christianity.

I—and other believers in one

God—certainly *do* believe Jesus came in the flesh, that he was a real human being, that he had the ability to sin if he had chosen to do so, but overcame sin, resisting while sweating blood, and qualifying to be our sinless Savior. Only a genuine human being who indeed had come in the flesh could genuinely die and serve as mankind’s saving sacrifice.

This is not meant to be a personal attack on James Malm or the COGs. Ask your ministers how many Gods they believe in. If they say one, do they mean that only the Father is God and that Jesus is the created son and did not preexist? Their answer might be quite telling.

Brethren, we can agree to disagree without becoming nasty towards each other. If this article at least gets you back into your Bible looking at pronouns and asking who is speaking in a particular scripture, surely we will find it to be a rewarding study.

The Worldwide People of God blog (tinyurl.com/wpogblog) will have articles and links that go into specific details and answer many of your additional questions, along with a place to leave comments.

One last question that I hope you will think about: If Jesus is God, and since God, being eternal, cannot die, when Jesus died who died?



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November 11, 2012

Go to www.tinyurl.com/wpogblog for further information, resources and links.

Elders, Rabbis, Scholars, Theologians

By Art Mokarow

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When you study *The Bible* you give honor and respect to God and also to individuals God has created. Each individual is a mixture of good and evil. The Bible teaches you how to treat others as you wish to be treated.

All mankind are sinners and miss the mark of perfection and holiness as God. There may be a good reason Christians look to *Biblical* people who study the *scriptures* and carry the title of Elders, Rabbis, Scholars and Theologians.



Art Mokarow

Right and Wrong

Who is right and who is wrong? Each person may be partly right and wrong, resulting in a mixture—part good and part bad. God answers this question mankind possesses. It is simple to discern if prophets who insist they have The Truth are correct or incorrect (Deuteronomy 18:22). If what they say comes to pass, then they speak The Truth.

If what they claim does not happen or proceed as stated, they are false Prophets. A Real Teacher of God speaks The Truth of God by what works perfectly, without a flaw. Being partly right just tells mankind it is not The Way of God. God is Holy and without the slightest error. His teachers must teach from Every Word of God.

Blaming others for making a super mess still designates that you are wrong. If you know what is right, you can calculate when you will succeed because you have all The Truth. Or do you?

Paul Doubted Himself

The Apostle Paul warned the Corinthians to realize mankind can prophecy only in part and know only parts of The Truth (I Corinthians 13:9). No one but God and Christ has and knows Every Word of God according to His “will.” Jesus always did what was His Father’s “will” (John 5:19).

They of Reputation

Here is why Paul went to Jerusalem to speak to the other Apostles and James, the Bishop of the Jerusalem Church: “And I went up by revelation and communicated to them that gospel [good news] which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately [in a conference] to them who were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain [for nothing]” (Galatians 2:2).

Paul did not want to teach a falsehood and be considered a false Prophet. He knew Prophets are subject to learn from each other: “And the spirits [minds] of the prophets are subject to the prophets” (I Corinthians 14:32). Everyone is to learn from each other, which includes The Prophets. That is why they had a school for Prophets in the Old Testament in Elijah’s and Elisha’s time.

The Greek word for “Prophet” means “an oracle

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or speaker who speaks The Word of God.” That is why Paul said he wished the entire Corinthian Church would prophesy rather than speak in tongues, since no one can understand the tongues (I Corinthians 14:1-2).

Here is why you need to be willing to learn from each other to be sure you are on the same path to The Kingdom of God: “For God is not the author of confusion [Babylon], but of peace, as in all churches of the saints” (I Corinthians 14:33).

The key to opening The Truth of God is to be humble and to learn from each other. What you need

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

God Knows Your Heart

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CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

to do is test yourself to prove what is truth and then, only, to do good works—harming no one (I Thessalonians 5:21).

Men of Honor

The Nobel Peace Prize is to give honor to men or women who are successful in their research for the good of mankind.

God was way ahead of them. Paul defined those seeking The Will of God not as The Church of God but as Saints. Saints are those trying to grow to become Holy as God is. In Greek, the word “Saint” is a *hagios*—“a holy one.” The Corinthian Church was carnal, like animals debating with each other, creating separate church denominations (I Corinthians 3). The men or women, Jewish or Christians, as well as others, need to be defined so you can learn from others. You need to remember that no one has all The Truth. They know only “in part.”

You, then, can prove to yourself if what you understand is truth.

1) Elders, usually men fifty and older, become *Biblically* dedicated to The Word of God. As they grow in true knowledge, God gives them double honor.

2) Rabbis are known as master theologians in The Words of God. A master is honored as a lord. Jesus told you He, alone, is your Lord and Master since His “commission” was from God (Matthew 23:10).

It does not mean Rabbis cannot teach you, but only Jesus is your Master, who now is The One who knows all truth (Hebrew 1:1-2). Christ replaces The Prophets because He knows Every Word of God and not just “a part.”

3) Scholars are like scribes in The Savior’s day. They are the academics who can teach you very helpful tools to discern The Word of God. They are not necessarily right as to *Biblical* interpretation that demands they have The Holy Spirit of God, which only, then, guarantees success.

4) “Theologian” comes from two Latin words. The Greek word for Theo is from the word *Theos*, defined as “God.” *Logians* in Latin connotes *logas*,

which is “logic” or the ability of God to reason.

All who diligently study *The Bible* are theologians, but again only those who are given The Holy Spirit of God can know The Truth.

Do You Have God’s Spirit?

When you constantly prove yourself as you study, Paul wrote that you are to prove what is good. You have “The Holy Spirit of God—In You” if, in faith, you follow The Will of God.

The Holy Spirit of God is His power, love and logical mind. The Word of God is like a sword cutting your flesh to death. You change the way you think, you repent and do only what The Holy Spirit of God tells you, no matter what you have to go through.

Your nature grows in The Love of God, trying not to offend or harm anyone. If you do harm others, it may pain you deeply until you repent and are forgiven by The Blood of Christ. Then you are on your way to becoming Saints of God (Hebrews 4:12).

God is reproducing Himself “In You” by

The Holy Spirit of God. He unites “the spirit In Man” with The Holy Spirit of God: “Then he answered and spake to me, saying, This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel, saying, not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, said the lord of hosts” (Zechariah 4:6).

It is The Holy Spirit of God which does the work, whether building The Temple of God or making you Holy to become like Him to worship God and becoming “The Temple of God.”

God alone knows your heart. You, with Christ, conform The Temple of God on The New Earth (Revelation 21-22). You must become a Son of God like Christ to enter their temple.

Your heart—which moderates your deepest desires and, only, through Christ—and The Holy Spirit teach you what you are able to learn at any one time. Your doctrines come from The Holy Spirit of God by your being humble as babes, learning a little here and a little there. A babe “In Christ” must not be a carnal animal but become The Bride of Christ as faithful Saints doing, only, The Will of God as you grow in The Word of God.

**Your nature grows in
The Love of God, trying not to
offend or harm anyone.**

Do You Have a Soul?

Love God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. That is admonition from Jesus Himself.

We know where our heart is, and about our mind, but where is our soul? What is the soul? Where is it located? Is it just my physical body? A living, breathing creature?

In the religious culture I came into, the teaching on the soul was that you *are* a soul, you are a living, breathing creature, not that you *have* a soul. There are some scriptures that indicate that this may be true, but there are others that indicate that there is more to it than that (1 Kings 17:20-24; Job 33:18, Leviticus 26:11; Hebrews 10:38-39).

The Scriptures say God has put His will in us, a part of God that works in us to do good, that writes His laws on our heart, that can translate spiritual truth into physical understanding and physical actions (Philippians 2:12-13).

There is the part of us that can understand spiritual things. We can't understand spiritual things by human intellect, which involves only our physical brain, using our physical senses (1 Corinthians 2:10-16). Understanding spiritual things comes from a different sense.

So where do we get the ability to understand the spiritual influences on our life? Where does that come from? How do we get the ability to determine spiritual matters? How does God communicate with us? (John 15:26; 16:13, Romans 8:16; 1 Corinthians 2:9-12).

Separating the soul

I believe there is something more to the soul than just the flesh, the living, breathing creature. The soul is attached to the spirit.

The Scriptures say that the Word of God is sharper than a two-edged sword, separating the soul from the spirit. The soul is attached to the spirit, but the Word of God can separate them, and the spirit goes back to God, who gave it. So, if the soul can be separated, it must be something different from the spirit (Hebrews 4:12; Matthew 10:28; 1 Thessalonians 5:23).

The Bible talks about at least three ways to love God: with the heart, with the soul, and with the mind (Matthew 22:37).

The heart (*kardia*) is the physical body, the living, breathing creature, the flesh and the spiritual. God writes His laws on our hearts.

The mind is the human spirit, the spirit in man, that which makes the living creature a human—the human mind, as different from the physical brain.

But the soul is different. It consists of both the human spirit and the Holy Spirit, God and man. Man can kill the body, but not the soul (Matthew 10:28).

The soul is where our character is. The character that is in us depends on what has the most influence in our soul: God's Holy Spirit, or the human spirit. To do good, or to do evil, the soul is where habits

are formed (good and bad) (Romans 7:14-25).

Access to the mind of Christ

The soul has two natures: physical and spiritual (Romans 2:1-17; 1 Corinthians 2:7-16). The human spirit in the soul communicates with the physical brain. The Holy Spirit in the soul allows the human brain to communicate with God.

The soul enables the physical to communicate with the spiritual. It communicates with man and God. It is spiritual and physical.

The soul is able to interpret emotions. It can be cast down, depressed, bitter (Psalm 42:5; 1 Samuel 1:10).

The soul is something God created, so it is good. But, because the soul contains the human spirit, it can also be influenced by the physical: influences that are human, things that appeal to our senses, the sensual, the flesh. Although they are spiritual in nature, their influence is on the flesh.

Lust, pride, greed, and fear are negative emotions that influence the soul (Romans 8:5-6).

Love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, and faithfulness are some of the positive influences (Galatians 5:16-25).

The soul gives us the ability to evaluate ourselves. It gives us a standard with which to gauge ourselves, because it gives us access to the mind of Christ, which is the highest standard (1 Corinthians 2:16).

The soul can die if it is separated from the spirit (Matthew 10:28). The spirit in man, the human spirit, dies when the body dies. The soul dies when God separates it from His

are spiritually, that we are in the same place Adam was after he did whatever it was he did. Now we see both good and evil.

But God has provided something better for us. He has put good within us so we have a standard to measure by. God has put the spirit of man within our soul, and He has put His Holy Spirit within our soul. The Holy Spirit is made available to us by Christ living there.

God says that He has put His will in us to do His good pleasure, or to do good, so to speak. The Scriptures say it is God Himself who works in us both to will and to do His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13).

The will to do good is God Himself working within our soul, speaking to our conscience, which prompts us to do good, thereby holding us to the highest standards (Romans 2:15; 9:1).

That is what I believe the conscience does. It's intuition, an inkling, a still small voice that speaks to our consciousness. It is something residing within our unconscious soul that brings spiritual matters to our consciousness, into the realm of our ability to comprehend it with the physical brain, the human mind, the physical senses.

Our soul connects the physical to the spiritual, or rather the spiritual to the physical. It gives the human mind the ability to communicate with the spiritual mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16; Philippians 2:5).

But there is more than one spirit, so we have to be able to discern good spirit from evil spirit: good from evil.

have created (Romans 6:6).

The self can die and we still be alive. When you use the word "old," it indicates there is a "new" (Ephesians 4:22-24). The new self is created by something that has been put within our soul by a source

outside us, a spiritual source, the Holy Spirit (Colossians 3:9-10).

God can separate the soul from the Spirit, and the human self has

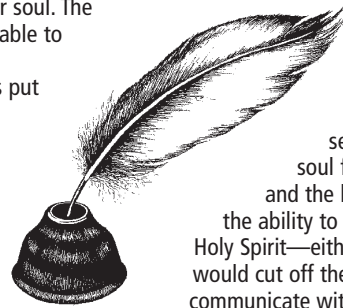
the ability to quench the Holy Spirit—either of which would cut off the ability to communicate with God and the creation of the new person, the spiritual person (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Creation continues

There is a spirit in humanity, a human spirit that makes us human (Job 32:8). There is a spirit in a dog, a dog spirit that makes it a dog (Ecclesiastes 3:21).

The human spirit (the spirit of man) is what enables man to think, reason, compare, remember, and build knowledge on experiences. It's what makes a physical mechanism human (or a dog, or cat, or anything that is). Spirit is put into things when they are created. That spirit is what makes it what it is. God put His Spirit in our soul, but the creation is not complete. We have a part in it (1 Corinthians 2:11-14).

"I would have mercy and not sacrifice" (Matthew 9:13). What does that mean? "I would have mercy and not sacrifice" (Hosea 6:6). If I bring a sacrifice, does that



The soul can die if it is separated from the spirit (Matthew 10:28). The spirit in man, the human spirit, dies when the body dies. The soul dies when God separates it from His Spirit.

Spirit. When the body dies, God keeps our soul, which contains our character and is later put into another spiritual body at the resurrection (Proverbs 24:12; 1 Corinthians 15:42-44).

By the human mind (that is, the spirit in man, the nature of man, which is capable of discerning those things that are physical), we can gauge and measure physical things. We can build knowledge upon those things we experience and use those experiences as a standard to gauge and measure by (1 Corinthians 2:11-14).

So it is with spiritual knowledge. We are in need of a standard to gauge and measure by.

When God finished creation, He looked at all He had created and pronounced it good. That included humankind: Adam and Eve, you and me.

You might say that's where we

We are not fighting physical battles (Ephesians 6:11-18).

The self: old vs. new

The self is spiritual and also communicates with the human brain from the soul. Its appeal is to the physical. The self exists, and, even though we can't detect it, we know it's real (though it is spiritual), because it makes itself known very easily to our flesh through our human senses (Romans 6:16).

The spiritual self competes with the Holy Spirit. It wants its own way to satisfy the physical appetites. Its appeal is to the heart—the physical, sensuous, natural part of us (Romans 8:1-10).

The self is a persona. It is not our being. It is not our life. It is something we have created, or has been created in our soul by circumstances and experiences. Christ said the old self has to die; that is, the self we

obligate God to do something for me, or am I paying a debt?

In my mind that would be as the paying of a debt, something that was owed to God, whereas mercy is different, in that it is something I have done to make God believe I think, repented, if you will. It's not the paying of a debt but the changing of your mind, the way you think and the way you act.

God would rather have us change the way we think and the way we act, to repent, so He can have mercy on us.

Do we succumb to anger? Do we succumb to lust, pride, fear, or by whatever we are overcome? We are the servants to whomever we bow down our "selves" to serve. The new man is stronger than the "old man"; the new man resides in your soul. The new man is created by the Spirit of the Son, which is stronger and

able to control the "old self."

The self has to be controlled. Self-control is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit living in our soul. The old man is controlled by the flesh, the spirit of man and the things pertaining to nature, human nature (Romans 7:15-25). The new man is controlled by the Spirit of the Son, the Holy Spirit and the things pertaining to God, the divine nature (Romans 8:11-14).

Something compels us, something leads us, something gives us an inkling, talks to us in a still small voice as to do what we need to do. Like a prevailing wind, something steers us to do right.

The soul is the place where choices are made. Our soul gives us the information to make a choice, because that is where the Spirit of God resides and that Spirit influences us to do good through our conscience (Romans 2:14-15; 9:1).

But we, the old self, can quench the Holy Spirit and no longer be able to hear its voice. Our conscience can be seared. "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" (Hebrews 3:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 4:1-2).

How do we live in peace? How do we live in hope? "Love God with all your heart, soul, and spirit and love your neighbor as yourself."

That seed that God planted in our soul has sprouted and is growing and is starting to produce fruit. It's something God planted, by Jesus Christ, in the soul of man (Matthew 13:18-23). He called it the comforter.

If we know from something deep inside us that gives us a prompting, that tells us right from wrong, then I believe that is what God put in us by Christ, in our soul, and therefore we are accountable if we know to do good (James 4:17).

God is the energy behind the processes that keep the earth turning and spinning around the sun, the sun spinning around inside the solar system, the solar system spinning around inside our galaxy, which is a very small part of the universe.

He is also the energy that keeps our ecosystems, makes seeds germinate, egg and sperm unite, cells divide and multiply, gravity, trees, rocks, earth, flesh—all things of which we are aware or unaware. He is the One who holds things together and makes things go spinning away. God is the source of all things.

There is a will that has been put inside us that is stronger than the will that is in the world, which is human will (1 John 4:4). The building God is building, by His Holy Spirit, is in our soul, in that part of us that is able to discern good from evil and that will live again after the physical body dies, in a spiritual body that Christ gives when He returns.

The will that He puts in our unconscious soul enables us not only to know good from evil but enables us to do good (Philippians 2:13).

We need to learn to put more emphasis on the spiritual and less on the physical. The Holy Spirit will always lead us to Good, into all Truth. We have to become spiritually minded (Romans 8:6).

— lelli93763@aol.com —

What Happened to the Faith Once Delivered unto the Saints?

Discover the True Nature of the Father and Son

By Ken Westby

Jesus' brother exhorted the faithful of his day to fight hard for truths that were then already under attack. We think that Jude used the term *faith* to embody the beliefs and principles he and the apostles had received directly from Jesus. History is silent on the specific response of Jude's Christian audience, but for the church as a whole the following centuries witnessed a pathetic slide into apostasy from truth.



Ken Westby

One of the biggest crimes the apostates committed was to redefine God Himself and, in so doing, redefine His son Jesus. This was a corruption of "the faith once delivered" at the highest magnitude. The gentile-run church of the 4th century had successfully merged pagan Greek concepts of divinity with the Christian faith. It was shepherded along by Imperial Roman political power. The new definitions of God and of Jesus were declared creeds that must be believed.

None of this could have happened had not the Hebraic/Jewish traditions of the primitive church been gradually discarded by an apostatizing church. It was a great "falling away" from the faith once delivered.

Like it or not, for almost 2,000 years the Catholics, later joined by the Protestants, have faithfully and effectively conveyed these *redefinitions* of God and Christ to us today. It is pervasive; it is in our religious water.

People are emotionally attached to their traditions, but we must remind ourselves that our faith is not based on emotions but on truth. Our culture including our religious culture is so appallingly superficial, fixated on celebrities, entertainment and self-indulgence, it is difficult to get people to question orthodoxy.

Are people today motivated to contend—i.e., fight hard—for the true faith that has been lost or buried under centuries of obfuscation and stained glass?

I hope some are. We are counting on it, and to that end our seminar series is dedicated.

Have you given the idea of One God and a human Christ a fair hearing? Can we discard the redefinitions of God and Jesus by 4th-century church fathers and return to the true understanding of the apostles and Jesus? The evidence is remarkably intact, and the historical trail complete. The case can be made.

We can embark on this discovery and defend our position of biblical monotheism without becoming defensive. We can present arguments for the truth of God's being and nature without becoming argumentative.

There is no need to be abrasive to be persuasive. There is no reason for quarreling, but there is wisdom in seeking answers from Scripture that can bring people closer to knowing God. We seek to live in truth, not self-deception.

True apologetics involves "speaking truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15). You will find that is the spirit that animates our Nature of God seminars. But come and see for yourself. They are free and without obligation.

It is of immense importance that our ideas of God correspond as nearly as possible to the true being of God. The challenge of getting the American people—and a lot of church people—to think deeply about God is that they've become

ger is the low-information Christian who can be made to believe just about anything. The *objective truth* about God is what we seek. (Something is *objective* if it's real, if it's true, independent of anyone's opinion about it. "Water is H₂O" is an objective fact.)

Subjective reasoning about God, which infuses Christianity's definitions of God and Christ, are subjective and are dangerously, even blasphemously, wrong.

(Something is *subjective* if it's just a

matter of personal

opinion that may or may not be true. "Vanilla tastes better than chocolate" is subjective.)

Our old ideas about God may lie buried under the religious rubbish of conventional orthodoxy and require of us an intelligent and vigorous search to unearth the truth. Only after an ordeal of painful self-probing are we likely to discover what we actually believe about God.

The key to right religion and practical Christian living is a right conception of God. Jesus' prayer was: "Righteous Father, though the world does not know

You, I know You, and they [the disciples] know that You have sent me. I have made You known to them, and will continue to make You known . . ." (John 17:25-26).

It is a *libel* on God's character to assume that God is other than He is. To substitute mystical man-made images of multiple gods-in-one is to disrespect the Holy One. A prime ministry of

Jesus today remains to make his Father known to his disciples—you and me.

~ ~ ~

Twelve presentations with Q&A will highlight our 12th annual One God Seminar. Speakers will come from Israel and various U.S. states. For seminar details including information on presenters, please visit www.Godward.org.

I know it is common for many to think of their church and its leader of the past century as recipients of "the faith once delivered." Did Jude have that corporate church in mind? It is assumed so, and consequently many folks fight hard to keep the faith of their 1970s or 1980s church. Did that faith in toto ever get delivered—or received? Such thinking locks the mind and spirit in a time-freeze fantasy. Can we discover the faith Jude said was worth fighting for?

so used to God that they take Him for granted. The foggy ideas of three gods in one or two gods in a godhead—and the impossibility of relating to them—just makes it easier for the disengaged to keep God irrelevant.

Politically, we lament the shame of the low-information voter who is putting democracy in danger. Perhaps a greater dan-

The Association for Christian Development

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Connections runs classifieds

Obituaries

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Carol Simpson Anderson, 84, of Dardanelle, Ark., died Nov. 28, 2012, at her home after a long battle with ovarian cancer. Carol was born in Lela, Okla., on Nov. 27, 1928, to Floyd and Eva Simpson. She was a wonderful mother, a fantastic seamstress, homemaker and a long-time member and deaconess in the Church of God. She was preceded in death by her parents; her brother, Roy, and her husband, Henry. Carol is survived by two sons, Gary (Elizabeth) Anderson of Casa, Ark., Alan (Sheila) Anderson of Texas; a brother, Don of Tulsa; seven grandchildren, Brian (Jeana) of Casa, Stephan (Susan) of Southlake, Texas, Scott (Carolyn) of Austin, Texas, Keith of Gershan, Ore., Aaron, Kyle (Christine) Anderson and Katherine (Andy) Barrett of Burleson, Texas; eight great-grandchildren, Aimee and Michael of Casa, Sophia of Southlake, Texas, Katelyn Wright, Douglas Wright, Bryce Barrett, Thomas and Abigail all of Burleson, Texas; as well as many nieces, nephews, great-nieces and nephews. Memorial donations may be made to Hospice Care, Yell County Health Unit, 719 N. 5th St., Dardanelle, AR 72834. Write Gary Anderson at garyliza@arkwest.com.



Carol Anderson

Jeanne Ireland, 67, passed away unexpectedly Jan. 25, 2013. She was the wife of John Ireland, mother of James and Joseph Ireland, and grandmother of Joshua Ireland.

Obituaries

Rosy Halley, 81, died Dec. 14, 2012, in a Tulsa, Okla., hospital after a stroke and associated problems. Mrs. Halley was the creator of Prayer-Lines, an online listing of seekers of prayer support in life challenges. She is survived by a son, Mike, and a daughter, Kern.



Rosy Halley

Fred Bailey Richardson, 72, of Mountain Home Village, a community near Yucaipa, Calif., died Feb. 6, 2013, of injuries he sustained in a traffic accident. Mr. Richardson was killed when the pickup he was driving was struck by an out-of-control tour bus carrying tourists from San Diego, Calif., and Tijuana, Mexico. The crash injured several passengers on the bus. Robin Webber, pastor of the Redlands, Calif., congregation of the United Church of God, wrote about Mr. Richardson: "Fred's accident has impacted all of us in the Redlands congregation, the Church of God community at large in Southern California, the Mountain Home Village community, and all his landscape clients. Fred was known for his kindness, for always smiling, for always serving and working, and for always being so very positive. He was a most loving man and a man loved by



Fred Richardson

one and all." Mr. Richardson, who moved to Mountain Home Village at the age of 2, leaves behind his wife of 48 years, Anita, two adult children and six grandchildren. Friends of the Richardson family set up a memorial Web page in his honor to help collect funds for the family. See gofundme.com/Fred-Richardson-Family.

Obituaries

James Edward "Ed" Burson of Grass Valley, Calif., died at home Jan. 24, 2013. He was 66. He was buried in the Sacramento Valley National Cemetery. Ed was born November 22, 1946. He is survived by his wife of 37 years, Cindy (Galloway) Burson and son, Nathaniel Burson.



Ed Burson

Donald R. Ditto Sr., 77, of Winnsboro, Texas, passed away the morning of Feb. 9, 2013, in Longview. Don was born to the late Roy W. and Helen Busby Ditto on June 11, 1935, in Dallas. He was an entrepreneur, artist and member of the United Church of God in Big Sandy and served in the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard. He was preceded in death by his parents and a sister, Sharon Conine. Surviving are his loving wife, Peggy Clemmons Ditto of Winnsboro; six sons



Donald Ditto

and daughters-in-law, Donald R. Ditto Jr. and wife Karla, Terry Ditto and wife Tyria, Preston Ditto and wife Stefanie, James Ditto and wife Nanette, Clint Ditto and wife Vicki, all of Winnsboro, Jason Ditto and wife Paulette of Flint; one sister, Carol Reimer, and husband Jim of Garland; 11 grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Obituaries

Graveside services for Nancy Ann Sharp, 52, of Gladewater were Jan. 25, 2013, at Chilton Cemetery in Big Sandy, Texas, with pastor Dave Havir officiating. Born May 30, 1960, in Grand Prairie, Texas, she died Jan. 20, 2013. She was a homemaker and a member of the Church of God. She is survived by her father, H.L. Sharp of Big Sandy, son Aaron Booper of Oklahoma; brother R.L. Sharp of Shady Grove, Texas; and aunt Anna Booper.



Nancy Sharp

John Guffey was born Sept. 1, 1936, to Edith Detrich and George Guffey. He passed on Feb. 13, 2013, at this home. John was strong in his faith and a member of the Fellowship Church of God in Midwest City, Okla. He actively participated in the Vietnamese community. John served as operations officer for the Saigon Mission Association (SMA) and adviser in the Vietnamese-American Community Association. He enjoyed camping, boating, water-skiing, tubing and working in his and Mai's gardens. John is survived by his

Obituaries

wife, Mai Thi Truc Guffey, brother Robert Guffey, daughters Charlotte Giddens and husband Steve, Cherril Guffey, and Hong Dao and husband Nhan Vo, grandchildren Jordan Downs, Kaylee Corcoran and Celeste Baca. Survivors also include Dzunf Dang and Phuong Nhan, Thuy Pham and Quang Pham and their three children Jennifer, Stefanie and Valerie. He was preceded in death by his parents, his grandmother, Muoi Thi Vo, three sisters and three brothers. Please make donations to Saigon Mission Association, 1762 Clear River Falls Ln., Henderson, NV 89012.



John Guffey

James Quentin Robertson, 92, of Big Sandy, Texas, died Oct. 20, 2012. Mr. Robertson was born April 28, 1920, in Booneville, Ark. He was a veteran of the United States Army. He is survived by his wife, Berniece; two sons, Marty Robertson of Orlando, Fla., and Jim Robertson of Portland, Ore.; a daughter, Summer Robertson of Orlando; several grandchildren and great-grandchildren; a brother, Jack Robertson of Fresno, Calif.; and a sister, Joyce Appleford of Fresno, California.



Quentin Robertson

Celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles on the Gulf Coast with the South Texas Church of God

The South Texas Church of God is calling all sojourners and pilgrims to keep the **Feast of Tabernacles** at the **Drifters Resort** (www.driftersresort.com), Rockport, Texas, on the coast of the **Gulf of Mexico, September 19-26, 2013.**



This will be a small, intimate site with a family reunion atmosphere. Drifters Resort offers **pristine clean cabins** and RV sites bathed by soothing Gulf breezes and nestled among ancient, windswept oaks. You will be able to **walk to services and hear motivating messages, share meals** made by the loving hands of brethren, take a **sunset harbor cruise** that includes watching the full harvest moon rise over the ocean, share evening campfires with pleasant sounds of the brethren's voices singing in harmony and unity. **Rockport** has so much to offer you for a great Feast, such as some of the **best coast fishing**, enjoying the clean "**Blue Wave**" beach, watching the many **varieties of birds**, plus art **galleries, shopping** and **outstanding restaurants.**

For more info about this site or to request a Feast packet, please contact:
Terry A. Post • P.O. Box 1089 • La Vernia, TX 78121
210-392-4891 • terrypost@aireplastics.com

Perfect Teen Fundraiser—Team Kairos Kingdom Fundraising helps churches, youth groups and ministries raise funds at no cost to them! The company will build each church

a teen/youth website. Money earned is for youth development, camps, field trips, other church-sanctioned youth projects. Call 903-769-9000 for information. Reference ID #ZD26536.



Dr. Lynn Torrance

Attention to all **Ambassador Big Sandy** students who were on campus from **1965 to 1977** including the classes of **1978-1980:**

There will be a gala **Ambassador Big Sandy Reunion in Dallas, Texas, September 5-8, 2013**, at the Marriott Airport North.

Go to **www.ambassadorbigandalumni.com** to register. If you were a student during those years, just find your name and sign up. If you would like to attend the reunion as a guest, E-mail **Tom Williams** at **twilliams@tv24.tv** for all of the registration information.

Redwood Building on Big Sandy campus said to be haunted

Continued from page 1
the Redwood Building. An ALERT staff member was overheard commenting that he believes the library is "haunted."

Another staffer was heard confirming that hauntings are indeed some-

The post says that "anybody that stay[s] the first couple nights there [has] had the feeling like somebody is grabbing at there [sic] throat & brushing up against them."

A 1970s AC alumnus who lives in East Texas offered her analysis of the

God's previous doctrine on the resurrection."

Different scenario

Just what does she mean? What does a different view of the afterlife have to do with ghosts and goblins?

be in the ground awaiting the resurrection may find themselves confused because a different scenario has presented itself to them."

What kind of scenario?

"Maybe they are not dead in the grave but are being summoned to cross over," she said. "In their fear and confusion, they have returned to haunt Ambassador College, hoping to find answers."

How would haunting the Redwood Building provide ghosts with answers?

"Like I said, maybe they're confused."

That's crazy

Another *JOURNAL* reader has another view.

"That crossover business is crazy,"

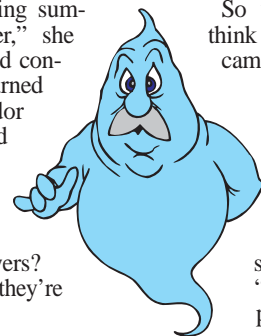
said Ellis Stewart, a longtime Church of God member who lives in Big Sandy.

"What we believe is that when you die you don't know anything. You're dead. And your spirit goes back to the one who gave it: to the Father."

So what, Mr. Stewart, do you think is going on out on the old AC campus?

"People have all kinds of religious ideas, and most of them don't believe what the Bible says. I think it's just superstition, because they've heard all these weird stories about Ambassador and the Church of God. "I don't think it really happened."

For a coincidentally related article, see "Could Soul-Sleep and Afterlife Doctrines Stand Some Tweaking?" on page 12 of this issue of *THE JOURNAL*.



How would haunting the Redwood Building provide ghosts with answers?

thing ALERT students say they believe are happening.

A Web site, shadowlands.net, features an anonymous post that reports that a "negative presence [is] felt around isolated parts of the campus especially around the library and the guys' dorms."

unusual happenings at the former Ambassador College.

"I have heard some people give a different view of the afterlife," she said.

"They have wondered if the supposed hauntings at Ambassador are the result of the Worldwide Church of

"Perhaps," she explained, "when people have died they've had problems crossing over."

What? Like in the *Ghost Whisperer* TV series about disembodied spirits moving into the light?

"Yes," she continued. "People who previously believed that they should

Church founder accepts that God is maybe moving the mantle

Continued from page 11

it is not to “cause division” among Church of God brethren (1 Corinthians 3:3)? Maybe what he’s doing is for good reasons, yet he is certainly causing division, is he not? Is it a problem, Dr. Thiel, that you’re causing division?

“I strove to work with the eldership of the Living Church of God for 14 years and made numerous multiple attempts to assist in areas they wanted assistance in and to help correct things,” he said. “Division was not on my list.”

Further, he said, “I didn’t ask anyone to lay hands upon me so I would be anointed with a double portion of God’s Spirit. It just happened.”

“We always tell people they’re supposed to trust God and not man. Yet we have people out there who think one could not possibly be a prophet, let’s say, unless a particular corporation agrees.”

“Yet this overlooks Jesus’ absolute clear words on this in Matthew 10 verse 41, which if you don’t mind I’ll read:

“He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward.”

“If Jesus is saying you’re supposed to rely on some man’s interpretation of something else, etc., perhaps He would have said that.”

“But that’s not what the Jesus of the Bible said.”

God allowed

So you, Dr. Thiel, are saying there is a time that is appropriate to cause division?

“I’ve not tried to cause any division,” he said. “I believe I was forced out, that God allowed this to happen, because the mantle was no longer there.”

THE JOURNAL was not trying to accuse Dr. Thiel of anything, but division happened. Therefore division was caused. Who caused it, Dr. Thiel?

“I believe that the division occurred by one or more people in Charlotte.”

Doctrine matters

THE JOURNAL had another question for Dr. Thiel, this one concerning God’s view of doctrine and other matters pertinent to the beliefs held by

leaders and other members of the Churches of God.

Do you think, Dr. Thiel, that God could be as interested as obviously you and the Living Church of God and most of the other COG groups are about the minutiae of the Bible, even apart from the COGs’ traditional set of beliefs?

THE JOURNAL asked that because it seems reasonable to this writer to posit that God surely cannot be as picky as we are when it comes to many of the sayings and doctrines in the Bible. Is it possible that God isn’t as fussy as we are about the things that tend to divide us, namely doctrine and governance?

“I’m not sure that I ever said that God was particularly picky,” Dr. Thiel replied. “So you’re putting me in a slot that I haven’t put myself in.”

“If you look at the first sermon I did with the Continuing Church of God, I said it’s all about love . . . The most important thing is love.”

“Are there doctrinal differences I have with Living? Certainly, and I’ve posted about those.”

“But it wasn’t because I was focused on one or another minute-issue area of doctrine.”

Reasonable people

Dr. Thiel believes reasonable people don’t always have to agree with each other.

“Reasonable people can disagree on certain points, and I’m not challenging that,” he said.

On his Web site Dr. Thiel posts a list of 24 “doctrinal differences” between the LCG and the Continuing Church of God. He says, for example,

that his church, unlike the LCG, believes the following:

■ The “falling away” of 2 Thessalonians 2 refers mainly to those who claim affiliation with the Church of God. It is not mainly a phenomenon that involves people turning to the Beast power.

■ A prophet outranks an evangelist

even if the evangelist has a longer history in the Church of God.

■ It is not necessary for a new Jewish temple to be built in Jerusalem before the Second Coming.

■ Jesus is present at the Passover.

■ “Adultery” in the Bible does not mean only multiple acts of adultery.

■ The Great Tribulation does not start in Daniel 11:40 when the King of the South pushes at the King of the North. It starts in the prior verse.

■ The ministry should not promote American football.

■ Church of God members should not eat out on the Sabbath except while traveling and during emergencies.

■ The “word of the law” should be preached as a part of the Feast of Tabernacles every seven years.

Organized religion

Dr. Thiel talked about the way the new church is legally organized: as a corporation sole. Such a corporation can be recognized as a church by the State of California but, unlike a church that is an unincorporated association or falls under the typical 501(c)3 IRS setup, it does not require a governing board.

in Dr. Meredith having to start another church, the Living Church of God.

Onward and upward

Dr. Thiel’s plans for preaching the



THE CHURCH, CONTINUED—Bob Thiel, founder of the new Continuing Church of God, sits at his computer in his office in Arroyo Grande, Calif. See the article based on THE JOURNAL’s interview with Dr. Thiel beginning on page 1 of this issue. [Photos on this page and page 1 by Joyce Thiel]

gospel will do it faster and more efficiently, he hopes, than other groups when they were start-ups.

Was Dr. Thiel saying there is a time that is appropriate to cause division?

Only one official is required, and in this case that’s Dr. Thiel. It’s set up that way, he said, to prevent something happening to the new Continuing Church of God like what happened to the Global Church of God before 1998.

That church, he said, was taken over by a runaway board that resulted

“Concretely, within the first 30 days of the existence of the Continuing Church of God,” he said, “we are determined to reach more people with the message than other groups did in their first 30 days since they formed.”

So far “it’s been the Internet almost exclusively, but I’ve got a couple of radio interviews coming up.”

Jesus understood that sometimes people feel a need to mourn

Continued from page 3

mourn over local events, national events or global events.

Sorrow for the family

Okay. We see that Jesus experienced an emotional reaction for the plight of His community.

But did Jesus ever allow people to experience mourning for the events that affected their family?

Notice Christ’s perspective:

“And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him. But Jesus, turning to them, said, ‘Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.’” (Luke 23:27-28).

Jesus understood people mourning when events affected themselves and their family.

Just get over it

Some religious people in this present age could ask: “Do you really think the national calamities at this time rival the calamities recorded in history?”

My answer: Since people mourn at different times, it is not important whether there are worse times of national calamities. Jesus gave people room to mourn. Will you give people room to mourn?

When people tend to minimize trials and calamity, it has the same effect of people who use the time-honored mistake of trying to help people in mourn-

ing by saying “just get over it.”

The approach of “just get over it” reveals a fundamental lack of understanding about how to deal with people who are mourning.

Prophecy can hurt

Have you ever focused on the fact that the reality of prophecy often hurts people?

Believers understandably look forward to the return of Jesus Christ and the establishment of God’s Kingdom.

But the return of Jesus Christ will be preceded by some horrible conditions in the world. Both the Old and

and a serpent bit him! Is not the day of the LORD darkness, and not light? Is it not very dark, with no brightness in it?” (Amos 5:18-20).

I am sure that there are people who believe that the words of Amos apply only to the people of society.

Friends, are you assuming that all believers will escape the calamities ahead?

Certainly you are aware of the many examples of chosen people being caught up in the pain of history and prophecy.

Do you understand that the details of prophecy may hurt a little—or

give you a future and a hope.

“Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.

“I will be found by you, says the LORD, and I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive” (Jeremiah 29:10-14).

Although God was with the believ-

one or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages.’” (Luke 3:12-14).

Final thoughts

Here are a couple of reminders for when the circumstances of life influence you to mourn for the conditions you see around you:

■ It is recommended that when a believer prays for leaders he should pray for the well-being of the community and the family.

“Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence” (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

■ It is recommended that when a believer experiences sorrow he should blend it with a true hope.

“But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope . . .

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

“Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thessalonians 4:13, 16-18).

New Testaments reveal the biblical pattern for times of calamity often preceding times of blessing.

The prophet Amos made a recommendation: Do not be so anxious for the arrival of the Day of the Lord.

“Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD! For what good is the day of the LORD to you? It will be darkness, and not light. It will be as though a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him!

“Or as though he went into the house, leaned his hand on the wall,

maybe even hurt a lot?”

Although God said the Babylonian captivity would eventually end with good news, those 70 years in captivity were difficult.

“For thus says the LORD: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place.

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to

ers during the time when Christ came in the flesh, they had to deal with their nation being occupied. They had to deal with the atrocities of tax collectors and soldiers.

“Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, ‘Teacher, what shall we do?’ And he said to them, ‘Collect no more than what is appointed for you.’

“Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, ‘And what shall we do?’ So he said to them, ‘Do not intimidate any-

People of the Sign launches in Wisconsin

By John Dickerson

FITCHBURG, Wis.—The author of *The People of the Sign* officially launched his book here on Dec. 1, 2012.

The event was an opportunity for Wade Fransson, who lives in Madison, Wis., to meet his audience while two other authors announced their pending books to news media and the general public.

The site of the triple book launch was Liliana's Restaurant, an upscale bistro in Fitchburg.

I was honored to be master of ceremonies of the event. I had spent time with Mr. Fransson and reviewed his book for *THE JOURNAL*. (See issue No. 151, dated September-October 2012.)

Hot at Amazon

The People of the Sign is published by Something or Other Publishing, of which Mr. Fransson is co-owner and managing partner.

Upon its release, *The People of the Sign* shot up to "No. 1 Hot New Release" in the "Messianic Judaism" and "Religion and Spirituality" categories on Amazon.com.

The back cover asks, "What do divorce, alcoholism, kidnapping, radio

evangelism, obscure theology, ancient prophecies, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the music of the Beatles have in common?"

Fifty intrigued book lovers apparently eager to read *The People* learned the answers to those questions at the launch and had their books signed.

Local musician Ken Wheeton sang Beatles songs, accompanying himself on guitar, during the three-hour gathering.

After introductions, Mr. Fransson read from his book and fielded questions.

Tales of life's meaning

The next author to present was Dr. Eric Mondschein of Lake George, N.Y. His memoir is *Life at 12 College Road*.

Jill Renner of Madison read from her writings, *The River of Life*, a tale

of the quest for life's meaning through the analogy of a river.

Dr. Mondschein's and Ms. Renner's manuscripts are in the editing stage and should be published by Something or Other in 2013.



PERSON OF THE SIGNING—Wade Fransson autographs a copy of his book *People of the Sign* at its official launch in Wisconsin in December 2012. [Photo by Eric Mondschein]

A Texan down under

I took the opportunity, since I had the floor, to read the introduction to my manuscript of *A Texan Down Under*, my experiences in Australia. I hope to publish my book through Something or Other this year.

Three dollars from each book sale at the launch will go to a local Montessori school that Mr. Fransson's two young children attend. The money will help build a playground.

The People of the Sign is available for \$15 from major booksellers and, with free shipping to U.S. addresses, from Something or Other Publishing at info@soopllc.com or 3537 Mammoth Trail, Madison, Wis. 53719.

UCG losing top two ministerial officials

By Dixon Cartwright

Within the space of four months the United Church of God, with headquarters in Ohio, will have lost the two top officials in its ministerial chain of command: the chairman of the council of elders and the president.

Chairman Melvin Rhodes of Lansing, Mich., was asked to resign in early November 2012, reportedly because of "unchristian behavior" involving another church member a few years ago.

"Although it was repented of and resolved with the offended party, another COG group applied pressure to resurrect it again, with obvious success," Mr. Rhodes said in an interview with this writer for *THE JOURNAL*.

President Dennis Luker announced Nov. 1, 2012, that the administration and council had initiated an ongoing investigation. Mr. Rhodes acknowledged that there was "some substance to the accusation."

He said that "some people [specifically the non-UCG-member accuser] aren't concerned with repen-



Melvin Rhodes



Dennis Luker

tance. They're more focused on punishment."

Mr. Rhodes was replaced as council chairman by another council member, Robin Webber of Romoland, Calif.

President Luker on March 1 announced that he intends to resign at the end of his current term in June.

The day after his announcement he and his wife, LeeAnn, sent UCG members a prayer request explaining that he has been diagnosed with an aggressive form of cancer and the Lukers would soon move from the Cincinnati area back to their home area of Seattle, Wash.

Late-breaking news

Dennis Luker died early on March 14, 2013, almost immediately after moving from the Cincinnati area to Seattle, where he entered hospice care. He was 76 years old.

Mr. Luker "spent his last physical days residing in his hometown of Seattle, Washington, surrounded by his loving wife, LeeAnn, and their immediate family," Robin Webber, president of the UCG's council of elders wrote in a letter to UCG members.

Mr. Webber, as council chairman, assumes the added role of acting president until the council chooses a new permanent president.

Victor Kubik of Indianapolis, a UCG elder and close friend of Mr. Luker, said the passing of the UCG's "beloved president" marked a day of "grief and sadness."

Notes and quotes

New COG magazine

ARROYO GRANDE, Calif.—The new Continuing Church of God has a new magazine, *Bible News Prophecy*, announced church founder Robert Thiel.

A PDF version of the January-March 2013 issue is available at ccog.org.

"The Continuing Church of God is serious about fulfilling Matthew 24:14 and 28:19-20," Dr. Thiel said. "*Bible News Prophecy* magazine is one more way that we plan to use to fulfill the great commission."

For more about Dr. Thiel and his Continuing Church of God, see the article based on *The JOURNAL's* interview with him beginning on page 1 of this issue.

Unreasonable doubt

GATINEAU, Que., Canada—Sam Licorish has a new E-book: *Unreasonable Doubt! Why Christianity Concedes Failed Prophecy*.

See it and other works by Mr. Licorish at Amazon.com. Visit Mr. Licorish's Web site at beyondtheimpasse.com.

Ron Weinland incarcerated

COVINGTON, Ky.—Long-time Church of God member and elder Ronald Weinland was sentenced to 3½ years in prison on Nov. 14, 2012, for failing to pay taxes on income he earned while running a ministry from his home in Union, Ky.

According to published reports, a judge ordered Mr. Weinland to pay \$245,000 in back taxes and a \$7,000 fine. He was reportedly convicted of income-tax evasion for failing to pay taxes on \$4.4 million in income from 2004 through 2007.

Mr. Weinland's ministry is the Church of God Preparing for the Kingdom of God. He has predicted that Jesus will return on May 19, 2013.

Cosponsored Feast

TYLER, Texas—Common Faith Network (CFN) and the Church of God International (CGI) plan to collaborate on a Feast of Tabernacles site Sept. 18-26, 2013, at Panama City Beach, Fla.

The other sponsors of the Panama City Beach Feast site will be the Church of God Cincinnati, Common Ground Christian Ministries and LifeResource Ministries.

For more information see commonfaithnetwork.com, or write CGI, 3900 Timms St., Tyler, Texas 75701, U.S.A.

One God Seminar

FEDERAL WAY, Wash.—Ken Westby's 12th annual One God Seminar is set for June 8-9, 2013, in the Seattle-Tacoma, Wash., area.

For more information see the Association for Christian Development's Web site at godward.org. Or write ACD, 27013 Pacific Hwy. S., No. 400, Des Moines, Wash. 98198.

AC Big Sandy reunion

LACEYS SPRING, Ala.—Tom Williams announces a major Ambassador College reunion for the Dallas, Texas, area Sept. 5-8, 2013.

The gathering, which Mr. Williams says as many as 300 people may attend, will focus on former students who were on the Big Sandy campus from 1965 through 1977, including the classes of 1978, '79 and '80.

If you were a student during those years, register online at ambassadorbigandyalumni.com.

To attend the reunion as a guest write Mr. Williams at twilliams@tv24.tv.

AC Bricket Wood reunion

A committee of former students of Ambassador College, Bricket Wood, England, is making plans for an AC reunion May 18-22, 2014, in the Bricket Wood area.

The U.K. campus was the second of the three Ambassador Colleges: AC Pasadena, Calif. (1947-90), Bricket Wood (1960-74) and Big Sandy, Texas (1964-77 and 1981-97).

The last surviving of the three, by then having become the accredited Ambassador University, was the Texas campus, which closed for good in 1997.

The committee planning the Bricket Wood event: Annette (Weatherley) and Richard Forkun; Bob Howell; Colin Lauchlan; Jill (Pilkington) Gully; Jill (Smith) Berg; Linda (Moll) Smith; Merrie (McCann) Elliott; and Tricia (Kingsmore) Hayward.

For more information, see bricketwoodreunion.info. Write Mrs. Forkun at annette@bricketwoodreunion.info.

Four Big Sandy Feasts

BIG SANDY, Texas—Dave Havar, pastor of the Church of God Big Sandy (CGBS), announced that his congregation will sponsor three Feast of Tabernacles sites in 2013, with possibly a fourth to be added.

The Feast, which will begin for most Church of God members the evening of Sept. 18 and run through Sept. 26, will take place at these sites sponsored by the Church of God Big Sandy:

- Big Sandy.
- Destin, Fla.
- Myrtle Beach, S.C.

For more information write the CGBS at P.O. Box 690, Big Sandy, Texas 75755, U.S.A., or email@churchofgodbigandy.com.

2013 Feast plans

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.—The Church of God New Mexico plans to sponsor a Feast of Tabernacles site in Albuquerque in September 2013 at the Sheraton Uptown Hotel.

"For those who would like to join us for the Feast, you may begin registration now," announced elder Ed Costanza.

For more information see cognm.org.

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