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News of the Churches of God

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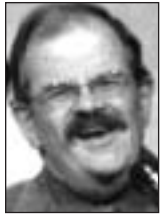
PCG security lapse allows interloper to attend Feast

The writer has been a member of Church of God groups almost 30 years and is a longtime journalist in broadcasting and freelance writing. He currently worships in Wichita.

By Richard Burkard

WICHITA, Kan.—I quietly asked a man standing outside a church-convention business office a biblically suggestive question: “I was a stranger and you took me in?”

His answer was a disappointing shake of the head. No, he would not let me attend the Feast of Tabernacles, even though his group considers it a commanded annual assembly for believers in God.



Richard Burkard

We stood inside Armstrong Auditorium in Edmond, Okla., the showcase building of the Philadelphia Church of God (PCG), on Sept. 19, 2013.

If I had purchased a ticket to one of the auditorium’s artistic events, there probably would have been no issues. But attending a “free” worship service on a Thursday morning clearly was another matter.

“Only baptized members of the Philadelphia Church of God can attend,” the man told me.

But there was something he didn’t

know. The Feast of Tabernacles had begun the night before, and, in a rarity for the PCG, an outsider had been allowed inside the auditorium’s main hall for a service from start to finish.

Driving down I-35

I hadn’t traveled to Edmond, the site of the PCG’s headquarters, to rescue someone from what some consider an oppressive and spurious church.

I wasn’t there to recruit people away, or even cry aloud in the auditorium lobby as Jesus might have done in John 7.

Armstrong Auditorium simply was the closest Feast site to my front door, and my job situation allowed me to attend only on the holy days specified in the book of Leviticus, along with a weekend.

It was my desire to worship God. But I drove down Interstate 35 well aware of what might happen.

Watch out for Laodiceans

The PCG has gained a reputation as being far more restrictive than the old Worldwide Church of God ever was.

Members are barred from all contact with relatives who are not PCG members, even those attending other Sabbath-keeping groups.

In a sermon at PCG headquarters on Dec. 5, 2005, Pastor General Gerald Flurry explained the attendance and disfellowship policy involving “Laodi-

See **OUTSIDER**, page 5



Big Sandy church reunion

60TH ANNIVERSARY—Kerry Buck Hammer (left) and his brother Scott Hammer attend the reunion of the Big Sandy church on Oct. 26, 2013. The two men are sons of the late Buck Hammer, who in the early 1950s donated the original property, about 15 acres, to Herbert W. Armstrong and the Radio Church of God that became the Texas campus of Ambassador College in 1964. See the article beginning on this page and related photos on page 24 of this issue of *THE JOURNAL*. [Photo by Dixon Cartwright]

Church of God member’s 10-tribes writings said to influence recent Glenn Beck prophecy commentary

By Dixon Cartwright

SIoux FALLS, S.D.—Church of God member and author Steven Collins was shocked when conservative commentator Glenn Beck announced recently he believes America was founded by descendants of 10 of the 12 tribes of Israel.

Mr. Collins was amazed but pleasantly surprised to learn that someone as famous as Mr. Beck seemed to be endorsing what Mr. Collins has been saying for years.

“Glenn Beck shocked a lot of people,” Mr. Collins told *THE JOURNAL*, “when he devoted one of his widely watched video programs to announcing that he now believes the U.S.A. was founded by the migrating descendants of the 10 tribes of Israel.”

Some of the writers of news articles about Mr. Beck’s announcement (in-

cluding a writer at wnd.com) cited Mr. Collins’ Web site and books “as being a major support for Beck’s belief,” Mr. Collins said.

No one contacted Mr. Collins before writing their stories, he said, but they quoted from his blog post on the subject at his Web site.

“This may be the first time the 10-tribes truth was dealt with seriously in a major Web site and espoused by a major U.S. news figure,” he said.

As a result of the unexpected publicity, Mr. Collins’ Web pages recently attracted 1.1 million hits and visitors from 137 nations.

His original book, *The “Lost” Ten Tribes of Israel . . . Found!* saw its four printings sold out several years ago but is still available in English as a downloadable E-book at his Web site and as an Amazon Kindle book.

The discussions about Mr. Collins’ writings on prophecies focusing on the descendants of the 10 tribes invariably mention “British-Israelism,” he said, and he’s not too happy about that.

The Journal invites readers’ Feast reports

THE *JOURNAL*: NEWS OF THE CHURCHES OF GOD invites readers to send in reports of their 2013 Feast of Tabernacles observances.

Members of the Churches of God and other Sabbatarian fellowships are meeting this year at several hundred Feast sites, with most observances beginning the evening of Sept. 18.

Mail your article to Feast Reports, P.O. Box 1020, Big Sandy, Texas 75755, U.S.A. Or E-mail it to info@thejournal.org.

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

For *THE JOURNAL*’s first report for the 2013 Feast, see Richard Burkard’s article on page 1 of this issue. Mr. Burkard participated in observances sponsored by the Philadelphia Church of God, United Church of God and Lyons Bible Study Group.

Scattered members recall Big Sandy church’s history

By Dixon Cartwright

BIG SANDY, Texas—About 160 members and former members of the “Big Sandy church” met on the former Texas campus of Ambassador College for a 60th-anniversary reunion Oct. 26, 2013.

The Big Sandy church—a congregation of the Radio Church of God and its legal successors: the Worldwide Church of God and Grace Communion International—was remembered in an event sponsored by one of the many Churches of God derived from the old WCG.



Marion McNair

CGWA sponsor

The sponsoring group was the Church of God a Worldwide Association (CGWA), known informally as Cogwa, with headquarters in Allen, Texas. CGWA president is Jim Franks. Reunion attendees hailed from several of the Church of God splits.

The reunion’s venue was the International ALERT Academy, residents of the Big Sandy campus since 2002.

That’s when the owner of the

Hobby Lobby chain of arts-and-craft stores donated the property to the ministries of Bill Gothard of Oak Brook, Ill.

ALERT (Air Land Emergency Resource Team) employees served the Big Sandy reunites a Thanksgiving-themed meal in the dining hall in what used to be called the Field House.

Local CGWA pastor Ken Treybig was under the weather, so local church member Scott Hammer (whose father, Buck, donated the original 15 or so acres to the Radio Church of God in 1953) served as master of ceremonies.

Mr. Hammer introduced two videos about the history of the church.

Reminiscing audience members included Mike Blackwell, Wayne Cole, Clyde Kilough and Dave Treybig.

Figuring out the pastors

The parent church in 1953 was called the Radio Church of God, based in Pasadena, Calif.

The name changed to Worldwide Church of God in 1968.

The name changed to Grace Communion International in 2009.

There was some question about who were the Big Sandy pastors over the years.

The following list is a compilation from several sources and may not be completely accurate:

See **60 YEARS**, page 24



Steven Collins

Rally aims to help victims of domestic abuse

GAINESVILLE, Texas—A rally to raise funds and awareness to help counselors and victims of domestic abuse will take place here Friday, Nov. 15, 2013.

Making presentations will be Texan Mamie McCullough of Dallas and Sheila Graham of Lake Kiowa.

Dr. McCullough is a motivational speaker and author of several books. Mrs. Dennis is former managing editor of Grace Communion International’s *The Plain Truth* magazine.

The event is a Cheer You On Rally, set for the Gainesville Civic Center.

Coordinator Eileen Dennis-Hinshaw says the rally is to “raise awareness of domestic violence and

abuse and to encourage, motivate and educate the public, both professionals and nonprofessionals.”

The rally will specifically benefit Abigail’s Arms and the Cooke County Family Crisis Center. Gainesville mayor Jim Goldsworthy will kick off the morning sessions at 9 o’clock.

Mrs. Graham will “share highlights of her journey in a troubled church,” said Ms. Dennis-Hinshaw.



Sheila Graham



Mamie McCullough

Ms. Dennis-Hinshaw encourages businesspeople, the clergy, ministries, health workers and women’s groups to attend.

The online fee is \$55 and includes lunch, a copy of Dr. McCullough’s book *I’m Not Waving . . . I’m Drowning* and a wine-tasting. Men as well as women are encouraged to attend.

For more information write eileen.hinshaw@ntin.net or phone (940) 736-7733.

Letters from our readers

Speaking of politics

Many of the COGs believe COG members should not serve in political and government leadership roles.

The reasoning is by quoting out of Bible context and quoting the opinions of religious pundits.

There were no democracies as we know of them now in biblical times. You can't tell me that Joseph, Daniel and many others in the Bible didn't hold important government leadership jobs.

Speaking of politics, we see plenty of power politics in our COG churches, which is causing one split after the other. Food for thought.

Earl Cayton
San Francisco, Calif.

No women priests?

In reading the letters section (issue No. 154, Aug. 31, 2013), I have to disagree with Earl Cayton about there not being any women priests in the Bible.

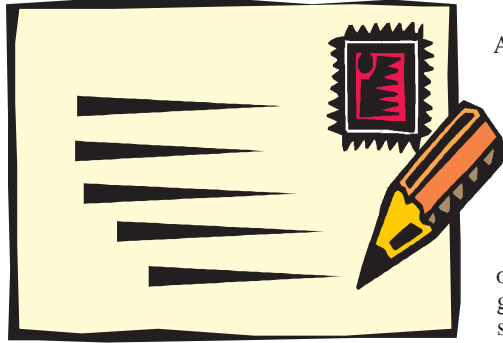
In Judges 4-5, Deborah was a judge over Israel.

Hulda was a prophetess to whom Josiah sent the priests from the temple to inquire of God in 2 Chronicles 34:18-25.

Anna was a prophetess who taught the people about Christ in the temple (Luke 2:34-38).

There were other prophets among women in the Bible. In Galatians 4:30 Paul taught Sarah's prophecy from Genesis 21:10:

"The son of the bondwoman shall not



they disagree with the gospel of the New Church—because they know what God says in John 3:16.

The true gospel that Jesus' apostles taught in Acts 2:38 is easy to understand and will put everyone in the right church:

REPENT AND BE BAPTIZED EVERY ONE IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS, AND YE SHALL RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. That is what the True Church believes.

Paul and Micki Herrmann
Metairie, La.

Difficulties with new moons

On page 5 of issue No. 154 of *THE JOURNAL* Michael Turner implies there were no problems with the weekly Sabbath when its time was set from the new moons.

I heard that some years ago. Let us look at some serious difficulties.

Whereas the month, by the moon,

When Stephen said in Acts 7:42 that "they" (the Israelites under Moses) were turned over to worship the host of heaven, wasn't he speaking of seasonal observances?

If not, what was he referring to?

Are we ready to throw out John's gospel as "not good evidence" because he says the test of Christ's students is their love for each other?

I will admit that most try their best to be unreasonably selfish. With such habits we can always find something to fuss about if we are so inclined.

What could be the reward if getting along peacefully were easy? Of course trying to get along with people who consider themselves first among equals is a waste of time and effort and will become quite expensive.

It is interesting that science tells us modern man appeared on earth about the same time the moon phases cycled in exactly 28 days.

Does Michael believe he has the mantle authority to solve these and other problems for us and turn shadows into reality? If Christ isn't real, what in religion is?

I am always impressed *THE JOURNAL* is so willing to publish ideas whether the editor agrees with them or not. *THE JOURNAL* has even exposed us

'Trying to get along with people who consider themselves first among equals is a waste of time and effort and will become quite expensive.'

be heir with my son, even with Isaac."

Also, Miriam was called a prophetess (Exodus 15:20). The evangelist Philip had four daughters whom Luke (who wrote Acts) referred to as giving prophecies (Acts 21:8-9).

I really don't think that only men received the Holy Spirit in Acts 2.

Myra McQueen
Odessa, Texas

New Church, True Church

No wonder not many people are being saved: because they are not members of the New Church.

Therefore they don't know the new gospel. Here it is: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever keepeth the Ten Commandments shall not perish" (John 3:16?).

Joy! Hey, let's hire some people (including women, of course) and send them around the world to preach this new gospel so everyone can be long to the New Church and be saved. But, of course, some will say that

does not at this time have exactly 28 days, we must have a God-designated person, like the priests under the Old Covenant, to sight and determine the new-moon day.

Frankly, this person does not exist, and trying to make a religious litmus test out of any seasonal observances is like saying the true religion is not possible.

Now, consider what site to look from to determine the new moon. But this is immaterial as well as arbitrary when we don't have an authority all can agree on.

We obviously don't agree on what the Bible teaches. Going along with something we do not agree with to try to keep peace in the family doesn't solve the problem. Getting rid of associations that expect that will solve it.

Colossians 2:16-17 states: "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or sabbath: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is Christ."

to the unpopular idea that we should love and cherish one another in spite of our personal and religious quirks.

It is surprising to me so few see the value of such a forum, with differing perspectives, for spiritual growth. There is obviously a lot of reality beyond human understanding.

Phillip Griffith
Delight, Ark.

Bus incident in Manhattan

The year was 1980. The State of California had just recently lifted its siege of the WCG, and Stan Rader and Mr. Armstrong's second wife, Ramona, had just been excised from their positions and influence in the church.

Mr. Armstrong thereafter decided to come to New York City and speak to area churches.

Our congregations in Springfield and Hartford were enthusiastic about attending this gathering. As I recall, it was to be at the New York Hilton in midtown Manhattan.

We were within a 2½-hour drive

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from there. Discussions among us led to a proposal to charter buses rather than for us country folk to risk the hazards and hassles of dealing with New York City traffic snarls.

So I made arrangements, and we chartered and filled two 49-passenger buses. All went well on the trip down.

Upon our arrival at the hotel and after we unloaded, a police officer came along and told the driver he couldn't stay parked at that location. He would have to move on and park elsewhere for the duration.

The driver responded to the cop that the bus had a transmission problem and he didn't dare move it. So the bus remained parked where it was for the following four hours.

There was no transmission problem. The driver lied. I heard him, but did nothing about it.

Several hours later we boarded and did our head counts. All seemed fine.

The bus moved forward a few hundred feet, then there was this grinding noise under the bus's rear end.

The back end lifted half a foot, we heard more clunking, then it dropped back and the bus went out of gear to move no farther.

We had moved forward just far enough to stop broadside across the busy Sixth Avenue, a multilane, all-one-direction main thoroughfare in midtown Manhattan.

It was 5 p.m., the heart of rush hour. We were blocking the traffic and threatening to snarl traffic in all of the surrounding area. Circumstance had made our driver's excuse a reality.

Can we say be sure your sins will find you out?

So 15 of us dress-suited men pushed the bus forward to the nearest curb. There we stayed until the home agency could rush another bus the 135 miles to rescue us.

It was five hours before we were picked up for the return home. We soon learned that the replacement bus had no comfort facility.

The point here is that sometimes our fibs can turn into self-fulfilling prophecies. Lesson learned.

Rich Traver
Clifton, Calif.

How to survive

THE JOURNAL a few years ago ran an article by an author from Chiang Mai who attended a celebration of the king of Thailand's birthday.

Home Power magazine ran a picture of another author in Chiang Mai near Doi Inthanon, highest point of Thailand.

The *HP* article is about installing a \$100 hydro turbine. Falling water is the most efficient means to produce

electricity because it is 24-7.

A \$15 subscription for six issues to *HP*, Box 250, Ashland, Ore. 97520, has articles on solar panels, wind and hydro power, biodiesel and electric vehicles. Or go to homepower.com.

The earth is your mother; God is your Father (Exodus 20:12). I like articles on conservation of natural resources, how to survive (Revelation 12:16).

It is wise to prepare. If nothing happens, at least there will be a more thankful, efficient, happier attitude.

Regan Castevens
Sparta, N.C.

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Columns and commentary

Ezekiel: Sins of Sodom were not about sex

Mr. Hendrix was baptized into the Worldwide Church of God in 1978 and currently attends Church of God International services. He has ministerial credentials from the Seventh Day Baptist Church and has written numerous religion articles over the years for publication.

By Lonnie C. Hendrix

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark.—In appealing to the Bible for a code to govern our sexual behavior, we must be careful how we employ that book in arriving at a standard that comports with God's will.



Lonnie Hendrix

Many people have cited Scripture as the source for their beliefs about sexual morality. But a closer examination of some of those beliefs reveals a superficial and narrow understanding of what that book has to say about the topic.

In fact, when we focus on all of the scriptures dealing with the subject we are hard pressed to arrive at a coherent and reasonable standard for human sexual conduct.

OT accepting of polygamy, slavery, misogyny

For starters we would have to address the Old Testament's apparent endorsement of polygamy, slavery and misogyny. After all, Jacob had two primary wives (Leah and Rachel) and two secondary wives (Bilhah and Zilpah).

King David had many wives and concubines (2 Samuel 5:13).

Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines (1 Kings 11:1-3).

How do we square those statistics with the principle of marriage between one man and one woman?

Is monogamy really God's standard? Did God regard slaves as the sexual property of their masters? (Genesis 16:3; Deuteronomy 15:12-17; 20:11, 17).

Wasn't a woman regarded as "unclean" during her menstrual period? (Leviticus 15:19-28).

Did God regard women as the property of their husbands? (Exodus 20:17).

Or does He regard them as His property only in the sense that everyone is His property? (Exodus 19:5; Psalm 50:12; Ezekiel 18:4).

Volatile administration

When we focus on the Old Testament's statements about sexuality, we are also forced to confront the uneven application of some of its laws and principles. For instance:

■ Did Abraham violate God's law against incest (Leviticus 18:9) by marrying his half sister? (Genesis 20:12).

■ Did God permit only men to ini-

tiate a divorce under the Old Covenant? (Deuteronomy 24:1-3). If so, why were women unable to seek a divorce under the same system?

■ How can one harmonize three distinct teachings on the subject of divorce: Deuteronomy 24:1, Matthew 5:31-32 and 1 Corinthians 7:10-15?

■ It doesn't encompass the entirety of Scripture.

■ Most Christians find it impossible to adhere to such a standard.

Thus, by clinging to these false notions we set ourselves up for failure and misery and for exposing our belief system to charges of inconsistency and hypocrisy.

God's truth, however, is not subject to failure or attack. God designed the human body (Genesis 1:27), and we learn from Scripture that God viewed

Two problems with sex

There are two big problems with the traditional Judeo-Christian teaching on sex:

■ It doesn't encompass the entirety of Scripture.

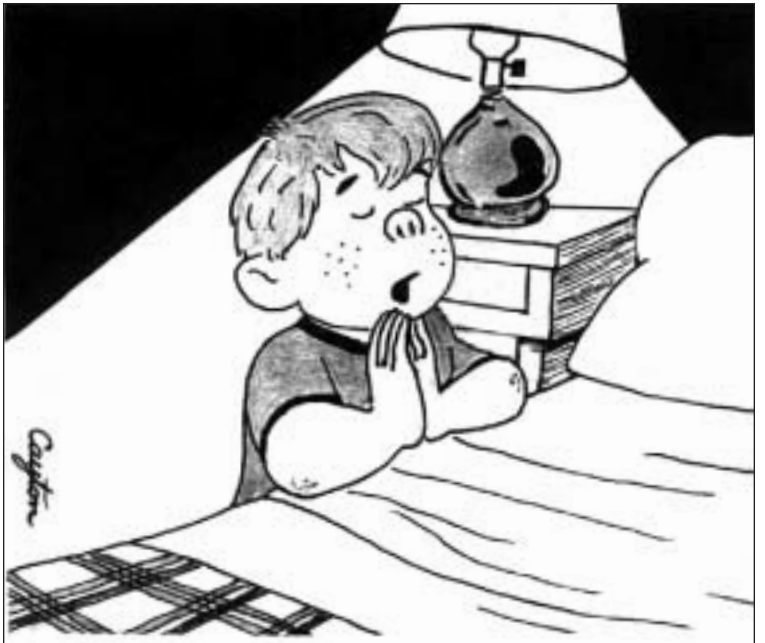
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See CHRISTIANITY'S, page 6

In short, many of the beliefs, thoughts and deeds we have traditionally labeled as sin are not sin.



"Thank You for my new baby sister—but I asked You for a puppy!"

Are we the lost tribes? Check our DNA to find out

The writer, a teacher in an elementary school in Tyler, Texas, attends with the Church of God Big Sandy.

By Reg Killingley

BIG SANDY, Texas—With advances in science come advances in knowledge. We have arrived at a tipping point that prompts this submission of a modest proposal for a scientific research project.

The project would attempt to ascertain whether there is a DNA basis for the theory of Anglo-Israelism (the fundament of a long-popular Church of God booklet titled



Reg Killingley

The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy).

Proof of the descent of the lost tribes

If modern Europeans and Americans of European descent are truly the descendants of the 10 "lost" tribes of Israel, then it should be possible to design a study to demonstrate the scientific validity of such a theory.

The study of genealogy has long been popular, but now genetic analysis allows us to study ancestry beyond just written and oral records and archives.

DNA research into migration patterns of ancient populations has come into its own.

Miles and miles of millennia

For example, *National Geographic's* Genographic Project, eight years old, uses advanced DNA analysis "to help answer fundamental questions about where humans originated and how we came to populate the Earth."

Just recently, three studies employing such research were featured in popular news media. They describe some of the tools scientists have at their disposal to determine with considerable accuracy the movements across the miles and millennia of multiple peoples.

Different DNA lineages

According to *National Geographic's* project, one study provided evi-

dence that "the people who lived in Central Europe 7,000 years ago had different DNA lineages than those that lived there 5,000 years ago, and again different to those that lived 3,500 years ago."

It showed definitively that from 5500 B.C. to 1500 B.C. the region that is today Germany saw at least four stages of significant migration and settlement. The stages were highlighted by marked shifts in the genetic composition of the populations in the region.

Researchers focus on mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA). This type of DNA is passed down, almost unchanged, from a mother to her children, thereby allowing geneticists to probe the maternal histories of populations.

Mutant sharings

By studying the mutations or changes in mtDNA sequences, researchers have been able to develop a record of maternal ancestry and to group different mtDNA lineages together based on shared mutations.

Another recent study focused on the ancestry of Ashkenazi Jews who dispersed into Central and Eastern

Analysis shows that the Jews who left Palestine 2,000 years ago were mostly men without wives.

Europe in the early Middle Ages.

Their ancestors migrated from Palestine after the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

Researchers analyzed mtDNA sequences from people across Europe, the Caucasus and the Middle East.

Men without wives

Their analysis found that, "in the vast majority of cases, Ashkenazi lineages are most closely related to southern and western European lineages, and that these lineages have been present in Europe for many thousands of years."

In other words, the results show that the Jews who left Palestine 2,000 years ago were mostly men without wives.

The proof is in the testing

"They seem to have married with European women, firstly along the Mediterranean, especially in Italy, and later (but probably to a lesser extent) in western central Europe,"

See COULD SIMPLE DNA, page 24

Malala Yousafzai shows exemplary courage

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

By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—By now you have probably heard about the book written by Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb titled *I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban*.

A description in the book says: "Malala was a 15-year-old fighting for the right to have an education when she was gunned down on the bus taking her home from lessons. Her miraculous recovery was the start of a journey that took her from her home in a remote Pakistan valley to the United States in New York."

"Malala, now 16 and living in Birmingham [England], tells here in exclusive extracts from her new book how the Taliban robbed her of her smile but failed to take her spirit."

Schoolgirl's diary

Malala burst onto the international scene four years ago when an article titled "Diary of Pakistani Schoolgirl" was posted at bbc.co.uk on Jan. 19, 2009.

Private schools in a northwestern section of Pakistan had been ordered to close due to an edict by the Taliban banning girls' education.

It was reported that militants seeking to impose a strict interpretation of Sharia law had destroyed about 150 schools over a year's time.

In that BBC article a seventh-grade

Pakistani girl outspoken on behalf of peace

The writer, a longtime Church of God member, posts regularly at morningcompanion.blogspot.com. He attends with the Church of God Kansas City.

By Lenny Cacchio

LEE'S SUMMIT, Mo.—When I listen to Malala Yousafzai, that 16-year-old Pakistani girl who was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, I have to sit back and marvel.

Outspoken on behalf of liberty since she was a little girl, she was hunted down and shot by a member of the Taliban just over a year ago.

She survived (she says miraculously, and who am I to deny that?) and has recovered almost 100 per-

See HER STORY, page 8

schoolgirl wrote a diary about how the ban had affected her and her classmates.

No colorful dresses

The subject headings of the diary included the following:

■ "Saturday 3 January: I am afraid."

■ "Sunday 4 January: I have to go to school."

■ "Monday 5 January: Do not wear colourful dresses."

■ "Wednesday 7 January: No firing or fear."

■ "Friday 9 January: The Maulana [Maulana Shah Dauran, a Taliban cleric who announced the ban on girls attending school] goes on leave?"

■ Wednesday 14 January: I may not go to school again."

■ "Thursday 15 January: Night filled with artillery."

Her public descriptions of what was happening in Pakistan were not appreciated by the Taliban.

Shot in the head

Members of the Taliban have a history of making threats against people, but not usually against teenage girls. In her book, Malala describes how members of the Taliban shot her in the head.

Here are excerpts:

"The day everything changed was Tuesday, October 9, 2012, three months after my 15th birthday . . .

"We had been getting threats all year. Some were in the newspapers, some were notes or messages passed on by people.

"The Taliban had never come for a girl and I was more concerned that they would target my father as he was always speaking out against them.

"A close friend of his and fellow campaigner had been shot in the face and I knew everyone was telling my father: 'Take care, you'll be next.'

'Who is Malala?'

"When our bus was called that afternoon, the other girls all covered their heads before emerging from the door and climbing into the white Toyota van with benches in the back . . .

See VOICE OF WOMEN, page 8

Essay

Them bones, them bones (them dry bones) did hear the word of the Lord

Mr. Monsalvo and his wife, Paula, attend services of the Church of God Big Sandy.

By **Bernie Monsalvo**

GLADewater, Texas—Is time travel possible? Can events in the future be perceived by mere mortals? Conversely, can the past be relived?

I believe it is not only possible but has happened. I have vividly imagined a conversation of thousands of years ago with one of my mentors in the ways of the Lord.



Bernie Monsalvo

At the time there was no English language, only Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek and Babylonian, and yet we were able to communicate.

Ezekiel ben Buzi ben Adam did indeed time-travel, and I think I did too by picking up his first impressions. I was at the time Barnabas ben Monsalvo, Ezekiel's faithful amanuensis.

Are there other events in the future waiting to be witnessed in our time? Can the past be probed?

Please, dear reader, you decide.

By **Ezekiel ben Buzi ben Adam**

As recorded by his faithful amanuensis, **Barnabas ben Monsalvo**

IN THE LAND OF THE CHALDEANS BY THE RIVER CHEBAR—Today I took a strange trip. I was taken—at least it felt that way—in some sort of flying chariot.

I was seated in the device quite comfortably. The chariot floated gently over the land. I was transported swiftly through the air.

I had no control over where the chariot was flying, but I wasn't afraid. I felt strange knowing I was not in danger of falling out of the chariot, even though I had never before ridden in a vehicle such as this.

The ride was pleasant because the hand of the LORD was upon me, and I was being carried out in the spirit of the LORD.

I alighted in the midst of a valley that was full of—of all things!—bones. The chariot circled around and caused me to pass by the bones, and, behold, there were thousands of bones in an open valley. And, lo, they were very dry.

The trip

I am well acquainted with the Eternal. He has spoken to me many times, but this was the first time I found myself riding 15 or 20 feet above the ground.

I glided over a giant valley. I don't know how big it was, but it was perhaps 30 or 40 miles wide.

It took a couple of hours to fly over what appeared to be millions of dried-out human bones. It seemed to me the hot desert sun had made them to appear white and parched. I had a sensation of profound thirst as well.

After I flew for a time in complete silence, the LORD said to me:

“Son of man, can these bones live?”

Intimate and endearing

For some reason I found that I liked being called *ben Adam*, or Son of Man. Every time I heard it I felt set apart, special. The appellation seems intimate and endearing to me.

I wonder if the LORD ever refers to anybody else in that special way.

I was deep in my thoughts and a question took me by surprise. I had no idea of the answer, but the question was: Can these bones live?

I answered, “O LORD God, You must know.”

As far as the eye could see

I didn't know what to think. Bones scattered as far as the eye could see? What could I know about such things?

I had the feeling that the LORD GOD would answer His own question. He was intent on enlightening my ignorance. After a silence He said to me:

“Prophesy to these bones, and say to them, ‘O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD! Thus says the LORD GOD to these bones: “Surely I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. I will

put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live. Then you shall know that I am the LORD.””

I was stunned by this direct order. I have carried out other requests of the LORD. But to speak to an audience of ancient, dried-out bones? How does this make any sense? How could the bones hear anything I would say to them?

Panoramic view

I was still hovering over the valley of the dry, dead, white bones when I gently came to rest on a small hill that afforded me a panoramic view of the immense valley around me.

I still had no idea how I would get back to my family, but I was not concerned or afraid. Something was reassuring and comforting about the presence of my divine Host.

I composed myself, straightened up and took cover behind a rock. But I prophesied as I was commanded.

As I was speaking I heard—and felt—a sound: a noise that grew into an unnerving rattling. The bones were coming together, bone to bone, skeletons! My words were having a strange vivifying effect on the bones!

The rattling continues

What in the world was going on? It seemed that in a twinkling of an eye the whole valley was astir. I heard the bones rattling and saw them convulsing. It sounded as if immense quantities of small pebbles were shaking and making a racket inside a huge, covered wooden box.

Then the frequency and volume of the rattling sound seemed to increase. I don't know if the earth was quaking and agitating the bones—was that what was happening?—but suddenly the noise the bones were making became unbearably louder.

Zombies for only a moment

The bones, now whole skeletons, began growing sinews and flesh. Skeletons became hideous zombielike creatures.

Then the zombies, in a twinkling of an eye, morphed into healthy, rosy human bodies.

They looked healthy, except that there seemed to be no breath in them. They were lying everywhere, even in piles. They seemed to be asleep, dormant, dead to the world.

The scene before me was nothing if not amazing. From mountains of bones to virtual piles of human bodies splayed and askew, young and old men, young and old women and multitudes of children, lay.

The valley could have been a battlefield full of dead soldiers, except there was no blood, no gore. The bodies appeared to be healthy if comatose.

It dawned on me that I was witnessing a miracle, and not just any miracle. I was surprised to find that I recognized some of the people, some who had been my teachers.

I blinked and notice that the bodies were beginning to seemingly magically acquire clothing. They had been naked. Now they were wearing attire: utilitarian, nothing fancy.

Then the LORD said to me:

“Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, thus says the LORD GOD: ‘Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live.’”

The bones wake up!

I followed the LORD's instructions as best I could.

I entreated the Breath That Gives Life to enter into the tens or maybe hundreds of thousands of bodies lying seemingly lifeless in this great valley.

I prophesied as the LORD commanded me, and air came into the bodies and they began to visibly breathe.

It wasn't long before they began to sit up and then stand up and gaze at their surroundings and each other in bewilderment.

I thought: If the bodies, these human beings, could be trained and organized, they could be a great army.

To say the least, I was dumbfounded. My jaw dropped open, my mouth was

agape. As they stood up and regained their senses, the newly conscious humans seemed to begin to recognize their families and other loved ones.

Beginning to perceive

Children ran to their parents and grasped their hands, clung to their hands. Hundreds, then thousands, then hundreds of thousands—millions?—of

I don't know how long I had been watching, engrossed, when the Eternal spoke to me again:

“Therefore, prophesy and say to them, thus says the LORD GOD: ‘Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.’”

“Then you shall know that I am the



THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES—The Valley of Dry Bones, described in Ezekiel 37, is depicted in a famous woodcut by French artist Gustave Doré. The artist, who lived 1832-1883, worked primarily with wood engraving. [Graphic in the public domain]

people stared in stupefied amazement, shocked that they were living again and obviously wondering what could possibly happen next.

The LORD GOD said to me:

“Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say, ‘Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!’”

God keeps His word

God was in the process of keeping His promise to Abraham. The whole House of Israel—Judah, Joseph, Dan, Ephraim, Zebulun and the rest—were

LORD, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves. I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken it and performed it,’ says the LORD.”

Miraculous voice

Once again, I addressed my newly revived audience. It seemed to me my voice miraculously thundered and reverberated throughout the valley. I didn't even have to shout. I was certain I was being heard loudly and clearly.

I perceived that the people were riveted by the words from God they were hearing from me.

I knew why God was using me to communicate with the people. The last time He directly spoke to crowds of human beings was at the giving of the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai.

The people at that time were scared to death. They entreated Moses:

“We're scared of His voice. You tell us what He wants us to do.”

“You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.”

We will unite again

My heart beat fast. The events of the last few hours overwhelmed me. But again the word of the LORD came to me:

“As for you, son of man, take a stick for yourself and write on it: ‘For Judah and for the children of Israel, his companions.’ Then take another stick and write on it, ‘For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel, his companions.’ Then join them one to another for yourself into one stick, and they will become one in your hand.”

Looking around at the trees, I found a couple of good-sized sticks. I peeled the

bark and a neat white surface lay beneath. I found my pen and ink and wrote on each stick as I was told.

Some of the people who had recently come alive had organized themselves and selected elderly spokesmen. The masses and their spokesmen watched me intently.

Of course, they had questions. Of course, God had already briefed me about their questions. He told me:

“And when the children of your people speak to you, saying, ‘Will you not show us what you mean by these?’—say to them, thus says the LORD GOD: ‘Surely I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will join them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand. And the sticks on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes.’”

Forgetful elders

I reminded the elders about God's promise to reunite the 12 tribes so they could live as they lived when they first entered the Promised Land.

Some remembered the cruel taskmasters of Egypt during their long slavery before the Exodus. Some knew about the dead during the Assyrian invasion. Some recollected the brutality of the Babylonians when they took the Jews to Babylon.

They looked at the united sticks and understood that God would make them one people again.

The LORD GOD spoke to me again:

“Then say to them, thus says the LORD GOD: ‘Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again.’”

“They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them.”

“Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God. David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them.”

A new king and a new Shepherd

Wow, what a promise! We will be one kingdom again, never to be defiled again by idols. God will gather His people from everywhere to restore them spiritually. He will fulfill His purpose for us: to be our God forever.

We will not be deceived again by false shepherds. We will have David again as our king: King David, the man after God's own heart, the man forgiven of his trespasses and hideous sins before God.

I somehow understood that David would have to be resurrected, and evidently he would be resurrected long before the valley of dry bones became the repository of millions of people who had been dead for centuries.

God continued with His message:

“Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children's children, forever; and My servant David shall be their prince forever.”

“Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore.”

“My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people. The nations also will know that I, the LORD, sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.”

Life anew

The elders were just beginning to understand what God was saying: that they would be given a new life, a new life under David and his princes, a new

See **THERE WILL**, page 5

There will eventually be peace in the Valley of Dry Bones

Continued from page 4
life under One Shepherd.

David will organize their nation while the LORD, our Shepherd, will guide us.

Suddenly the words of Psalm 23 made sense to me in a different way. David, the author of this psalm, had written:

“The LORD is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

“You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.

“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.”

No more valley of the shadow of death

I was witnessing what God had in mind for these newly resurrected people.

He gave them new, young, vibrant bodies with the breath of *life*. Their soul had been restored!

Now they would be under the Messiah, their new Shepherd, the LORD Himself, and He would lead them into the paths of righteousness.

All of them had lain as dry, dead bones in the valley of the shadow of

longer want for food. A big, abundant table will brim over with the goodness of the earth.

Their biggest blessing will be that this goodness and mercy will never end. Their children and grandchildren will never know what it is to live under Satan’s influence.

The earth itself will become the

acles, a God who gives life, a God who conquers death, a God who as a loving Father provides an abundant table for His people.

After mulling over these thoughts, I must have lost track of time. My next conscious thought was that I was again a short distance from my house on the shores of the River Chebar.

story. I resolved to sit down just now and write it all up.

God is real

I wouldn’t try to distinguish what was real and what was not. To me, everything was real.

The Eternal God is real to me. My relationship with Him is real.

The magnificent picture of millions of people from all nations coming back to life is real.

I’ll let my people know they have so much to look forward to.

May God speed that day when our people will have David as their king and the Lord GOD as the True Shepherd of Israel!

Got to get busy

I have no idea how everything I’ve witnessed, felt and rejoiced over will be delivered to the intended audience: the rest of the scattered children of Israel.

That is a question for another time.

I must get busy writing it all up while I do my best to be faithful to the words of the LORD.

My next conscious thought was that I was again a short distance from my house on the shores of the River Chebar.

death. Perhaps they had been dead for thousands of years.

Now, after their new life had been restored to them, they would no longer fear evil. The rod and staff of their Shepherd would comfort them while supplying all their needs.

The resurrected ones will no longer want for still waters, green pastures and oil that overflows their cup. They will no

House of the Lord forever. All the nations will know how the Eternal blessed the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Lost time

In my whole experience today, the LORD told me several times that these people will know who their God is. They will know Him as the God of mir-

I fell on my face and thanked the Eternal for what I had just seen. Had I been transported into the future?

Where is this valley of dry, whitened bones, this valley of the shadow of death?

Was this a vision, a dream, a glimpse into the future?

As a priest, I knew I had to comfort my fellow Jews in captivity with this

Outsider gets rare glimpse of PCG Tabernacles opening night

Continued from page 1

cean” family members and others.

(See *THE JOURNAL*’s report on that sermon, “PCG Clarifies Disfellowship Policy, Gives Main Purpose of Church: the Need to Expose Satan,” in issue No. 106, dated Jan. 31, 2006.)

This was the PCG’s opportunity to show if that policy was still in effect.

Avoiding offense

I admit I didn’t attempt to register in advance. I didn’t want anyone in Edmond to know an outsider was coming and prepare a special public-relations-style welcome.

To avoid potentially offending people, I even removed almost all United Church of God materials from my briefcase in advance.

Wearing the proper suit and tie, I followed the PCG parking crew’s guidance to a spot west of Armstrong Auditorium about 25 minutes before the customary 7:30 p.m. starting time.

Two door greeters welcomed me into the lobby while someone wearing a security badge stood well inside. He apparently, at that moment, was distracted with someone else and allowed me to walk right in.

During several minutes in the lobby, I admired a display of Middle East archaeology. A timeline along the walls dated it from before-Christ antiquity to recent Jerusalem trips by Mr. Flurry.

Several examples of items collected in the PCG’s Armstrong Foundation’s “big dig” were displayed as well.

Have a seat

I was not at all surprised to find a large portrait of Herbert Armstrong. It didn’t face the lobby but was hidden on the opposite side of lettering declaring the building is dedicated to “the Great God.”

Unlike the Ambassador Auditorium in Pasadena, Calif. (which once had a bust of Mr. Armstrong in the basement), a large encased Bible actually sits below that dedication in the Armstrong Auditorium. It was opened to Jeremiah 38.

It soon was time to enter the main hall, and I followed other people in.

“Are you looking for a place to sit?” an usher asked without any other question.

Very nice building

He helped me find a great seat with little difficulty: the middle of the ninth row of the main floor, directly in front of the lectern. It indeed was a top-quality building in appearance.

A bit surprisingly, the 823-seat auditorium wound up with empty seats down front on the opening night of the Feast.

After I spent a few minutes sitting quietly and marveling at my situation, a man to my left shook my hand.

He told others sitting nearby about how seemingly “everyone who moves to Florida gets suspended [from the PCG] and never comes back.”

A male college student wound up sitting to my right with a laptop, ready to take notes on the sermon.

No recording allowed

The unnamed song leader made it clear during opening announcements that, while picture-taking was allowed almost everywhere (a change from Ambassador Auditorium, which restricted such things), no audio or video recording was allowed of any PCG messages.

Copies wouldn’t even be sent to congregations after the Feast.

People from other Church of God groups might have felt right at home with the opening night of the Feast in Edmond, at least with its format.

There were three Dwight Armstrong hymns from a version of the old purple hymnal (updated with a PCG logo on the cover), followed by an opening prayer.

Nice special music

There were lengthy announcements about Feast rules, including an ominous note that only people wearing Feast badges were allowed inside the building. I wasn’t wearing one. An old one from prior Feasts I had attended would not have worked, because the PCG badges had a big picture of the Armstrong Auditorium on them.

After a flawless presentation of special music by a Feast choir, the main opening-night message was a video sermon by Pastor General Flurry.

attempt to purchase the old Ambassador College campus in Brickwood, England, is “going slower than we would like.” He gave no other details.

Raising the universe’s ruins

Mr. Flurry said the future, which will include “raising the ruins of the entire universe,” promises to be “more beautiful than Herbert W. Armstrong College.”

Armstrong College (AC) was visible three times during his message, thanks to an overhead helicopter camera, with emphasis on Armstrong Auditorium and the Armstrong Foundation office across the driveway.

He revealed at one point the auditorium cost “upwards of \$25 million,” including landscaping.

Yet, in spite of all that wealth in the “protector of wealth” city—which Mr. Flurry has pointed out is the meaning of “Edmond”—the PCG studio apparently could not afford a clock to time his video.

He looked at his watch at least three times, admitting he was trying to keep the opening-night message short.

At least one obvious misstatement was left in the video, not edited out: a declaration that 2 Chronicles is “the last book of the Bible.”

To avoid potentially offending people, I removed almost all United Church of God materials from my briefcase in advance.

It apparently was the first of at least three videos shown at PCG Feast sites because he talked about “other messages” several times.

Coded scriptures for the PCG

The Flurry focus was on how the books of Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah have a Feast-time “key of David” message.

It’s a “coded message,” he said, that’s “specifically for the Philadelphia Church of God today.”

Yet he turned to only two sections of 2 Chronicles during the opening video and cited a letter from Elijah in 2 Chronicles 21 to buttress his claim that Mr. Armstrong contributed to the work of God beyond his death in 1986, as “shown in the book of James.”

(You have to read Mr. Flurry’s booklet on Jeremiah to understand that, he said.)

Bricket Wood purchase delayed

Mr. Flurry admitted during his section on 2 Chronicles 21 that the PCG’s

The service ended in 90 minutes, with a minister giving a closing prayer that referred in passing to Gerald Flurry as a “prophet.”

Change of plans

After a moment of small talk with two older women sitting in front of me, I walked out of the auditorium and admired its marvelous nighttime beauty.

My backup plans to attend an alternate Feast site in northeast Oklahoma the next day were changed as I drove back to my motel.

If I could get inside “God’s house” (as the song leader declared it) once, could I get in a second time?

Security not sympathetic

Thursday promised two services, at 10:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. I arrived for the morning service about 30 minutes in advance.

The American flag outside the foun-

He shook his head. At least the PCG maintained principles similar to what Peter told Simon Magus in Acts 8:20.

Yielding not to temptation

With that, I turned and walked across the lobby without an escort, tempted for a moment to blend into the crowd and try to get into the service anyway, as Jesus might have done long ago.

Instead I stepped out the stage-left door and walked to my car. As I walked I did something I can’t recall ever doing at a religious meeting before. I shook the dust off my shoes.

United Church of God

After driving home, I joined in the United Church of God webcast from Bend, Ore., for a couple of days.

Then for the weekend part of the Feast, I drove 2½ hours in the other direction to a different group’s Feast site.

Lyons Bible Study Group

I’d left an online question and voice-mail message with the Lyons Bible Study Group about my possibly attending but had received no response. So this was a site-unseen trip of speculation as well.

Yet an amazing thing happened when I found the group’s site: an unmarked campground shelter near Lake Wilson in north-central Kansas. The 25 or so members welcomed me like a long-lost relative.

They fed me several times, allowed me to join in interactive free-flowing Bible discussions and even let me lead a closing prayer after a 4½-hour discussion on Sabbath afternoon (including a one-hour dinner break).

Different direction

Several of the group members admitted they had also split from Worldwide Church of God two decades ago. But their path clearly went in a different direction from the PCG’s.

The tone of the discussions I attended was more Messianic and Hebrew roots in orientation.

Pork bologna was available for those who preferred it.

A few of the members openly swore, smoked and chewed tobacco.

And I wound up being the only one wearing anything approaching a suit and tie.

The difference between the two Feast sites I visited was like night and day. I offer them to you and ask: Which one comes closest to reflecting the example of Jesus Christ?

More Feast reports are scheduled to appear beginning in the next issue of *THE JOURNAL*.



Armstrong Auditorium, Edmond, Okla., at night

Christianity's traditions on sex lead to lies, shame, confusion

Continued from page 3

the end result as *very good* (Genesis 1:31).

Adam, Eve and David

We read in Genesis that Adam and Eve "were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed" (Genesis 2:25).

You remember the story. It was Adam and Eve who decided that their bodies were shameful and they should hide them (3:7-11).

God did not create Adam and Eve to perceive an innate shame about their bodies. This was something they acquired after they were created (with a little help from the serpent-devil).

We read that many years later David danced before the Lord without inhibition or self-consciousness (2 Samuel 6:14).

David's wife decided he had behaved shamefully because the priestly garment he was wearing had unnecessarily exposed him to some girls in the crowd (verses 16-20).

David, however, scolded her for her attitude and implied that God and the girls who had witnessed his dance would not consider his performance to be shameful (verses 21-22).

Brethren, we are the ones who have attached shame and sinfulness to our bodies, *not God!*

God is the author of attraction

God designed our bodies. He instilled a sexual appetite in humans. He designed us to be physically and emotionally attracted to each other.

When you think about it, does it make sense for God to give us sexual desire and then forbid us ever to satisfy it?

Deep down, we understand these truths, but many of us continue to insist that nudity (as with David's dance) and sexual attraction are tainted with sin and shame.

Maybe we need to reread the Song of Solomon. For many of us sexual attraction is just another word for lust, and everyone knows lust is bad.

Christ did say that "whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matthew 5:28).

There you have it. Any time a man looks at a woman with lust in his heart, he is guilty of adultery.

Or is he? And what about a woman lusting after a man? What was Jesus talking about in this passage?

Confusing attraction with infidelity

Is it possible that this scripture has been taken out of context and its meaning twisted?

Notice what Christ said just prior to the verse about looking on a woman: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery'" (verse 27).

On closer examination, it becomes clear that Christ was speaking about the commandment concerning infidelity.

In other words, after one is committed or married to another person, it is indeed wrong to indulge in sexual fantasy about anyone else. (The original Greek word implies something much more serious than finding someone attractive.)

Hence, the original commandment and Christ's elaboration of it specifically address sexual activity (or the imagination of sexual activity) with others after entering into a committed relationship with another person.

Sexual attraction between single adults is a normal and healthy feature of how Almighty God designed us to work. Married folks, however, are expected to direct all of this natural energy and attention *exclusively on each other*.

No specific prohibition

What about sex before marriage? Surely God intended for intercourse to be confined to the institution of marriage.

It will probably surprise many people to learn there is *no specific prohibition against premarital sexual intercourse in Scripture*.

John Sash wrote an excellent article dealing with this very subject that was published by this newspaper in the

summer of 2010 (see "We've Misunderstood the Bible on Sex," *THE JOURNAL*, issue No. 140, dated July 31, 2010).

In that essay Mr. Sash pointed out that the English word *fornication* does not fit the Greek words used in the original writing of the New Testament.

A contract does not preapply

Still, many will argue that the commandment against adultery is violated by participating in sex prior to marriage.

But a little logic quickly defeats such an argument. When two parties enter into a contract or covenant (like marriage), both parties generally understand that the covenant does not apply to what happened prior to its consummation (unless there is what is called a "grandfather clause").

In short, the contract or covenant is generally understood to govern the behavior of both parties going forward.

Even so, some will point to the fact that a woman who misrepresented her virginity to her husband was to be stoned to death under the Law (Deuteronomy 22:20-21).

Mr. Sash points out that the woman is not stoned for having premarital sex but for misrepresenting her former behavior to her husband.

Again, however, we are forced to ask: What about a man who has misrepresented *his* behavior prior to marriage? Does this principle apply equal-

dition is not on the same par with whatever God's will happens to be on this or any other subject.

What about marriage? Where did it originate? Is marriage God-ordained or the product of human tradition?

No marriage ceremony in the Bible

In beginning to answer these questions, we should note there is no prescription for a marriage ceremony anywhere in the Bible.

Does that shock you? Let me repeat: *There are no ceremonial prescriptions regarding marriage in the Bible.*

"But I've heard the words recited at Christian marriage ceremonies all of my life," some will protest.

Even so, I challenge you to find such a ceremony in the Bible. You will not find one. Our marriage ceremonies are based on the traditions of men.

Granted, much of the wording and symbolism in these ceremonies is based on scriptural teachings, yet the fact remains that God did not give us a formula for a ceremony.

Even when we go all the way back to the beginning of the Bible we cannot find any evidence of any kind of formal marriage ceremony for the first man and woman.

We simply read that the man and his wife were naked and that they were not ashamed of their nakedness (Genesis 2:25).

Three parts of a marriage

So what exactly constitutes a marriage in God's eyes? I believe the Bible reveals three components of a God-recognized marriage:

- The act of living with another person.

- The sexual act itself.

- A commitment to love and devote oneself exclusively to one other person.

The first two principles are summarized thus:

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2:24).

Christ quoted this scripture when he was speaking about divorce, which we will reference again later when we are addressing that subject (Matthew 19:5).

The third principle is explicit in the Seventh Commandment: "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Exodus 20:14).

Moreover, all three principles are reinforced by Paul's instructions about marriage to the Christians at Ephesus (Ephesians 5:22-33).

Are you sure you're single?

Therefore, in reviewing the biblical components of a marriage that is valid in God's eyes, it quickly becomes apparent to readers that a good many people who formerly regarded them-

brings into the world is a *legitimate* child in God's eyes.

You may personally be responsible for answering to God for how your child was conceived, but the child is yours just the same.

Paul instructed fathers to bring their children up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). God expects fathers and mothers to love, protect and support their children regardless of the circumstances of their conception.

Can a marriage genuinely end?

As part of a discussion about marriage, a few words about divorce are appropriate. What constitutes a legitimate reason (or reasons) in God's eyes for ending a marriage?

In times past, human traditions in this regard have often contradicted or been at odds with God's original intent. Moses told the Israelites:

"When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness [disgrace, blemish, shameful] in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house" (Deuteronomy 24:1).

Nevertheless, Christ refuted this teaching during His own ministry:

"It hath been said, 'Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement': but I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication [the Greek word implies chronic, habitual infidelity or sexual misconduct], causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery" (Matthew 5:31-32).

Putting asunder not allowed

Later the Pharisees asked Jesus about this teaching:

"Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every [any] cause?" (Matthew 19:3).

Notice Christ's reply: "Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?' Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh."

"*What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder*" (verses 4-6).

Jesus explained that marriage makes a husband and his wife *one* in God's sight and that man does not have the ability to make them *two* again.

This also refers to the original creation of humankind when God bequeathed to the male and female different aspects of the divine character (Genesis 1:27).

Divorce only because of infidelity

Even so, the Pharisees persisted in holding onto the tradition established by Moses:

"They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: *but from the beginning it was not so.*

"And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication [infidelity], and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (Matthew 19:7-9).

Therefore we could legitimately say Christ explicitly defines God's criteria for ending a marriage.

Paul had no authority to change Jesus' marriage instructions

What about Paul's instructions on marriage, divorce and remarriage? (1 Corinthians 7).

Again, context is important. Sometimes we forget Paul was writing letters to specific churches, often addressing circumstances that were specific to a specific audience.

It is unlikely that Paul ever imagined his letters would one day be regarded as books of a New Testament.

Thus anyone who would attempt to See **WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY**, page 23

If I'm right in this line of reasoning, Paul had no authority to override or modify Christ's statement on the subject of marriage.

ly to men? And, if not, why not?

This is just one example among many where the language relative to sex seems to be prejudiced in favor of the man.

Culture and times

Context is important, brethren. We cannot begin to understand or interpret these scriptures without an understanding of the culture and times in which they were written.

In ancient times most cultures were male-dominated (and the Israelites were no exception).

Further, most of these cultures (including the Israelites') were overtly misogynistic in the application of their laws as well as the roles they assigned to women.

In other words, many of the laws and regulations pertaining to male and female rights and roles were cultural. *They should not be regarded as universally applicable, eternal spiritual principles.*

Marriage virtually universal

Similarly, note that most cultures and societies developed traditions relative to some kind of marriage ceremony between their males and females.

As we study world history, we find the phenomenon to be almost universal.

Hence, it is reasonable to be curious about the origins of marriage traditions and how they developed down through the millennia of human existence on this planet.

Even so, we must acknowledge and underscore the *fact* that much of our understanding of marriage is based on human tradition.

Tradition can render God's Word less effective

We know that Christ scolded the scribes and Pharisees about "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Mark 7:7).

"For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men" (verse 8).

He concluded by informing them that they were "making the word of God of none effect" through their tradition (verse 13).

No biblical marriage ceremony

Traditions can be good or bad. Some are harmonious with the revelation of Scripture.

Nevertheless, we as Christians must understand and acknowledge that tra-

dition we learn that Adam "knew" (had sexual relations with) his wife and that she became pregnant and gave birth to a son (Genesis 4:1).

Marriage notions developed

In terms of the Bible, our discussion about marriage traditions must focus on the Israelites. It is, after all, their story we read throughout most of the Old and New Testaments.

Nevertheless, a word of caution is in order in reviewing the traditions of the Israelites: Not all of their customs with regard to marriage were in sync with God's expectations regarding that institution (e.g., the practice of polygamy).

Keeping in mind the pertinent scriptures, we should note that it appears that a festival or celebration was central to the marriage ceremony (Genesis 29:22; Judges 14:10).

This celebration, or party, was immediately followed by the consummation of the marriage by the bride and groom (Genesis 29:23).

Moreover, marriages were usually arranged by the parents or guardians of the bride and groom (Genesis 24, 29).

The festival, not the 'I do' vows

We read that the marriage of Ruth and Boaz was heavily influenced by Israelite inheritance customs (Ruth 4).

Nevertheless, although the tradition of the marriage festival appears to harmonize with our notions of a wedding reception, it is evident that the *festival itself*—not a reciting of vows—was regarded as the marriage ceremony by the Israelites.

This conclusion is reinforced by the traditions in place in Christ's day. For example, His first miracle was performed at a marriage festival in Cana of Galilee (John 2:1-11).

It is further reinforced by the portrayal of Christ's marriage to His church.

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor 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* [another tradition that carries over into modern Christian wedding ceremonies].

"For the fine linen is [symbolizes] 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" (Revelation 19:7-9).

selves as being single are, in fact, married in God's eyes.

Are you sure you're married?

Likewise, under these terms it should also be apparent that some of the people who have regarded themselves as married simply do not conform to the criteria outlined in the Bible.

Caution: It is not the intent of this author to advocate the abandonment of formal marriage ceremonies or disparage them generally. Any ceremony that points to God as the author of the institution and includes some of His instructions on its proper use is a useful and good tradition.

Many societies have developed ceremonies to mark the point where children become adults. While these ceremonies do not cause maturation, they do serve to underscore the reality of what has happened or is happening.

In the same way, a formal ceremony or an official document can serve to reinforce the spiritual reality of marriage.

What makes a child illegitimate?

Before we leave this topic we'll consider the question of children born outside of the sanctity of marriage.

Most "Christian" societies have historically regarded children who are born outside of marriage as in some way inferior to those who are born within the confines of that institution. They have attached names like baseborn, bastard and illegitimate to such children.

Once again we have to ask ourselves: How does God regard these children?

To answer, we must look at God's basic principle regarding personal responsibility. This standard is often overlooked by church leaders and their members.

In Ezekiel we read: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" (Ezekiel 18:20).

No child left illegitimate

The principle is clear: God holds each individual responsible for what he or she has done.

Hence, the practice of placing the onus on these children for something their parents did or did not do is not biblically sound.

Any child a father and mother

Connections: Member to Member

Issue No. 155

PUBLISHED BY THE JOURNAL: NEWS OF THE CHURCHES OF GOD

September-October 2013

Leavened Bread Cannot Picture Firstfruits

Leavened bread pictures something unholy and sinful, and so the leavened loaves "are unlikely to picture the Firstfruits." So says Ozwitness in an article in *The Journal*, issue No. 154, "An Abib Resurrection?" This statement has been stated and restated by many for as long as I can remember. The basis for this reasoning is that leaven represents sin; therefore offering loaves with leaven in them is offering sin—or, as Ozwitness says, pictures "something unholy and sinful."

Notice Ozwitness doesn't quote any scripture to prove his point? One important point that he and others miss is, "Does God allow anything that represents sin or is sinful to be offered?" Wouldn't offering two loaves of sinful leaven be the same as offering a pig or something else unclean? Is not the idea clearly preposterous?

Ozwitness uses Revelation 14:5, "And in their mouth was found no guile for they are without fault before the throne of God," as proof of his point of view. Ozwitness, is it possible that "guile—insidious, treacherous, cunning, deceit" is to be found in your statements?

When considering the meaning of the two leavened loaves that are offered,

shouldn't the most important, relative scriptures have been taken into consideration?

Matthew 13:33: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened." And Luke 13:20-21: "And again He said, 'To what shall I liken the Kingdom of God? It is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.'"

as being an acceptable offering in the case of the leavened loaves, which Ozwitness implies, seems unbelievable to me.

Another point: When leaven is put into dough and it is baked, then the leaven becomes inert. It can't be used to leaven anything any more than unleavened bread can be used to leaven.

That is why people drink wine and beer during the

unholy about them, from their preparation to the end of their being offered. They were never unholy and then got cleaned up or had a facelift. The problem is with human ideas about them.

Why do I suspect that Satan would love us to believe that God will lower His standard as to what an acceptable offering is, like offering sinful loaves? It's because Satan loves to quote but misapply God's Word.

Ozwitness states, "Leavened Bread Cannot Picture Firstfruits"; then quotes God, "You shall bring from your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. **They are the firstfruits to the Lord.**"

Ozwitness apparently expects us to believe his statement, "However, those loaves contain leaven, and so are unlikely to picture the firstfruits who become Christ's Bride, who are counted as holy and sinless by Christ." The question is, does his opinion override God's plain statement of fact?

The last person I question concerning this belief knighted me with the "Servant of Satan" title. I expect a similar honor will come from Ozwitness.

—Don the Heretic Henderson Edmonds, WA

Leaven is neither good nor bad, sin nor righteousness, God's Holy Spirit nor Satan's spirit.

Leaven is not like a pig. It is not sin, unclean or evil or, as Ozwitness states, "something unholy and sinful." It is neutral. It can be used as a type, such as sin or God's Holy Spirit, to make a point.

Is it beyond consideration that, in the case of the two leavened loaves that are offered, they are absolutely not unclean, unholy or representing sin in any way, and are in fact fully accepted to be offered as a Godly offering?

Is not this leaven a type of God's Holy Spirit, as described in Matthew 13:33 and Luke 13:20-21?

The idea that God lowered His standard of what quali-

Days of Unleavened Bread; the leavening that was used to make the beer can no longer be used to leaven anything. Therefore, wine and beer can be drunk during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Again, leavening is neither good nor bad, is neither sin nor righteousness, is neither God's Holy Spirit nor Satan's spirit. It can be and is used in many ways: to bake a cake or draw an analogy from, like we do with many things such as snakes, serpents, dogs, pigs, fire, water, etc.

The two loaves meet the strict requirements that God demands for an acceptable offering. There was nothing

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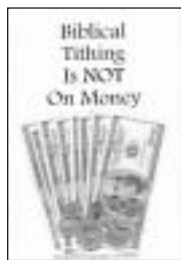
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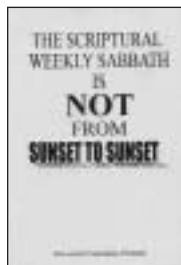


Few of us have taken a closer look at the Scriptures to see what it really says about tithing. Honestly, where does the Bible say, or even hint, that we are to tithe on the money we earn? What truly is Biblical "increase"? Few doctrines have been as badly misrepresented as the doctrine of tithing. If 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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Obituaries

Funeral services for Emanuel Omega "Pete" Peden, 83, of Tyler, Texas, were Oct. 3, 2013, at Tyler Memorial Funeral Home with burial in Tyler Memorial Park Cemetery. § Mr. Peden was born March 22, 1930, in St. Louis, Mo., to Emanuel and Helen Marie Davis Peden and passed away



Pete Peden

on Sept. 30, 2013, in Tyler. § Mr. Peden served in the U.S. Navy, was a member of the Church of God International, loved to ride bicycles, enjoyed camping and was a ham-radio operator (W5CPPP). He had lived in Tyler 53 years. § Survivors include his wife, Peggy Peden, of Tyler, son Rick Johnson and wife Dana of Tyler; daughters Debbie Cates and husband Kip of Tyler, Stephanie Wells and husband Ritchie of Flynn, Gwen Luchin and husband Tom of Pueblo, Colo., Melissa Bauer and husband Mark of Corpus Christie, Pam Rippley and husband Jeff of Magnolia; daughter-in-law Sola Peden of Houston; 14 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; a brother, Martin Barnhart of Oklahoma City, Okla.; and sisters Nancy Gibbon of Guthrie, Okla., Dolores Babbitt of Florida, Patricia Block and Constance Hughes. § Pete was preceded in death by his parents, a son, Larry Peden and a sister, Mary Barger.

Faye Odie Thompson, 63, passed away Oct. 6, 2013. § She was born in Durant, Miss., and lived in the Akron, Ohio, area for more than 40 years. She retired from First Energy Corp. in September 2013. § She was a member of the Class of 1975 at Ambassador College, Big Sandy, Texas. § She was preceded in death by her father, John Odie; her mother, Margaret Odie; and sister, Sandra

Eure. She is survived by sisters Bess Odie and Millicent Odie; a brother, Joseph (Sunwati) Subryan; nephews Damien (Tatiana) Eure and Ryan Eure; a niece, Elizabeth Eure; a great-niece, Sofiya Eure; a great-nephew, Nicolai Eure; and many other relatives and friends. § Private services will be at the convenience of the family. Condolences may be sent to 529 W. Thornton Street, Akron, OH 44307.



Faye Odie Thompson

Obituaries

John D. "Tony" Hammer, 83, passed away on Oct. 25, 2013, in Frisco, Texas. He was born June 13, 1930, in Seminole, Okla., to Roy Seth Hammer and Pearl (Cope) Hammer. Mr. Hammer was a resident of Frisco, where he was a member of Stonebrier Community Church. He was a veteran of the Air Force and had received a bachelor's degree from Amba-



Tony Hammer

Obituaries

sador College in Pasadena, Calif. He had worked in marketing for Nationwide Insurance Co. for 10 years before retiring in 2005. § He is survived by his loving wife, Natalie, of Frisco; two daughters, Vickie Hammer of Dallas and Jan Oakes and husband Mike of Farmersville, Texas; a son, Dave Hammer, and wife Clare of Dallas; a granddaughter, Catherine Hammer of Dallas; and two sisters, Shirley Armstrong of Palestine and Molly Antion of Pasadena, Calif. § A memorial service Oct. 29, 2013, at Restland Coppell Chapel. Condolences may be sent to Natalie Hammer, 915 Nicklaus Ct., Frisco, TX 75034.

Daniel in the Lions' Den

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C F P A L A C E M S N A I S R E P O W D
T F A I T H F U L Y A R M K J N Z D F H
R V U Y S O T S V S V S T N I X O U U X
N R N K I R Z H N H X D U F L N H R Q F
V S X N E S T O X J C U A I F E G B P H
S L T M Q U I X S K Z B M N R E G D Q O
R M B S O T B T G T U U W D I A H N O J
Q L K M A A E L Y R E T S A M E D R A M
E Z M N E A Z K V K V Z H M W O L I S M
D Y T N D S Q D S V R A E F Q G Q I P K
C F C F P N W A I J E M B S Z K T V B C
Y W A V J O D J Y U S O D T W X I C U D
T S Y R D I E X P Z N Y T I V I T P A C
T M L S R L C J B E J E F A S T I N G P
T C H T H X R P S X A F W Q A M B K O T
H I R O K A E G F M V C Y V X G A N Z H
G Z U N G Z E Q S U D D E H M R Z E Z I
I A J E I F S M Q I M E D E S G E D D L
N T G C N N N P R A Y E D H I M A E I N

Angel	Decree	God	Mouth	Persians
Bones	Den	Kingdom	Nations	Prayed
Captivity	Faithful	Lions	Night	Steadfast
Daniel	Fasting	Mastery	Palace	Stone
Darius	Fear	Medes	Peace	Tremble

I Corinthians 7:15 does not allow divorce

Many within the churches of God believe I Corinthians 7:15 does allow divorce. Let's look at a translation that reflects the original Greek without ambiguity. "And, if the unbelieving doth separate himself—let him separate himself: the brother or the sister is not under servitude in such cases, and in peace hath God called us" (Young's Literal Translation).

Although the English is somewhat archaic, Young's translation reflects the unambiguous meaning of the Greek *douloo*, which primarily means 'become a slave.' I Corinthians 7:15 is not saying anything about a marriage being unbound, but that the believer is not enslaved by the unbeliever. How could the believer be enslaved?

Jesus taught, "Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate" (Mat 19:6b). Paul paraphrased this in I Corinthians 7:10c. "A wife is not to depart from her husband." If the believer were absolutely required to 'not separate' from the unbeliever, wouldn't the believer be at the mercy of the unbeliever? The unbeliever could simply threaten to leave and the believer would be forced to do the will of the

unbeliever to avoid separation. The believer would be little better than a slave to the unbeliever.

Paul made his judgment here based on the overriding need to make peace. Jesus' instruction was to Jews. Jesus did not address a situation where a mate was an unbeliever from a different culture. Paul understood that the believer was not absolutely required to live with the unbeliever, even though Jesus' statement taken literally would indicate otherwise.

Paul's statement is also an example of typical Hebrew parallelism. This is the proclivity of Hebrew speakers to be somewhat redundant. "A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases" is just another way of restating and reinforcing his instruction: "But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart." The believer is not his/her mate's slave.

Doesn't a separation imply a divorce? This doesn't follow. The very next verse Paul exhorts those involved to keep in mind that their conduct could still win over their husband or wife. "For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?" If they were di-

vorced, they would no longer be husband or wife and would have little or no influence on the unbeliever.

In I Corinthians 7, Paul is not talking of divorce at all. The NKJV uses the word in verses 11-13. In fact a meaning of 'divorce' for the Greek *apbiemi* is very questionable. The three or four good lexicons that point to examples of ancient usage supposedly intending 'divorce' all point to Herodotus 5:39 to justify this meaning. That passage does talk of a monarch sending away his wife and marrying another, but it doesn't use *apbiemi* at all. It would not have been a typical divorce in any case. Former queens were not typically allowed to remarry (I Kings 2:13-25).

The primary meaning of *apbiemi* is 'send away.' Depending on circumstances it can also mean 'leave.' Paul is making judgments based on the teaching of Messiah. Paul knew Jesus' instruction was based on "the two shall become one flesh" (Mat 19:5c) and "Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate" (Mat 19:6b).

If one uses the primary meaning of *apbiemi*, there is no conflict with Messiah's instruction. Paul knew "A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives"

(I Cor 7:39a). This doesn't mean they must live together.

In I Corinthians 7:15 Paul is not allowing us to divorce, but explaining how to live in peace and still honor our commitments. God is faithful. He expects us to be faithful too. "For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?" (I Cor 7:16). If the unbeliever totally severs the relationship, that is on him/her. "His disciples said to Him, 'If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry.' But He said to them, 'All cannot accept this saying, but only those to whom it has been given'" (Mat 19:10-11).

Are you serious about honoring your Creator and understanding His mind? This is simply one chunk of the iceberg of misunderstanding that blinds (Rev 3:17) the churches of God. Don't assume this is the only thing that is misunderstood about the marriage relationship. Don't wait for someone ordained of men to look into this for you. Develop your own relationship with the real head of the congregation of God by an in-depth study of His word.

(Click 'Other Studies / Divorce & Remarriage' at the web site address below.)

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'Voice of women' frightens extremists

Continued from page 3

"A young bearded man stepped into the road and waved the van down. As he spoke to the driver, another young man approached the back.

"Who is Malala?" he demanded. No one said anything but several of the girls looked at me.

"I was the only girl with my face not covered. He lifted up a black pistol, a Colt .45. Some of the girls screamed and Moniba tells me I squeezed her hand.

Shot in the eye

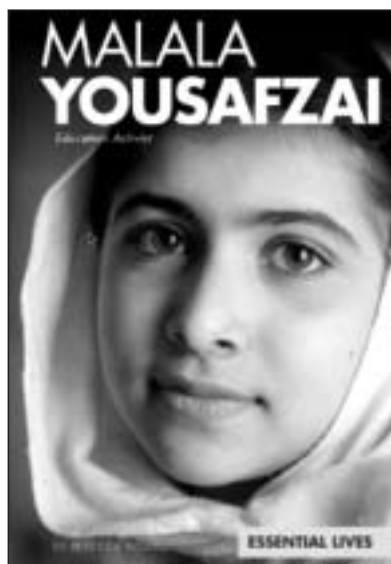
"The man fired three shots. The first went through my left eye socket and out under my left shoulder. I slumped forward onto Moniba, blood coming from my left ear, so the other bullets hit those near to me . . .

"A Taliban fires three shots at point-blank range at three girls and doesn't kill any of them. People prayed to God to spare me and I was spared for a reason—to use my life for helping people."

Speaking at UN

Malala gave a speech at United Nations headquarters in New York City on July 12, 2013, which was her 16th birthday.

Her speech was delivered to more



MALALA BOOKS—Above is a book about Miss Yousafzai, *Malala Yousafzai: Education Activist* by Rebecca Rowell (Essential Library). Another is *I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban* by Miss Yousafzai and Christina Lamb (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London).

than 500 young people (age 12-25) sitting in the audience from around the

world. She told her listeners that the Taliban's attack had only made her more resolute.

"The terrorists thought they would change my aims and stop my ambitions," she said.

"But nothing changed my life except this: Weakness, fear and hopelessness died. Strength, power and courage was born."

She continued:

"I want education for the sons and daughters of the Taliban and all the terrorists and extremists. I do not even hate the Talib who shot me.

"Even if there was a gun in my hand and he was standing in front of me, I would not shoot him."

Fear of women

She also said:

"The extremists were, and are, afraid of books and pens. The power of education frightens them. They are afraid of women. The power of the voice of women frightens them."

She summed up:

"Let us pick up our books and pens. They are our most powerful weapons. One child, one teacher, one pen and one book can change the world. Education is the only solution. Education first."

Her story could be the Parable of the Good Muslim

Continued from page 3

cent. She is more outspoken than ever.

It goes without saying that I am an unabashed, completely convinced Christian, a follower of Jesus the Christ.

It is also true that I have a real problem with the road down which Islam is taking the world.

(Lest you take that as a slam against Islam, understand that I have exactly the same concerns about Western civilization too.)

Jesus' parable

But Malala has caused me to think more deeply about Jesus' famous parable about the Good Samaritan.

If Jesus were speaking the parable to today's followers, the hero of the story would not be a Samaritan—because nowadays it's a compliment to be considered a "Samaritan."

In Jesus' day the Samaritans were an outcast people, at least

in the eyes of the Jews. They were considered usurpers, a mongrelized people and troublemakers.

It was upon a Samaritan town that the disciples wanted to call down fire from heaven (Luke 9:54).

Yet Jesus seemed to have a special regard for these people. He used a Samaritan as a prototype of a good neighbor, and it was a Samaritan woman to whom He revealed Himself as the Messiah (John 4).

So, while there might have been a goodly share of Simon Magus types running around Samaria (Acts 8:9-23), it was one of the first places outside of Judea to hear the gospel, and the people accepted it.

What would Jesus tell?

Malala has caused me to wonder: If Jesus were telling the story today, would it be instead the Parable of the Good Muslim? I kind of think so.

Forget the Calendar... Let's Talk About God's Feasts

One of Satan's most effective tools in misleading the churches of God is to get the church off track, and heading in the wrong direction. In the earliest days of the New Testament Church, as reported in the pages of your Bible, we see that there were some within the Church of God who attempted to force the Gentiles to go through Judaism in order to be a good Christian (Gal 2:11-14).

Satan's methods and goals seldom change: Get the church off track and headed in the wrong direction.

Since the mid-1990s the Church of God has been misdirected into a continued discussion about the calendar issue. As Christians who are concerned about the proper keeping of God's annual Feasts, the subject has drawn widespread attention.

One Church of God teacher informed me that he had written over 1,000 pages on the subject of the calendar. One could say that that may be a bit of overkill. There are, however, a few key points that we must understand before we are able to have a discussion of any substance.

Are you aware that:

- God never gave Israel a calendar?
- He gave them Feast days?
- The word *calendar* never appears in Scripture?
- *Calendar* is never mentioned in the seven major English translations of the Bible?

Furthermore, although most of the mainline churches of God claim to follow the Hebrew calendar, there is never a mention of the Hebrew calendar anywhere in the Scriptures. How in the world can they claim to follow something that does not scripturally exist? If they were honest about what they are doing, they would admit that they are simply following a Jewish tradition without scriptural backing of any kind.

Please don't take any of this as a condemnation of the Elders of God's church. They are merely following a tradition that was placed into the

church by HWA and Dr. Hoeh. Both of these gentlemen were men of good spirit and well intentioned.

This reminds me of Mark 7:7-9: "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men . . . Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition."

Question? If we can become sloppy with the keeping of the Feasts, what's next?

The Sabbath? Tithing? Clean and unclean? Look what happened when the church of God at Rome decided to move the "keeping of the Paschal celebration" from the 14th of the 1st month to the Sunday after the full moon (*Cat. Ency.* article "Easter").

chodesh. The translation of that Hebrew word is "New Moon."

In 1611 A.D., when the King James scholars translated the Scriptures into English, it was natural for them to use the word *month*, because by 1611 they were not recognizing the new moon. If every time you read the word *month* in scripture you said the words "new moon," you would eventually realize the significance of what the translators did in honest error.

When we realize that every Feast of God is directly connected to a new moon, we will see more clearly the evidence of the simplicity with which God created His Feasts.

When the nation of Judah was in captivity, the Word of God inspired the Prophet Ezekiel to condemn the spiritu-

am profaned among them."

In verse 30 he said he looks for a man to make a hedge and stand in the gap before him, and he found none. How sad it would be if that Scripture came to pass.

The question we might want to address is this: How difficult is it to calculate the annual Feast days, as God gave them to Israel?

If you have a fifth-grader in your group or in your family circle, put a calendar in front of them and asked them to count from day 1 to day 15. Then ask them to count 7 more. Congratulations! They just accurately enumerated the seven days of Unleavened Bread.

Now, from the weekly Sabbath within the Days of Unleavened Bread, ask them to

competent, understanding, converted human being to tell us when the first day of the seventh month occurs.

The Jewish leaders can give us numerous reasons why they choose to make the calculations so difficult and so convoluted. These numerical gymnastics were never a part of God's will or His Word.

Brethren, God did not give a group of Ph.D.s the understanding of his annual Feasts? He gave them to a group of wandering Hebrews living in the desert with no scientific instruments of any kind.

Why is the church leadership unable to get together and tell us when and how to do it properly? Most of the church leaders that I know personally are converted, honorable, educated, dedicated men of God. I don't think it would be disrespectful to ask them the question: Why do you refuse to get this issue out in the open instead of hiding behind one obscure text about "the oracles of God"?

In my opinion, God's people are not going to sit idly by while some of the major questions about God's Feast days go unanswered.

The Church of God in my opinion needs to be reconciled not only with God but with one another. Instead of reconciliation, we see split after split with no end in sight. Is there anyone who earnestly believes that God is pleased with the splits that have occurred and continue to occur within His body?

Please visit our website, reconciliationgroup.org, for what I hope will be a refreshing and educational visit. Please read our article "A House Divided."

Dedicated to the Reconciliation of The Sabbath Keeping Churches of God

It took less than 100 years to turn the truth of God into a lie.

Instead of wasting our time quibbling over "calendar issues," shouldn't we be having an honest discussion about the proper timing of God's annual Feast Days? A question for those who quibble over the keeping of the New Testament Passover: Should it be on the evening of the 14th or the evening of the 15th but sometimes keep it on the right day of the wrong month?

That can and does happen! It happened in 2013. This was one of the frequent years when the Jews claim the beginning the new year came before the end of the old year. This is easily provable

You need to know how the Jews calculate the first month of the year. You will no doubt be surprised!

First of all, let us recognize that there is no Hebrew word for month. In the first five books of the Scriptures, the English word *month* has been inserted 78 times in an honest error. The Hebrew word *which* is translated month is the word

al leadership of God's people.

Ezekiel was not a historian; he was a prophet. Prophets write about things that are going to come to pass. It is important that we recognize that fact when we read Ezekiel 22:23-30.

He was inspired to write about a conspiracy by the preachers in the midst thereof (verse 25). In verse 26 he talks about Judah's Priests who have violated his law and profaned his holy things and put no difference between the holy and profane. He goes on in the prophecy that they "hid their eyes from my Sabbaths, and I

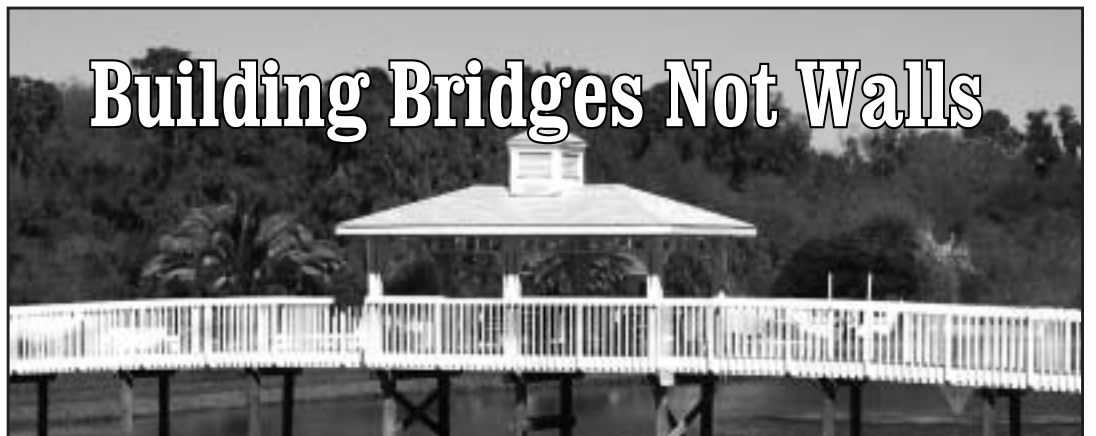
count seven more Sabbaths. Congratulations! The next day is the Day of Pentecost.

We are halfway through the year and we didn't need a Levitical priest or a member of the Sanhedrin to get us there. All we really need is for a converted, understanding human being to tell us when day 1 is.

The fall festivals are just as difficult to accurately locate. All we need to know is when is day 1 of the seventh month. Once we know that, our fifth-grader can tell us when the 10th, 15th and 22nd of the seventh month occur.

Again, all we need is a

Building Bridges Not Walls



Please visit our website at ReconciliationGroup.org

— Just Table Talk —

Is God Omnipotent?

By F. Paul Haney

Q: How Do Ignorance and Universal Evil Affect the Reality of God's Power?

Part Two

About This Series: The written segmented apparatus of "Just Table Talk" being offered within the pages of *The Journal* is ideally meant to represent a simple inclusive idea: a friendly discussion of various thoughts and views that a family might have at the kitchen table concerning the attributes of God, and other stuff.

Rather than lecture or browbeat folks about possible irregularities within Christian thought and practice, or within the Bible (which I have done already more than once), I prefer to communicate on a more informal, personal and expansive or reasoning level. Perhaps you will be persuaded to act. That would be gratifying. But forgive me if I stray off point or actually attempt to browbeat and lecture you a bit; I was a technical instructor for quite a while, and such teaching methodology runs in my blood.

About Truth: Alas! I find myself on a self-imposed perilous mission. My goal: challenge and perhaps eventually persuade a few hardy souls to think outside of the box in order to discover bits and pieces of the truth on their own.

I have discovered that Truth is like water. Try to contain and stifle it and somehow, sooner or later, no one knows how, it finds its way out of its dingy, poorly lit prison.

In its dungeon, Truth drips, dripping, dripping, inexorably like a leaky faucet in the night, quietly at first, then louder and louder, shouting to its guards. Even in our lifetimes, we have witnessed this phenomenon time and again.

Truth cannot be long contained; it always escapes. Look to the governments and the subjugated peoples around the world and their cries for liberation for corroboration. In spite of keepers' vain attempts to prevent its escape, Truth breaks down locked doors. Truth flees. Truth breaks out shouting, "Free at last! Free at Last! . . . Listen to me!!!"

At long last, to the chagrin of said ironfisted keepers and wardens, restless minds awaken, take notice of the leakage and rescue Truth for humanity.

Like downy feathers in a high wind, Truth, once set free, can never be returned to its prison. Again, like water, Truth slips through tightly balled fists and relentlessly spreads its way into open minds. And the world can never be the same again.

Obstacles to Communication: In any challenging project, such as this, communication is essential. No communication, no comprehension. No comprehension, no tolerance. When authentic communication ceases, any open-mindedness one may have had for the other's view suffers.

Open-mindedness does not presume compromising one's principles; it merely presumes one's willingness to understand, learn and perhaps grow closer to Truth. And, to the intellectually honest person, all this may wind up being at the expense of one's adopted belief system.

One who is open-minded does not automatically waver in his belief system, or fiddle with his principles, but is simply receptive to considering, as much as possible without prejudice or bigotry, new ideas, thoughts or opposing views.

A closed mind, of course, is not receptive to new or different ideas without injecting prejudice or bigotry into the exercise. Like a blocked artery, a closed mind goes nowhere and does nothing.

In virtually any religious quarter, communication can easily and quickly become strained due to misunderstandings. By not choosing our words carefully, we readily confuse and confound listeners or readers, some of whom may

not be accustomed to the demanding burden of attentive listening. Admittedly, I have been guilty of such poor word choices and pitiable listening behavior.

We would do well to pay attention to how we convey our thoughts—and thereby avoid unintended consequences of our verbal communication habits. Ambiguity and vagueness are fairly common within much religious thought, by choice or by chance.

One way to rid ourselves of the plague of vagueness, ambiguity, and the miscommunication squabbles that follow, is to choose our words with care. Additionally, we would do well to have our selected terms supported by proper and accurate definitions. Indeed, these points are two of the most useful methods of facilitating comprehensible communication.



Intellectual lethargy often gets in the way of our choosing appropriate words meant to express our thoughts. Oddly enough, otherwise knowledgeable and bright people frequently limit their vocabularies to the "sound bite" or thoughtless gut reaction based upon previously adopted ideas.

Religious folks will limit themselves similarly, even to the point of echoing shallow doctrinal positions they may have embraced, splashing them liberally about, thinking that in their careless speech they have said something weighty.

Even professional journalistic-type talk-show anchors are guilty of rank amateurish speech. Sunday-morning preachers are not excluded from this observation. Mean what you say and say what you mean is still a good axiom.

Knowledge is the great enemy of blindness, partial and absolute, physical or spiritual. Knowledge facilitates communication. Knowledge fights against superstition and irrationality and wins every battle. Knowledge has the ability to free all of us from the blinders we

cause, in my mind, the subject has not yet been satisfactorily concluded. Indeed, much of mankind, religious or otherwise, has struggled with this topic for centuries without a satisfactory conclusion. *Depending on one's disposition, there may be no satisfactory conclusion at all!*

On the other hand, some religious folks do not struggle with this topic; they *know*. Many would readily affirm that God is not only omnipotent, but would include in their assessment other corresponding "omni-s" as well.

And this sincere belief may come about because uninformed, ignorant or lethargic preachers within many Christian communities teach God's absolute omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence and omnibenevolence. These four traits are universally associated with God. And religious persons, by and large, simply accept them all at face value because they are *traditionally* assumed to be true.

Who, and What, Is God? With a few exceptions, the four "omni" characteristics of God are said to be "implied" within the Bible—some say they are clearly confirmed therein. Others deny this. Nonetheless, one must be wary of inference or assumptions based upon church practices, creeds, biased interpretations and doctrinal sensitivity.

I therefore warily propose that lack of spiritual discernment and closed minds have a great amount to do with the concept of God's power and influence.

Further, I put forward that the Christian world in large part has strayed far from the truth of the matter, inasmuch as it can be discerned. Mistakes, confusion and lethargy in this area can greatly modify one's perception of reality.

It has been said that the authenticity of God's omnipotence, his total power to do virtually anything, has been greatly exaggerated. Could that be accurate? Would average religious people or even the biblical authors *really* exaggerate God's attributes or amplify his traits?

It has already happened. Is *everything* really "possible for him who believes" (Mk. 9:23)?

In the Psalms we find much source material for implications about the traits of God. For instance, in Psa. 147:5 the psalmist in his song claims that there is no limit to God's understanding; i.e., God knows all things.

It has been said that the authenticity of God's omnipotence, his total power to do virtually anything, has been greatly exaggerated. Could that be accurate?

wear. Bible believers are duty bound to "grow in grace and knowledge."

(Here, it is presumed that along with knowledge comes a certain amount of responsibility and, eventually, wisdom.)

How many opportunities have we missed in our lifetimes? Opportunity to remove blinders comes toward you so very slowly that you cannot help seeing it, *if you will* see it. It creeps up like a snail, passes you, seems to make up its mind that you are not the person to seize opportunity, and it is gone in a second. Others let opportunity go by, too much startled when they see it, or they are too bewildered or intimidated to recognize it and to firmly take hold of it.

In Retrospect: One might wonder why I am harping upon topics that, at first glance, do not seem to deal with the main issue I am addressing; i.e., the omnipotence of God and how evil affects that reality. To respond, I submit that numerous side issues bear upon God's real or imagined omnipotence, as will be shown, while the main thrust relative to the issue above becomes who or what God is said to be.

The words "real or imagined" are used be-

The psalmist also claims in 147:6 that God throws the wicked to the ground, and, in 18:8, smoke came from God's nose and fire from his mouth. Could these be examples of poetic license, hyperbole or just plain hero worship?

I am unaware of God throwing anyone to the ground. Sincere adulation of an individual is common in the ignorance of heroic and anthropomorphic superhuman tradition. Can you think of any heroes today who are "bigger than life"—heroes who are virtually mythologized?

Logically, it is assumed, *an eternal Creator God has to be omnipotent*—a super-being. What else could he be? After all, how could a weak God (or Gods) have created the Universe?

My point: Trinitarian Caleb Colley, M.L.A., writes: "God has complete power over the earth . . . over the spiritual realm . . . over the affairs of men . . . over the devil . . . God's complete power is unending. [Why? I ask.] Because God would not be God if He were not omnipotent . . ." (www.apologeticspress.org).

I closed Part One with: *The next installment will cover ignorance, the problem of pain and evil, and more . . .* On second thought, all that

stuff cannot be covered within these two pages, so it will be spread throughout the remaining installments. Please be patient.

Ignorance and the Problem of Evil: Perceptions of God's omnipotence, his great unlimited power over creation and his goodness are affected by several key issues besides the ones already noted in the last issue. Two are prominent.

The primary issue is called the *Problem of Evil*. Evil is not limited to dreadful events: violations of civil and moral law run the gamut from disobedience to the rules of the road to gross wickedness.

At every level, the world is steeped in evil. Considering such massive evil as the norm, it is out of God's control. And, if this is true, it has always been out of God's control.

I am perplexed. Why is it that all forms of evil, depravity and general misconduct are so widespread, common and, seemingly, increasing? Within the pages of the Bible, God is assumed to be in control of evil. Outside of the Bible, God's control and influence over evil has vanished. What happened?

"By design," some say; *God adopted a "hands off" attitude; he is deliberately holding back, waiting for us to finish the gun lap.*

But I wonder. Is *that* in the Bible? And when exactly did he adopt that attitude? Why hands-off in the Bible but hands-off *outside* it?

A less prominent issue respecting God's assumed omnipotence is devotee *ignorance*. Ignorance is unawareness or lack of knowledge.

Intellectual impoverishment does not necessarily equate with immorality; ignorance does not make one a bad person. Likewise, goodness is not limited to the learned and sophisticated among us.

On the other hand, *willingly* ignorant persons twist inward, turning a deaf ear to societal and religious development, stunting their own intellectual maturity. Lack of knowledge seems to have a profound effect upon the celebrated manifestation of God's unconditional power and influence. Ignorance often results in *blind faith*. Been there, done that.

Sickness has been said to be a *trial of faith*. For instance, some have taught that medicines are not needed by the faithful: *only have faith in God to heal.*

Blind or unsupported faith can be a trap for the unwary. Remember Jonestown. Certainly, countless Christians are very bright and knowledgeable in any number of fields, but the bulk of Christendom seems to be happy grasping only popular religious clichés and trusting preachers to tell them the truth.

As a result, ignorant people are often snared into adopting a false god or gods, or invented gods. But three gods, two gods, many gods, growing family gods, no gods—are all the same: *artful delusions*.

The unintended consequence in adopting such illusory artificial gods is that such artificiality and misplaced trust negate many levels of truth. How can one know or experience the true God by supporting false gods?

There is much energy expended and authority employed in the defense of multiple-god religious convictions. I have heard and understand the arguments. But truth is truth even if it is embarrassing or challenging. Truth is truth even if it is not balanced, is not in harmony with adopted doctrine, is not agreeable, or just makes one feel bad.

Here's the point: *Ignorance breeds misunderstanding, false confidence, false trust and false expectations. It breeds apathy, indifference, distrust of "strangers" and much fear of ideas from "outside."* At the end of the day, ignorance may lead to entombment in false belief.

Ignorance is not bliss. Those who are ignorant have limited abilities to withstand all sorts of evil, and they are routinely taken advantage of by the clever ones in our midst, even from

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Is God Omnipotent?

Continued from previous page

the pulpits. Ignorance might not seem to be significant relative to God's omnipotence, at first glance. But make no mistake. Those with limited knowledge have limited competence. And they can wind up unknowingly becoming lockstep-followers.

Therein we find the danger. Much of what the truly ignorant know or think they know has been spoon-fed to them by trusted leaders. In effect, many believers practice blind acceptance of the preached word.

Trust but Verify. Historically, millions of trusting believers who have not verified have been victims of their adopted belief systems.

Since there is arguably "nothing new" under the sun, any given belief system may have roots traced back to earlier concepts. For instance, the Triune god of mainline Christianity has parallels in mythology and paganism; early peoples (and Constantine) worshiped the Sun (*Sol Invictus*, the unconquered sun), depicting this god with rays around his head, similar to the "halos" of Christian imagery.

Some persons have suggested that simply because a number of individuals living during the early centuries of the "common era" practiced various forms of multiple-god worship (as in binitarianism or trinitarianism), this fact confers legitimacy to those two forms of polytheism, especially to binitarianism, the two-god-plus model.

But placing one's spiritual life and future in the hands of an inferred, unreliable legitimacy is a dreadful miscalculation.

Evil and ignorance cut across all boundaries; no border, no gender, no race is safe from the plague of evil or the blight of ignorance. Enemies abound.

Corrupt and evil despots have ruled lesser worlds virtually unchecked since humanity has begun; many of these zealously followed one religion or another.

Corruption in places of authority has never abated—it continues virtually unchecked. Witness millions of innocent victims destroyed by notorious tyrants.

Paranoia has nothing to do with it; we are surrounded by dangerous creatures, whether two-legged human monsters, thugs, small-minded authoritarians or multi-limbed "lower" life forms that want to cause us harm.

Many unscrupulous and unprincipled individuals populate the world, even within religious communities, that operate inconspicuously but with grave effect, taking advantage of the weak and ignorant. But that's not news.

One argument for atheism is that the presence of monstrous evil negates a good God and is consonant only with a malevolent God or none at all. According to atheist reasoning (www.infidels.org), the argument from evil (the problem of evil) is that an all-powerful, all-knowing and perfectly good God would not allow any—or certain kinds of—evil or suffering to occur.

The *evidential* (or probabilistic) argument from evil contends that some known fact about evil is evidence against the existence of God. Other versions of the evidential argument concede that God *could* have a morally sufficient reason for allowing certain evils to occur—e.g., to ensure that some greater good is achieved as a consequence of an evil.

However, proponents add, *God would allow only as much evil or suffering as is absolutely necessary* in order to achieve greater good.

But, when we look at the world around us, we find prevalent instances of apparently *gratuitous evil*—pointless evil from which no greater good ensues. According to proponents, the existence of apparently gratuitous evil provides strong evidence that God (as traditionally defined) does not exist (William Rowe, *Philosophy of Religion*).

The atheist reasoning above is persuasive, and some points seem unanswerable. Even the supposed Hell-Fire of Christendom where God burns sinners forever militates against a good God.

Perhaps gratuitous immoral evil is the *only* real type of evil. If an evil occurs that begets a "greater good"; e.g., one soldier dies to save many others; can the one death be deemed good or bad, gratuitous or beneficial, or both?

Would it be unwarranted or justified? And, if justified, can it still be deemed evil?

Evidently, *degrees of evil* exist. At what point on the scale from mild wrongdoing to monstrous wickedness does evil become tolerable to us or to God?—or benign, necessary, even good? Can any evil be insignificant and non-corrupting?

Then, can *natural evils* really be evil, or just serendipitous? Should a good God be able to control horrific *natural* events? In today's world, God does not seem able to do so. (Or is he just unwilling? That question opens up yet another door.)

Some say that we humans are somehow in a position to limit Yahweh's power. We limit God, they write, through unbelief, fear and disobedience, even ignorance—or through *erroneous thinking*, as Pastor Feeny wrote (see Part One).

This can be confusing. Ignorant flawed humans can limit Yahweh's power? Does God depend on us to somehow help him maintain his power? We humans can block God's power through ignorance and stupidity?

On the other hand, they continue, in order for God to have his long-lost power restored, we have to change. We are told to start trusting the one "who makes the impossible possible." Is that all it takes?

But, if God can make the impossible possible,

After all, was not Jesus a demigod?

Many, if not most, Christian church organizations, Christian groups and assemblies have mistakenly elevated Jesus to pure "God" status, more or less equal with the Father, or Yahweh, *but, according to the Bible(!)*, Jesus was only a demigod, a half-god. He was, it is written, half man, half god. That makes him a demigod.

Anyone born of a human mother but sired by a supernatural being cannot be totally one or the other, by definition.

According to the Bible, then, Jesus was a hybrid. Is it possible that those who worship Jesus as one of the gods of heaven have been duped into demigod worship? The thought is intriguing. This includes all believers who conclude that Jesus is, or was, a co-equal god of the one true God, Yahweh.

The Christian's very own holy book proves beyond any coherent argument that Jesus was only a demigod, *assuming* the truthfulness of the biblical scriptures. Could this be yet another Christian connection to Greek/Roman mythology?

OK. Maybe we *do* need more gods. *Clearly, the totality of evil, throughout the entire world, both moral and natural, far outweighs the good.* Wickedness is winning.

Nevertheless, if the good God is actually

At what point on the scale from mild wrongdoing to monstrous wickedness does evil become tolerable to us or to God? —or benign, necessary, even good?

how can we humans sap such great power?

The limiting of God's power by man may sound plausible, but it does not pass intellectual muster. How do belief, courage and obedience *increase* God's power to the point that what was impossible has now become possible?

There is much foggy about the reality of that teaching. It sounds eccentric. Without further support, it clashes with my intellect. I am fairly certain that millions of sincere believers have obeyed and trusted, *had* courage even to the death, and some willingly, according to *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* (brief excerpt below)¹ but, to my knowledge, no rescue team materialized. No one pulled fagots from the fire and doused the flames. And no one chased lions from the arena. Were those believers wrong to obey and trust, to, in effect, throw their lives away?

I speculate. An all-mighty God, who holds little or no apparent sway over massive evil, moral and natural, is puzzling. Moral and natural evil permeates his creation in virtually every nook and cranny.

I very much want God to intercede universally and dramatically over evil and immorality. But is that possible?

Christian thought is that God is omnipresent, he is everywhere, and has great power. I cringe at the thought. Is it true? If so, what is he doing in all these places? Why is God seemingly unable or unwilling to act?

Every second of every day innocent victims, both children and adults, are, by accident or design, being hurt, killed, maimed, robbed, raped, shot, strangled or bludgeoned to death. And their only crime was to be present.

All this evil angers me. These are not minor events; they are major intolerable ordeals. How painful it is for so many. God is everywhere? God's lack of intervention in the face of the horrific blight of such massive and far-reaching, personalized evil is distressing.

Most of us have heard that God's power is unlimited; that he can do virtually anything he wants, and do no harm. After all, he created life and all the rest of it. But is the singular God up to the task of *limiting* or *restricting* evil?

Many say yes. But, from the evidence, it would seem not. Perhaps binitarians and other polytheists have a point; maybe we *do* need many more gods and deities, even if they are only demigods² with a lower power quotient.

limiting evil, holding it back, he is in a losing battle, or someone is fudging the numbers. Does God need some help?

Of course, this is not to imply that goodness does not exist today, it does. Good people doing good things can be found in every land, struggling against all odds; may they be abundantly blessed and allowed to flourish.

Stamping Your Feet: *An assertion is not proved by stamping your feet, however hard, fast and loud you stamp them.* Neither is an assertion proved by fast talk, changing the subject, asking clever questions meant to sidetrack another in response to a question, or obfuscation.

You may confuse me, but that confusion does not convince me. Shouting the opposition down with empty assertions and bogus allegations meant to belittle the opponent (the pejorative and disparaging term *heretic* comes to mind) might win the day among one's grinning slack-jawed social group, but it does precious little to advance one's legitimacy.

A majority of persons may rule a country, but a majority opinion proves nothing in and of itself, except, perhaps, that the majority rules. (A pure democracy resembles mob rule; America is not a democracy.)

A thousand individuals who stamp their collective feet in support of any given opinion or conclusion on top of one person asserting his opinion will prevent rational discourse, and may well silence the opposition.

But that stamping racket cannot be proof of the correctness of any argument except perhaps those pertaining to clamor and hostility.

Conservative speakers invited to speak at America's liberal universities have experienced such hostile behavior. When a group of people (or some government entity) "stop their ears" in opposition to calm dissenting voices, what results is not a reasoned argument in support of either group's position; the debate often devolves to a dismissal of the dissenter, sometimes followed up by shrill outbursts and mob rule, accompanied with evil intentions against those who would dare propose a nonconformist position (Acts 7:57).

Consequently, the dissenters may quickly be characterized as heretics against orthodoxy. They must be silenced. Orthodoxy must be preserved. Heresy must not be tolerated or allowed to become established.

Historically, the charge of heresy has typically been accompanied with great personal risk, even to the point of torture and certain death.

Back in the day, any person foolish enough to advance nonconforming premises to the ruling Roman Catholic Church had two choices: run and hide, or stick around and suffer the severe consequences of an unwisely uttered thought.

Witness Galileo (1564-1642). He unwittingly challenged Roman Church dogma by publishing his scientific conclusions regarding the solar center of the universe. He was arrested on charges of heresy, forced to recant at the hands of the Inquisition and made to spend the rest of his life under house arrest. Has much really changed today?

Today, within many religious groups, it is extremely important to maintain "social equilibrium." Such equilibrium is the lifeblood of most groups and is not necessarily a bad thing.

Yet, a freethinker, daring to contribute a different opinion or another view of established religious doctrinal positions, upsets equilibrium and brings on tension. When this happens, banishment from the congregation, marking and excommunication are the usual punishments for questioning the status quo, however innocent and fitting one's thoughts may be.

Yet, even these punishments can be difficult to handle. In effect, banishing a person from a religious order to "the world" outside is tantamount to assigning the person to solitary confinement and sensory deprivation.

Marking is a way of highlighting one as an unacceptable person: a throwaway from the society where your longtime friends remain, and, by the way, who are not allowed to contact you. You are deprived of friends, the procurement of stroking, and comfort.

Of course, one should ultimately recognize the shallowness of religious societal friendships when a contrary opinion is sufficient to turn folks away. Yet contrary opinions are in fact sufficient to turn religious friends away.

Dare you test your friendships? If doctrinal agreement is the basis of friendship, which I suspect is true in many fellowships and church groups, you have no real friends. Been there, done that.

Freethinking and church dogma cannot long survive side by side within the confines of one's brain—something has to give way.

This commentary is not ended. Lots more to come.

—F. Paul Haney, cfministries@att.net

¹The general persecutions in Germany were principally occasioned by the doctrines and ministry of Martin Luther. Indeed, the pope was so terrified at the success of that courageous reformer that he determined to engage the emperor, Charles V, at any rate, in the scheme to attempt their extirpation.

"[The pope gave money, troops and horses to the emperor] to assist in carrying on hostilities against the Protestants. Thus prompted and supported, the emperor undertook the extirpation of the Protestants, against who indeed he was particularly enraged himself; and, for this purpose, a formidable army was raised in Germany, Spain, and Italy.

"The Protestant princes, in the meantime, formed a powerful confederacy, in order to repel the impending blow. A great army was raised, and the command given to the elector of Saxony, and the landgrave of Hesse. . . .

"At length the armies met, and a desperate engagement ensued, in which the Protestants were defeated, and the elector of Saxony and the landgrave of Hesse both taken prisoners. This fatal blow was succeeded by a horrid persecution, the severities of which were such that exile might be deemed a mild fate and concealment in a dismal wood pass for happiness. In such times a cave is a palace, a rock a bed of down, and wild roots delicacies. Those who were taken experienced the most cruel tortures that infernal imaginations could invent; and by their constancy evinced that a real Christian can surmount every difficulty, and despite every danger acquire a crown of martyrdom." [Please note that Martin Luther was no saint when it came to persecuting Jews. His hatred of them knew no bounds, according to his own writings, especially in *On the Jews and Their Lies*. —FPH]

²A **demigod**, meaning half-god, is originally a Greek mythological figure whose one parent was a god and whose other parent was human. As such, demigods are human-god hybrids. Examples of well-known demigods include Greek hero Heracles (Roman Hercules), the Celtic hero Cuchulain, the Sumerian king Gilgamesh (who supposedly was actually two thirds god). —Wikipedia

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).

A Very Troubling Future—Just Ahead!

Dear Brethren,
Considering the state of America, Britain, the other Tribes of Israel and the world in view of what Jesus Christ said would be taking place at the end of this age (Matthew 24), it can easily be seen by the astute observer the time is very near as prophetic Scriptures makes known: "... It is the last hour ..." (1 John 2:18).

And to the members of God's true Church, the Apostle Peter wrote: "But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be SERIOUS AND WATCHFUL." (1 Peter 4:7).

Unsolvable Problems Worsening — Consider these problems that are witnessed daily from the News Media, the continued rebellion in all societies (Habakkuk 1:2-4), the worsening abominable sins that know no boundaries in view of the end-time prophecies! (Isaiah 3:9).

They attest to the Scriptural fact that this age is now in its death throes, beyond redemption in this age (Jeremiah 14:11-12, as was the pre-Flood world (Genesis 6:5-7, 11-13, and Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:13, 24; Luke 17:26-30)). It has become so bad that even the world's most renowned Protestant minister has spoken out in an interview about these **hot-button issues** in society:

Graham: Immoral America and Christ's Return — Newsmax wrote on October 6: "In an exclusive interview ... Billy Graham tells Newsmax that President Obama's 'hope and change' mantra is nothing more than a cliché and warns that the nation faces increasing threats to civil and religious liberties from its government. Graham ... said America is drenched in a 'sea of immorality' and suggested that the second coming of Christ is 'near' ... 'Our country is turning away from what has made it so great,' he continued, 'but far greater than the government knowing our every move that could lead to losing our freedom to worship God publicly is to know that God knows our every thought; he knows our hearts need transformation' ...

"Many believing Christians believe in a coming Armageddon, a final battle between good and evil prophesied in the book of Revelation. Graham tells Newsmax it is not wise to 'speculate' about the dates of such a battle, but he adds that the Bible says that there 'will be signs pointing toward the return of the Lord. I believe all of these signs are evident today,' Graham wrote, adding that 'the return of Christ is near. Regardless of what society says, we cannot go on much longer in the sea of immorality without judgment coming,' he says. "Amen."

Jesus Christ is coming soon—Having been graced with understanding of the prophetic Scriptures by God, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong knew prior to the return of Jesus Christ there would be the downfall of the House of Jacob due to their abominable evils. Scripture speaks of this soon-coming horrible time as the **Great Tribulation!** (Jeremiah 30:4-7; Matthew 24:12, 21). Shortly thereafter Scripture teaches Jesus Christ will return to this earth.

From these prophecies, Mr. Armstrong understood a very powerful revived Roman Empire would emerge in Europe and it would be used by Satan the devil to bring about the demise of Israel as nations

(Revelation 13:17). It is now very close as the following article makes known:

Germany To Lead a Holy Roman Empire in Europe —The Local wrote on October 8: "In the last week Germany's president Joachim Gauck has called on the country to take more responsibility in the international arena and told the Germans: 'Our country is not an island' ... But is it time for Germany to step up on the global stage? At an event at the US Embassy in Berlin on Monday The Local asked US author and foreign policy expert Professor Walter Russell Mead for his view ...

"Professor Mead argued German foreign policy has been relatively successful in Europe. Asked if Germany should play a greater global role, he said: 'Germany is playing a larger role in the world than people appreciate. ... Europe is doing what it wants, in many ways led by Germany. We would hope Germany would continue to play the leading role it has played in the past' ...

"On the subject of Europe and the Eurozone, Professor Mead ... urged Germany to lead a Holy Roman Empire rather than a Prussian conquest. 'Any discussion of Germany's world role must begin with Europe,' he told reporters ...

"Professor Mead called for Germany to lead a Holy Roman Empire in Europe—a loose federation of states—instead of aggressively imposing austerity ... 'Are you going to have a King of Prussia or the Holy Roman Emperor? The Holy Roman Emperor is the more sustainable ..."

The Revived Roman Empire —History teaches all great civilizations over time have self-destructed from within before being conquered by other nations. The same is also taking place with America as forewarned by great men of this nation:

President George Washington warned in his first Inaugural Address, April 30, 1789, "... that the propitious smiles of heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right which Heaven itself has ordained." On January 27, 1838, President Abraham Lincoln warned: "If danger ever reaches us it must spring up amidst us. It cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen, we must live through all time, or die by suicide."

General Douglas MacArthur, speaking on December 12, 1951, said: "In this day of

gathering storm, as the moral deterioration of political power spreads its growing infection, it is essential that every spiritual force be mobilized to defend and preserve the religious base upon which this nation was founded ... History fails to record a single precedent in which nations subject to moral decay have not passed into political and economic decline ... either a spiritual reawakening to overcome the moral lapse, or a progressive deterioration leading to ultimate disaster" (Quotes from Ascent to Greatness, pages 698-699, Mr. Raymond McNair [emphasis by use of colors in all three quotes are mine]).

Same Problems —As it was with past great civilizations, the same pattern is being followed with this once great nation, for it is being destroyed from within! Tragically, the warnings of these great men have been ignored. Its final demise will be at the hands of the Revived Roman Empire that has been submerged into the bottomless pit for many years (Revelation 9:1-2). It is now being seen emerging from the symbolic sea and land! (Revelation 13:1,11).

And it will in very short time to come launch a **successful blitzkrieg Nuclear Warfare** on the House of Joseph, conquering it (Ezekiel 7:14-15), and then taking the survivors into captivity to be martyred and the remainder to serve as slaves to all who will buy them (Habakkuk 1:6-10; Deuteronomy 28:62-68).

Because of their evil sins, Jesus Christ is permitting Satan the devil to work within the societies in America and Britain to bring about their destruction as nations. Almost unheard of today, Supreme Court Justice Scalia touched on his belief in the devil in a recent interview:

Scalia: The Devil Is Alive —CNN wrote on October 7: "As the Supreme Court begins its new term Monday, the devil is not on the docket—but the Evil One apparently is on the mind of Justice Antonin Scalia. New York magazine has published a fascinating new interview with Scalia in which the outspoken jurist tackled a number of topics. But none seemed to surprise Scalia's interviewer, Jennifer Senior, more than his views on Satan ... [Scalia] is one of a record six Catholic justices on the Supreme Court ... The justice said ... 'I even believe in the devil' ...

"Scalia said the devil has gotten 'wilier' and convinced people that he and God don't exist. The justice added ... that disbelief in God 'certainly favors the devil's desires ... Jesus Christ believed in the devil! It's in the Gospels! You travel in circles that are so, so removed from mainstream America that you are appalled that anybody would believe in the devil! Most of mankind has believed in the devil, for all of history. Many more intelligent people than you or me have believed in the devil.'"

The Invisibility of the Devil —Due to the devil being invisible, hardly anyone recognizes him as being behind the unsolvable problems inflicting society that are made known daily by the News Media (Ephesians 2:2; John 12:31; Revelation 12:9, 12).

Those who do speak of the devil do not grasp his reality and the depth of what he is doing through his powers of deception, for he appears as an angel of light (II Corinthians 11:14-15). He uses leaders of mankind to achieve his diabolical and destructive goals.

This makes it easy for Satan the devil to influence all people, including religion, while affecting attitudes of rebellion in society, for he has deceived the whole world! (Revelation 12:9, 12). Virtually all of mankind is receptive to his sways and pulls due to his being a master of powerful broadcasting with diabolical waves of rebellious self-seeking attitudes that pervade the whole world! (Ephesians 2:2).

The devil injects hostile attitudes, a sense of injustice and resentment into carnal minded societies. As the result, this is a world in rebellion, nation against nation, mankind against mankind; exactly that which is in evidence today both in leadership and society as made known by Jesus Christ (Matthew 24:6-7).

No Real Recognition of God and Jesus Christ —At the same time, though people use the name of God, they really do not believe in His actual existence any more than they do Satan the devil, for He is also invisible; another dimension. Even those who do believe in his existence do not grasp the danger he continually presents to society, to the churches, and to the individual members. He has to be recognized from Scripture and from attitude and resisted! And this can only be done through will-power and the help of Jesus Christ (James 4:7-10).

Church of God, Faithful Flock —Jesus Christ is using this small flock to support His Work via our 14 websites with the Recorded Works of His late Apostle to send out **"A WAKE-UP Call"** to God's true people in light of the prevalent and pervasive evils we now see growing and prevailing about us lest we be swallowed up and partake of the plagues from God! (Revelation 18:4-5). This will be a soon-coming time of terrible and horrible conditions that will affect every person on earth! (Matthew 24:21-22; Revelation 3:10; 12:12).

It is hoped all will wake up who are in churches with **unconverted** or apostate ministers who have **rejected** Jesus Christ by going **OFF-TRACK** from His true doctrinal teachings in part or in whole will quickly get back **on-track and escape the worst of these coming horrors!** Remember: **"God's eyes are upon the TRUTH!" (Jeremiah 5:2; John 17:17; Matthew 4:4).**

Please know unless there is a CHANGE with godly repentance, Scripture makes known many thousands of members will experience **the horrors of the Great Tribulation!** (Revelation 6:9-11). Please know—"... it is the last hour!"

The Apostle John wrote: "And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever" (1 John 2:17).

Your caring friend and servant in Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior,

—Don Billingsley

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P.O. Box 130 • Valley Springs, CA 95252 • (209) 772-0737

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).

“Cry Aloud and Spare Not; Lift Up Your Voice LIKE A TRUMPET ; TELL My People (God's Church) Their Transgressions, and the House of Jacob Their Sins” (Isaiah 59:1).

By Alton B. (Don) Billingsley, Church of God, Faithful Flock

From 1934 to 1986, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong cried out the warnings of that which is soon to come to pass in Radio Broadcasts, Telecasts, and Evangelical Meetings. Articles were also written by him in *The Plain Truth*, booklets and books fulfilling the above commission given to him by Jesus Christ.

And, though it will be denied, Jesus Christ is still using that same man, though dead, via of the recordings of all of those works done in his lifetime going forth to multiple millions on our 14 websites.

Knowing most members rarely ever, if ever, even look at the writings by this God-chosen man, the following excerpts are offered as a stimulus to pick them up and read what Jesus Christ led him to write.

The Mystery of the Ages

Jesus Christ led His late apostle and the promised Elijah—*His teacher*—to write the last book of his life, THE MYSTERY OF THE AGES, in which he termed it a synopsis of the truths that had been revealed to him to be A REMINDER of all of the doctrinal teachings that Jesus Christ used him in RESTORING within His Church:

Pages xii, xiii—**“Time may prove this to be the most important book written in almost 1,900 years ... its plainness of speech in clarifying the most important knowledge ever revealed from the supreme source of understanding of that which has mystified all humans since man first appeared on earth ... And, now in my 93rd year, I have been led to write this book before this event-packed life ends, to share with as many as care to know the answers that the great supreme mind of God reveals in His Word—if one is only willing to understand that Word.”**

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 United States and Britain in Prophecy

In this book, *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*, Mr. Armstrong wrote what could be considered an epitaph for the House of Joseph; for it can easily be seen nothing is going to change their downward plunge into reaping the results of their abominable sins as made known in many prophecies.

He lamentably wrote in the introduction of this book about what is soon coming to pass: **death, destruction, and bondage:** “People of the Western world would be stunned—dumbfounded—if they knew! The governments of the United States, Britain, Canada, Australasia, South Africa would

set in motion gigantic crash programs—if they knew! They could know! But they don't! Why?”

Philadelphia Remnant Magazine Going where all others refuse to go!

In addition to being 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, there are articles that speak of the problems that need to be addressed within the churches for the sake of the membership.

Inside the covers of this magazine will be found articles to my knowledge that will not be found anywhere else! Articles that speak of TRUTH that needs to be taught that others will not address for fear of not being politically correct in a godless society, and kickback, both inside the Churches, and in the real world.

For example there are articles in the current magazine that the reader will not find in other magazines, such as:

A Hot Button Article—

“Interracial Marriage”—This is from a Bible Study given by Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong in May, 1982. As far as is known, interracial marriages are NOT prohibited but even have been performed within some of the churches.

What does the Holy Bible teach? Read this article and the TRUTH of God will be made clear to the unbiased reader.

No Compromise—Personal with the Editor—“No Compromising with the True Teachings of God.”

Mr. Armstrong wrote: “I have never compromised with God's truth—regardless of the cost or the circumstances ... I never have! I won't compromise—not even “just a little.”

This Congregation fully supports the TRUTH of those doctrinal teachings, together with the rulings God led him to make, that Jesus Christ used Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, His late apostle and His promised Elijah, to restore within His Church (*Malachi 4:4-6; Matthew 17:10-11*).

And furthermore this Congregation will not compromise those doctrinal teachings Jesus Christ opened our minds by His Holy Spirit to receive and understand those precious truths that Mr. Armstrong was used to restore within His Church.

Read this article for an understanding that all others have lost or rejected since his death.

The Daily Sacrifices—Daniel 12:11-12—“And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be 1290 days. Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the 1335 days.”

The GN (Good News Magazine, August 8, 1987): “Both the 1290 and 1335 day periods end with the return of Jesus Christ. And each period begins with a significant event.”

This is a prophecy to be fulfilled in the very near future with very significant numbers for the understanding of God's True Elect. If you are a true member of God's one and only true Church, you cannot afford not to read this article.

Going Where Others Refuse to Go

This flock of God goes where all of the others are fearful to go with the true teachings of God, fearless and unafraid, know-

ing **“... for if God be for us who can be against us.”** In addition, we fully believe what Jesus Christ stated in His letter to the Philadelphia Church Era—

Revelation 3:8—“I know your works. See, I have set before you AN OPEN DOOR, and NO ONE CAN SHUT IT; for you have a little strength, have KEPT MY WORD and NOT denied My Name” (see also Revelation 12:11; 2:13).

The Ten Commandments Book

This is a new book just recently completed and can be read or downloaded from our website (www.cog-ff.com). This book continues to support what Jesus Christ used His Promised Elijah of the End-time to restore: the Ten Commandments, Statutes and Judgments, along with the original Doctrinal Teachings (*Malachi 4:4-6; Matthew 17:10-11; Jude 3*).

The Three Elijah's Book

The book of The Three Elijahs has been updated and completed. It can now 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.

And, because of faithfulness and loyalty to Jesus Christ, and His TRUE TEACHINGS, as taught by Christ through Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, the Elect of His faithful and true Church will shortly be going to the place of refuge (*Revelation 3:7-13*)—leaving behind the Laodicean and Sardis members to endure the horrors that are even now beginning to fall on the House of Joseph by the fury of nature (*Revelation 3:14-22; Ezekiel 7:12, 26*).

Websites—Subscriptions

These articles may be read on our website (www.cog-ff.com) or they can be read in the magazine by requesting a free subscription at the address listed below.

Please know there is a GREAT NEED to get back on-track Faithful Flock —Jesus Christ chose to use such a very tiny flock of people as we are, because no other leader was willing to step into the gap with the fullness of doctrinal teachings, including the teaching and practicing of God's government with His true and faithful leader, during the almost 28 years since his death, with respect and support of all those teachings. They were interested only in their own pursuits.

Knocking at the Door—The end of this age is now so close it becomes much easier to visualize the Open Door being closed by Jesus Christ (*Revelation 3:7-8*). In the little time remaining, Christ is still KNOCKING at the door of the minds and hearts of His people: **“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone HEARS My voice and OPENS the Door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me” (Revelation 3:20).**

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Are You Quite Sure You know Which God was the Creator and LORD God of the Old Testament?

The all-capitals form "LORD" occurs over 6,500 times in the OT. For example in Exodus 20:2 the LORD God of the OT addressed the nation of Israel from Mt Sinai, saying, "I am the LORD thy God". Incidentally the singular pronoun "I" marks that the OT "LORD God" speaking is one and not two God Persons. In Isaiah 54:5, Jeremiah 3:14 and Jeremiah 31:32 the LORD God declared being married to Israel and being her Husband. This raises the question, *Was the NT Jesus the OT LORD God who married the Nation of Israel at Mt Sinai?* as was taught by the former Worldwide Church of God (WCG). If your answer to that question is "Yes", then do you accept that the following are inescapable consequences of Jesus being Israel's Husband?

- That as a result of Jesus marrying Israel at Mt Sinai, God the Father would have remained a single unmarried Father,
- That a single unmarried God the Father must have begotten His Son Jesus through His Son's Wife Israel by Mary,
- That a single unmarried God the Father committed both adultery and incest in begetting His Son Jesus!

Surely those consequences cannot be true and therefore we need to re-examine that teaching by the former WCG and our "Yes" reply to that question. When I became aware of this in 1993 it galvanized me into action by searching the Bible many times from Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:21 for the answer. To my amazement I found not even a single minister the slightest interested in that question and its inescapable consequences of a "Yes" reply. I began to see that none of these men were truly interested in God's Truth but that they were keen to restore and cash in on Mr Armstrong's (HWA) life's work despite God having allowed this to be thrown down during the 1990s by the late Mr Joseph W Tkach. Surely there must be one minister willing to restore the OT LORD God to the Church of God. How can members of the former WCG who don't care be the Elect of God?

A review of the 18th lesson of the 58-lesson correspondence course or a review of the 17th lesson of the 32-lesson Bible Correspondence course should leave the reader in no doubt that the former WCG taught that Jesus married Israel under the Old Covenant. Therefore let no one question that the former WCG taught that the NT Jesus was the OT Husband of Israel. Indeed these lessons refer to that marriage as Jesus' first marriage. The WCG also taught that when at last Israel repents and returns to Him, Jesus will remarry His OT Wife Israel (Hosea 2:2, 7, 14, 16, 19, 23). In addition the NT teaches that the NT Church of God is the Bride of Jesus. Therefore the former WCG taught that our Lord Jesus will be involved in at least two marriages and a betrothal. Again a necessary consequence of all this is that God the Father remained throughout an unmarried Father.

This returns us to the earlier question which is addressed in this article. Yet many will ignore the enormous mountain of evidence from the Bible and insist that the WCG under HWA could not have been in error on the important issue of our Father in Heaven's OT identity and His marital status. They should ask themselves whether the witnesses I cite, our Lord Jesus, Peter and Paul, were in error rather than HWA.

There comes a time when we must decide between God's inspired Bible truth and a faulty human interpretation but without losing respect for God's 20th-century servant HWA. Mr Armstrong did much of his early work without any assistance whilst at the same time publishing The Plain Truth magazine, conducting regular radio broadcasts, ministering to a growing flock and later opening a virtual university in the form of Ambassador College and who converted us from mainstream Christendom to the Truth of the Bible.

The writer rejects Unitarianism, God is a Family (a pseudo Binity) and Trinity but recognizes from the Bible the original independent and self-existent deities of both the NT God the Father and His incarnate Son Jesus but which independence and self-existence Jesus surrendered to become and die as our atoning Passover Lamb and an obedient Son to his original fellow God.

Before we can know God the Father's OT identity and Jesus' surrender of His original deity to become incarnate and die as our Passover Lamb we must understand the following:—

1. The Hebrew noun "Elohim" (God, Strong H430) is always singular when it refers to the true God of Israel.
2. How did the OT fathers and prophets hear His Father when Jesus said no one had heard or seen His Father (John 5:37)?
3. Who is the OT LORD God who declares there is no God beside Him (Isa 45:5)?
4. Who is the most high LORD God of Abraham, possessor of heaven and earth (Gen 14:22)?
5. Who was Melchizedek priest to the most high God of Abraham (Gen 14:18) and who had neither father nor mother nor beginnings of days (Heb 7:4)?
6. The full extent of Jesus' sacrifice can only be understood when this is seen to include the surrender of His original independent self-existent deity so that His Father now remains as the only true God (John 17:3).
7. The all-capitals form "LORD" denotes God the Father's unique sacred name JHVH (YHWH), which means "The Eternal" and is not the commonplace title "Lord".
8. The first occurrence of the phrase "LORD God" in the Bible and why is this not found in Genesis chapter 1.

Once these are understood the absurdity of both Unitarianism and Christendom's Monotheism in the form of either a *Trinity* or the former WCG's "God is a Family" (a type of Binity) will become clear and the fuller extent of Jesus' sacrifice can at last be appreciated.

1. God (Hebr. ÒElohimÓ) is singular!

The former WCG taught that the Hebrew noun "Elohim", when this refers to the true God of Israel and is translated God, is a uni-plural noun. For example, in Gen 1:26, "And God said, . . ." that the Hebrew noun "Elohim" (English "God" Strong H430) denotes a multi-Person Godhead comprising currently God the Father and His Son Jesus.

This claim may seem reasonable because "Elohim" has the outward appearance of a plural masculine Hebrew noun. Further the continuation of Gen 1:26, with the first person plural pronouns "us" and "our", seem to support the alleged plurality of "Elohim": **Gen 1:26**—"And God said, 'Let us make man in our image and after our likeness'."

However, appearances can be deceptive because throughout the Hebrew OT the noun "Elohim", when this denotes the true God of Israel, has the grammatical force of a singular

Hebrew noun and then governs singular Hebrew verbs and singular Hebrew pronouns. Below it will be shown that those plural pronouns "us" and "our" of Gen 1:26 are not governed by "Elohim" (God) but denote jointly the singular God (Elohim) speaking and the One He addressed in Gen 1:26.

For example let us consider side by side:

And God said, let us make man in our image
And Tom said, let us make dolls in our image

Since the plural pronouns "us" and "our" do not render Tom plural so in Gen 1:26 these pronouns do not render either the English "God" or the Hebrew "Elohim" plural.

As a result in the Hebrew of Gen 1:26, "And God said, . . ." the Hebrew verb translated "said" is singular, thus showing that "Elohim" governs a singular Hebrew verb and therefore, like "Tom", is a singular noun and not a plural noun as Trinitarian Christendom and the former WCG taught.

Indeed in Gen 1:29 the Hebrew noun "Elohim" (God, Strong H430) again governs the singular Hebrew verb translated "said" as well as the singular personal pronoun "I" and which both show that Elohim is singular.

Gen 1:29—"And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed . . ."

It is wrong to teach that God (Elohim) is a plurality of Persons by saying "God is a Family". Man ought not to define what God is but depend on what the Bible says He is. It is fine to say that God the Father has a Family but it is wrong to say that God the Father is a Family.

God the Father's Family consists currently of His still wayward Wife Israel and their Son Jesus! The reader should compare that with the errant teaching by the former WCG that God the Father is a Family that currently comprises God the Father and His Son Jesus.

2. How was the Father heard in OT times?

But how can it be that the NT God the Father spoke to the patriarchs, Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses seeing Jesus said in John 5:37 that no one has seen or heard His Father?

John 5:37—"And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape."

I show how in paper P10, *How God the Father Was Seen and Heard!* The point is that no one has truly listened to God the Father, and even Moses saw only a similitude of God the Father and never His shape (Num 12:1-8).

Moses was one of God's more faithful servants but even Moses did not always obey (hear) God the Father. Although God commanded Moses to have all males born in the

desert circumcised on the eighth day (Lev 12:1-3), Moses neglected to have this done and as a result at Gilgal Joshua was required to correct Moses' omission (Josh 5:1-9).

In John 5:37 Jesus refers to man's customary failure to listen to or obey God the Father but that does not preclude God the Father having spoken to the OT patriarchs and prophets starting with Adam.

Note how Israel refused to listen to God the Father immediately after He gave the Ten Commandments:

Exod 20:19—"And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die."

Therefore God the Father told Moses He would send a Prophet (Deut 18:15-20) with his message and Peter identified this Prophet was Jesus (Acts 3:20-23).

3. ÒThere is no God beside meÓ!

If Jesus was the LORD God of the OT as taught by the former WCG, then what are we to make of OT verses where the LORD God states there is no God beside Him? If Jesus indeed gave that message through the Prophet Isaiah, then He would be denying the deity of His NT Father.

Isa 45:5—"I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: . . ."

Surely it is inconceivable that the NT Jesus would have denied His Father, and once again we must question that the NT Jesus was the LORD God of the OT.

If on the other hand the NT God the Father had given that message through the Prophet Isaiah, then did He deny the deity of His NT Son Jesus? The former WCG tried solving this difficulty by declaring (1) the Hebrew noun "Elohim" translated "God" (Strong H430) being a uni-plural noun and (2) that this uni-plural noun denotes that the true God of Israel is a Family, which currently consists of the NT God the Father and His NT Son Jesus.

Now there is no justification anywhere in the Bible for stating that "God is a Family" and in truth that teaching by the former WCG amounts to teaching a pseudo Binity that parallels mainstream Christendom's Trinity.

It is not difficult to see that a major Godhead misunderstanding is behind this attempt to define the Godhead by teaching that God the Father is a Family. Man ought not define what God is because only God can state what He is. It so happens that on the available biblical evidence we may say instead that God has a family, which currently comprises God the Father, His still wayward Wife Israel and their Son Jesus—see at my Home Page my article A15, "Should we say 'God is a Family?' or 'God the Father has a family?'" and which was published on page 11 of Issue 145 (Sept 2011) of The Journal.

4. The most high BRD God of Abraham

After Abraham had virtually offered his son Isaac, the LORD God said Abraham,

Gen 22:16—"And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and has not withheld thy son, thine only son:"

Paul explains this in Hebrews 6:13,

Heb 6:13—"For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,"

From this we may conclude that the LORD God who spoke to Abraham was the most high LORD God of the OT and therefore the NT God the Father.

This is also the LORD God who spoke to Moses from the Burning Bush as testified by Jesus and Peter. Let us begin with Peter's testimony,

Acts 3:13—"The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus . . ."

Let us link this with Moses's testimony,

Exod 3:6—"Moreover he said, I am the God of thy Father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God."

Then let us remember that "God" (Strong H430, Hebrew Elohim) is singular and, since Peter equates this to the God with a Son and hence with God the Father, we must conclude that the God speaking to Moses from the Burning Bush was God the Father.

This is also clear from Jesus teaching the Sadducees as follows:

Mark 12:26—"And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob?"

Mark 12:27—"He is not the God of the dead but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err."

That in Mark 12:26-27 Jesus was inferring His Father had spoken to Moses from the (Burning) Bush follows from His using in verse 27 the underlined third person singular pronoun "He". It is clear that Jesus was not referring to himself but to His Father as the OT LORD God who spoke to Moses.

This is also obvious when Jesus discusses with the Jews their God of the OT and identifies Him with His Father: for example in John 8:54.

John 8:54—"Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:"

This is also seen in James 1:1 and many other NT verses.

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Continued from page 14

Jam 1:1—“James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ . . .”

This should have been obvious to anyone reading the NT, including Mr Armstrong, but it wasn't. My paper P1, *Laodicea's Lamp!* essays the reason God blinded HWA to this truth.

Readers should avoid fooling themselves that HWA could not have erred on the OT identity of God the Father because in the end that would mean that Jesus and Peter and Paul too would not have known the OT identity of God the Father.

Additional proof that God the Father was the Creator and LORD God of Exodus and the OT is given in articles Q6, Q7, A2 with A3, A4, A13 and the study paper P2, *God the Father is the Creator and Husband of Israel*—which are all available at my Home Page.

5. Melchizedek, priest to the Most-High God

The NT God the Father and the NT Son of God, Jesus were both known to Abraham. God the Father was the most-high LORD God who spoke to Abraham on several occasions. The apostle Peter explains in Acts 3:13 that the *God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob* was the Father of Jesus.

Acts 3:13—“The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus . . .”

Exodus 3:6 shows that Moses met this most-high God when He appeared to Moses at the Burning Bush in Exodus 3:6.

Exod 3:6—“Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob . . .”

Genesis 14:18 shows that Melchizedek was priest to the most-high LORD God who met Abraham.

Gen 14:18—“And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God”.

Hebrews 6:20-7:4 identifies Melchizedek who met Abraham as the God who became incarnate as the NT Jesus. This is obvious from Paul's inspired description of the titles King of Righteousness (Melchizedek) and King of Peace (Salem) which can only apply to Jesus.

Since the Melchizedek who met Abraham had no human descent (no father or mother) and had no beginning of days or end or life when He met Abraham, He was not a created angel or man but can only have been an independent self-existent God alongside His NT Father.

Heb 7:1—“For this Melchisedek, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him:”

Heb 7:3—“Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God abideth a priest continually.”

For a fuller explanation see Article A12 at my Home Page or on page 25 of Issue 139 of The Journal (June 2010).

This is further supported in King David's Psalm 110 in which God the Father addresses Jesus as David's future Lord Jesus.

Ps 110:1—“The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”

Ps 110:4—“The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.”

The Unitarian nonsense that is finding increasing acceptance amongst members of the former WCG vainly attempts to get around the inspired messages of Hebrews 7:1-4 and Philippians 2:5-7.

Php 2:5—“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:”

Php 2:6—“Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:”

Php 2:7—“But made himself of no reputa-

tion, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.”

6. The fuller extent of Jesus's sacrifice

The inspired descriptions of Melchizedek in Hebrews 7:1-4 can apply only to a God and not to a created Being such as angels or man. Although angels have neither father nor mother, they do have a beginning of days because they were created. Therefore the Being who met Abraham as Melchizedek and was priest to the most high God (Father) was the NT Jesus and was not an angel but was originally an independent self-existent God himself.

Therefore Melchizedek, who was priest to the most high God, was a God himself but obviously was not God the Father but was the God who was made incarnate as the NT Jesus. See article A4 for a detailed explanation, which appeared on page 14 of Issue 149 of The Journal (May 2012).

Therefore Hebrews 7:1-4 utterly refutes the Unitarian nonsense that arose during the 2nd century AD and which detracts from the fuller extent of Jesus' sacrifice to become incarnate and die as mankind's atoning Passover Lamb and being made for ever an obedient Son to his fellow God and now his Father.

7. God the Father's unique sacred name

At Moses' request the LORD God (Father) gave His unique sacred name.

Exod 3:13—“And Moses said unto God, Behold, When I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you: and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?”

Exod 3:14—“And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.”

In Hebrew God's unique sacred name “I AM THAT I AM” is denoted by the Hebrew Tetragrammaton JHVH (also YHWH). Only the four Hebrew consonants of His name have survived as that Tetragrammaton. The reason being that originally the Hebrew text recorded only consonants and no vowels and no one dared say the sacred name. As a result the vowels of the sacred name became lost and with that also the sacred name. Only the recorded four Hebrew consonants (JHVH) have survived in the Hebrew OT, as the Tetragrammaton where it occurs over 6,500 times.

Exod 6:2—“And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the LORD:”

Exod 6:3—“And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them.”

The pronouns “I” show only one God spoke.

God the Father's name means *The Self-existent One* or *The Eternal* and since the God speaking calls himself “God Almighty” He was God the Father.

This unique sacred name of God the Father is denoted in the Hebrew OT by the Tetragrammaton (the four Hebrew letters) JHVH (or YHWH) but this is variously represented in English as the all-capitals forms “LORD” or “GOD” and even as Jehovah (see Exod 6:3 above).

In English translations the Tetragrammaton is mostly depicted by the all-capitals forms “LORD” (Strong H3068) and “GOD” (H3069).

This is fully explained in article A13, “How the OT Lord, God and GOD Relate to God's Name and His NT Identity” at my Home Page and was published on page 16 of Issue 154 of The Journal (August 31, 2013).

It is recommended that when reading in the OT the all-capital forms “LORD” and “GOD” that instead we read “The Eternal” because that is the literal meaning of God the Father's unique sacred name. Let us not read “Lord” but “The Eternal” because there is no place for turning God the Father's unique sacred name into the commonplace title “Lord” despite the KJV translators having rendered

His unique sacred name by the all-capital forms “LORD” or “GOD”. The reader is urged to study my article A13 and not assume he already understands the matter.

It is explained in article A13 that God the Father's unique sacred name—The Eternal—can only apply to God the Father and not to any created being, such as the angels, or to even God the Father's Son Jesus. It cannot apply to Jesus because Jesus surrendered for all future eternity his former independent self-existent deity to become and die as mankind's atoning Passover Lamb.

Jesus was without existence for 3 days and 3 nights and depended on His Father to restore Him to life again. He now remains for all future time an obedient Son to His Father.

Therefore Jesus is no longer a true independent self-existent eternally existent God. Only His Father remains an independent self-existent eternally existent God and therefore only to God the Father belongs the unique sacred name JHVH which means The Eternal and is denoted in English by the all-capital forms “LORD” or “GOD”.

Only God the Father can be “The Eternal” and no other. Therefore when we see in the English OT the all-capital forms “LORD” or “GOD” we must recognize that these refer to the NT God the Father and to on one else.

Further that the all-capital form “LORD” detracts from God the Father's unique sacred name “The Eternal” (I AM) and reduces it to a mere commonplace title “Lord” which frankly is blasphemy!

8. First occurrence of the phrase LORD GOD

Note that Genesis chapter 1 does not refer to the phrase “LORD God” but only to “God” (Heb. Elohim, Strong H430). The first time we find the expression “LORD God” is in Genesis 2:4. That is after God the Father put that question in Genesis 1:26 to His fellow God (NT Jesus) and Jesus must have confirmed His commitment to be made incarnate and die as our atoning Passover Lamb.

Up to that point there were two independent self-existent eternally existent God Persons but with that commitment in effect only God the Father remained as the one and only independent self-existent eternally existent God Person. As a result of his commitment to become incarnate and die as man's atoning Passover Lamb, this God surrendered His former independent self-existing eternally existing deity. This God also accepted becoming for evermore an obedient Son to His fellow God and Father.

Therefore God the Father is the only remaining independent self-existent eternally existent God who could give himself the unique sacred name JHVH (The Eternal) and which the KJV translators denoted by the all-capital forms “LORD” or “GOD”. It is not surprising the form “LORD God” appears only after Jesus made that commitment in Genesis 1:26 and so allowed God the Father to create Adam and Eve in their image.

Gen 2:4—“These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.”

Although the forms “LORD God” appears from then frequently throughout the rest of Genesis; Abraham, Isaac and Jacob did not know God by His name (Exod 6:3). This was probably because they did not ask for God's name but which Moses did ask in Exodus 3:13 and was given the LORD God's name in Exodus 3:14—see Section 7, God the Father's unique sacred name

9. The Godhead taught by the former WCG

The WCG under HWA taught that the NT God the Father and His NT Son Jesus are both God Persons but that Jesus had been made incarnate to become and die as mankind's atoning Passover Lamb.

HWA agreed with Mainstream Christendom that Jesus had created the physical worlds including Adam and Eve. He went a little further in stressing that Jesus as the LORD God of

Exodus had married the nation of Israel in the Old (Marriage) Covenant at Mt Sinai.

To cope with apparent Unitarian scriptures such as Deut 6:4 and Isa 44:6, 45:5, which state there is only one God, HWA taught that *God is a Family*, which at present comprises God the Father and His Son Jesus. In other words HWA taught a kind of Binity (Cp Trinity) Godhead by claiming that God is a Family. Man needs to be careful when defining what God is or isn't and especially when this is not explicitly stated in the Bible. Indeed nowhere does the Bible state that God is a Family.

HWA also claimed that the Hebrew noun for God (Elohim Strong H430) is uni-plural in support of his claim that “God is a Family”. This helped him with those aforementioned apparent Unitarian scriptures because then it could be claimed God (Hebrew Elohim) includes two God Persons.

However the Hebrew OT reveals that Elohim (God, Strong H430) is always singular in reference to the true God of Israel. The true God is Israel's Husband and therefore must be the NT God the Father. This is supported in prayer by Jesus when He referred to His Father as the “only true God”.

John 17:3—“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

The point being that the Church of God did not know that God the Father was the only true God. It was not realized that when Jesus agreed to be made incarnate and die as mankind's atoning Passover Lamb He from then ceased being an independent self-existing eternally existing God Person. It is true that Jesus lost only 3 days and 3 nights from his original eternal existence but it was nevertheless a gap that stopped him being another Eternal besides his Father.

Once Jesus made that commitment (Gen 1:26) it was as good as done and He was from then no longer a true independent self-existent eternally existent God. However, He did retain his original God mind as we can see from Philippians 2:5-7,

Php 2:5—“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:”

Php 2:6—“Who being in the form of God . . . **Ø** **Php 2:7**—“But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:”

Note the significance of Genesis 1:26.

Gen 1:26—“And God said, Let us make man in our image after our likeness . . .”

In this the God Person speaking (Father) addressed another God Person (the one who became incarnate as the NT Jesus). God (Father) did not address any angelic being because man was made in the image and likeness of God and not in the likeness of an angelic being. So when God the Father refers to our image He was addressing His fellow and then still independent self-existing God.

It was this fellow God's last opportunity to withdraw from the commitment to become incarnate and die as mankind's atoning Passover Lamb. Only when He (NT Jesus) agreed could his fellow God (NT Father) go ahead with the creation of Adam and Eve.

The NT states several times that God (Father) created the worlds, ages, etc, through Jesus. This does not mean Jesus did the creation but that God the Father could create the Adamic world only as a result of Jesus commitment. It is plain from Genesis 1:27, 29 and Gen 2:4 that just one God did the creating and He was the God who addressed Jesus in Genesis 1:26.

Gen 1:27—“And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he them: male and female created he them.”

Gen 1:29—“And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed . . .”

The papers referred to above are all freely available by writing to Henk Jens, P.O. Box 121, Belmore, NSW, 2192, Australia, or at my Internet Homepage www.rightly-dividing.net.

Now and New World Order

Part 22

Dark Star (2011) by Henry Stevens

Hidden History of German Secret Bases, Flying Disks & U-Boats: In 1955 Karachi, Pakistan, thousands of mostly Pakistanis and some British military saw a glowing orange disk. It moved then hovered 40 yards high. The hull resembled two bronze cymbals, 150 feet in diameter and 75 feet high. It looked manmade with rivets, catwalks, portholes and ladders.

Wendell Stevens (no relation), then a US Air Force Colonel, was tasked with filming UFOs in the Arctic, in stripped down bombers equipped with cameras. The films were sent to Washington DC, but he had no feedback. He believes they were Nazi craft, and he speaks at UFO conferences.

Karl Doenitz said "The German submarine fleet is proud of having built for the Fuehrer in another part of the world a Shangri-la on land, an impregnable fortress . . . The German navy will have to accomplish a great task in the future. It knows all the hiding places in the oceans and therefore it will be very easy to bring the Fuehrer to a safe place should the necessity arise." Nazi bases were found in Greenland and kept secret with a device that skewed magnetic compass readings.

William Lyne claims "Today, flying saucer bases such as the huge underground base built in Greenland are probably maintained under joint Trilateral/ex-Nazi control." He claims 24 U-boats were ready to attack the US with nuclear missiles, so a deal was cut for the US to save half of Germany for the Nazi homeland. Many Nazis were allowed amnesty [and hired in the US to continue their criminal activity], and the atom bomb was conveyed to the US on board a U-boat.

Admiral Byrd led a US fleet to Antarctica for "research" in 1958. He warned that "in the event of a new war the US would be attacked by flyers who would be able to fly from one pole to the other with fantastic speed." He exploded atom bombs, claimed for air tests as those in Nevada at the time, to supposedly recover land from the ice layer. They were really to fry electronics with EMPs, but the Nazis shielded sensitive devices with metal coverings. Many flying disks were seen in the area during those years. Disks flights were seen over Washington DC in 1952—a warning?

Just before WWII, Nazis sent an expedition to Antarctica, finding warm water lakes fed from geothermal vents. This Neuschwabenland is on the coast just south of the tip of Africa where they were able to grow vegetables. William Landig wrote they were forced to leave when their immune systems became weak from the sterile environs so were subject to fatalities from the common cold, and they moved to South America where some were already settled.

Dr. Salla reported on Nazi mind control experiments that were later carried on by Nazis in CIA employ to produce super soldiers. One subject told how he was led to believe by hypnotic trances that he could do great feats by thinking they were just small ones as jumping off a stool while jumping out of airplanes without a chute. He could do whatever they said if he believed them, as 200 pushups or lifting 1500 pounds. [Like the adage *Anything the human mind can conceive and believe, it can achieve.*]

The Nazi U-boat base in the movie *Raiders of the Lost Ark* is real at Fuerteventura in the Canary Islands, denied by most islanders in public but confessed in private. It had two U-boats used to at least 1950.

When Mussolini was captured by Italians, Hitler sent Skorzeny with a team to free him. They barely escaped. Mussolini was clutching a briefcase, but had to leave it behind. The Nazis got the papers inside and found they were letters from Churchill as if they were pen-pals. Mussolini planned to use the letters to blackmail Churchill to save himself if necessary. [Britain was really directing Hitler and Mussolini, but they later went rogue.]

Post-war Nazi production of flying disks could be much by contracting out for parts and assemblies from ordinary companies without causing suspicion. And work done in underground plants as during the war.

U-boats were fitted with flying disk technology so they could fly or submerge. The free energy golden age of flying disks was 1940-1970. U-boats used diesel engines on the surface and to charge their batteries, but were unaffected by battery-use underwater. Tesla envisioned submarines with a trailing antenna a mile long to receive energy supply from afar, as radio signals, using ELF waves with long wave lengths. He later perfected a shorter antenna, compacted. Energy could be supplied to any point on the globe. Many of his inventions are still kept secret.

Nazi Reinhard Gehlen agreed with the US to

form an organization that would continue spying. The US and Nazis agreed to work in cooperation with each other, but when US-Nazi interests diverged, the new "organization would consider the interests of Germany first."

Jesuits—the Vatican Assassins

Jesuit James Marquette's statue is in the Capitol. Why is a Jesuit so honored?

Lafayette said about Jesuits "It is my opinion that if the liberties of this country—the United States—are destroyed, it will be by the subtlety of the Roman Catholic Jesuit priests, for they are the most crafty, dangerous enemies to civil and religious liberty. They have instigated most of the wars in Europe." Rothschild hired Weishaupt, a Jesuit, to reform the Illuminati.

Jesuits were founded by Jews, though allow some Gentiles to appear universal, while destroying Christianity. Jesuits later took over the pope, with their own 'black' pope, now 2 share power. Hitler's SS copied Jesuit ways, while he and Mussolini were both aided by the pope. The pope is the little horn (Dan 7:8), though controlled by the Jesuits. Jesuits had many US presidents killed and are aptly called Vatican assassins.

The US officially became a nation in 1789, the same year the first Jesuit school was founded, Georgetown University. Now 28 Jesuit universities are in USA, the nation with the highest Jesuit influence; 112 nations have such schools. Jesuits have a sun worship logo.

Jesuits and the pope in Vatican City are the dual-headed antichrist. The two-headed eagle of Freemasonry represents the white and black popes. "The Jesuits are Satan's greatest secret society." [The new pope is a Jesuit general.]

"England's throne has been fully controlled by Jesuits since King George III during the mid-18th century . . . [He] called himself *Prince Elector of the New Holy Roman Empire*. British PM Shelburne was an actual Jesuit himself. He was a PM during King George III's reign."

Freemason world leaders

Most all nations' rulers are top Masons, exposed when they use symbolic hand signs when greeting each other, or using certain gestures for the camera. These Masons collude to further Satan's agenda (though all want to be top dog). Even lesser Masons take blood-curdling oaths to help other Masons, even to perjure themselves in court to defend them. Highest Masons vow to avenge Lucifer.

"Masonry is based on Judaism." Rabbi Isaac Wise stated "Freemasonry is a Jewish establishment whose history, grades, official appointments, passwords and explanations are Jewish from beginning to end."

Many US presidents were 33° Masons. "Besides being taught that Lucifer is the true god, 32° and 33° Masons have their own Luciferian calendar, based on Anno Lucis (Year of Light/Lucifer)." Dating cornerstones of Masonic-built edifices, as US national buildings.

Freemasonry is called the Craft and has many things in common with witchcraft. "In Freemasonry is embedded the core or the secret heart of the occult mysteries, wrapped up in number, metaphor and symbol."—Benjamin Crème

Napoleon Bonaparte was a Mason. Guiseppe Mazzini was 33° and founder of Italian Freemasonry and the Mafia, organized crime mob. Albert Pike was a supreme Mason, too, set up the KKK and is revered by Masons.

"The Illuminati is the highest echelon of Freemasonry, an occult secret society dedicated to Lucifer. The world control bankers have intermarried with the richest European monarchs and US presidents." Even a 12-year old girl traced out the royal lineage of presidents (see online). Just one big family, as Bush and Kerry are cousins.

Lucifer can be translated morning star, a term for Venus and reason for using the ubiquitous 5-point star. Its orbital path traces out 5 points. Masons worship Lucifer through these stars.

John Daniel's Scarlet Beast

"It is a Masonic conspiracy, and 32° Masons have called us from all over the United States and told us it is. And the U.S. is to play the key central role in the New World Order. America is a Masonic nation, called the New Atlantis, the New Zion."

The British Union Jack flag flies over the J.P. Morgan offices in the heart of Wall Street. "Since the 19th century the entire policy-making apparatus of the USA has been manipulated by the noble families of Britain, acting in concert with their Venetian and Genoese relations."

"Not only were corporations enthroned following the Civil War, but the power of Freemasonry secured the Presidency following

Lincoln's assassination. [Lincoln's VP] Johnson pardoned General Albert Pike for treason and subsequently received the 4°-32° in one night in 1867."

Senator Helms spoke before the Senate 12-15-1987: "This campaign against the American people [of] systematic psychological warfare [by] the Council on Foreign Relations, the Trilateral Commission and the Bilderberger Group serve to disseminate and to coordinate the plans for this New World Order in powerful business, financial, academic and official circles."

Psychology Today quoted James McConnell. "The day has come when we can combine sensory deprivation with drug hypnosis and astute manipulation of reward and punishment to gain almost absolute control over an individual's behavior. It should then be possible to achieve a very rapid and highly effective type of positive brainwashing that would allow us to make dramatic changes in a person's behavior and personality."

"Delgado demonstrated a prototype by putting a brain implant in a bull, which charged him till he hit a button on his hand held control [device] behind his red cape, the charging bull came to a screeching halt, turned docile and went back where it came from. Now they can do this with people, and from very long distances. They actually have the ability to use microwaves and implants to put thoughts and even voices into your mind, and to make you do anything they want."

Banker and corporate world rule

Former Malaysia PM Mahathir Mohamed claimed "Jews rule this world by proxy, they get others to fight and die for them . . . They have now gained control of the most powerful countries . . . This tiny community has become a world power." Jew-Zionist terrorist leader Ze'ev Jabotinsky boasted: "There is only one power which really counts. The power of political pressure. We Jews are the most powerful people on earth, because we have this power, and we know how to apply it."

Helen Thomas: "I think every president has had to bow to the whole problem of [Zionism] . . . They [Zionists] used their money. They had the power—communication, propaganda—so it's been going on more than a century. There's a great purpose, to preserve Israel at all costs, aided and abetted by almost every president because they put money in campaigns and presidents owed a debt."

General Smedley Butler wrote the 1935 book *War Is a Racket*. In his 1933 speech he said: "I spent 33 years in active military service . . . during that period I spent most of my time being a high class muscle-man for Big Business, for Wall Street and for the Bankers. In short, I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism." Fascism is when corporations rule the government.

Lawrence Britt studied fascist regimes of Hitler, Mussolini, Franco (Spain) and Suharto (Indonesia) finding 14 traits (most listed here) that also apply to the US: (1) Powerful Nationalism—constant use of patriotic mottos, slogans, symbols and songs. Flags everywhere. (2) Disdain for Human Rights—For fear of enemies and security, people need to look the other way or even approve of torture, executions and long prison terms. (3) Identify Enemies or Scapegoats—rally behind patriotic frenzy over a foe. (4) Military Supremacy—highest budget, soldiers glamorized. (5) Controlled Mass Media [US media is controlled by only 5 companies now]. (6) Obsession with National Security. (7) Corporate Power Is Protected. (8) Obsession with Crime and Punishment—police given much power as the people lose civil liberties for sake of patriotism [despite liberty lauded]. (9) Rampant Cronyism and Corruption (top political leaders are corporate leaders [as Cheney with Halliburton despite its hiked prices for poor services]).

(10) Fraudulent Elections [Each year US elections show rigging as Bush vote in Florida, gained because Jeb Bush was governor. Most blatant was the 2012 election when absentee military ballots were shipped wrongly. They were found after the election in crates labeled ammo. These ballots were expected to side in favor of Romney, to swing electoral votes to elect him. The ballots were collected and shipped in the spring to avoid not getting their votes counted! Another case of poor treatment by the US government for its troops, in spite of lip service.]

US Senator George Malone in 1957 spoke before Congress: "I believe that if the people of this nation fully understood what Congress has done to them over the last 49 years they would move on Washington; they would not wait for an election . . . It adds up to a preconceived plan to destroy the economic and social independence of the U.S."

US touts freedom but imprisons (has the highest prison population) and tortures many. And (at Abu Graib and) Guantanamo, kept going despite many protests against such practices as waterboarding, and held without due process (see *Wikipedia*). The US troops involved become cruel, performing sadistic acts a psychopath would do. The info gained is unreliable, the victim will say anything to stop the torture.

The British East India Co. flag with 13 stripes is derived from the Cabala of sacred colors red, white and blue. *Wikipedia* states: It "was part of the sister firm Khazarian-owned Dutch East India Co. operating in the Khazarian (Jew) merchant stronghold of Holland. Funded by vast amounts of New World gold and silver, these Khazarian businesses encompassed banking and world trade on a massive scale. They trafficked in African human slaves, opium and tea . . . monopoly on saltpeter and thus gunpowder. Then they established and built (monopolized) the foundries and factories that produced the guns. Nations went into debt to them for guns and powder." Eventually they did not need to actually move the money that funded war! Every war since 1492.

Khazars had become 'Jews' but were not really. They became monopolistic world merchants during the 13-18th centuries makers of money (gold and silver coins) demanding 10% tax on all trade. They practice communal life—Communism. From Henry Ford's *International Jew*: 300,000 Jews were expelled from Spain and some went with Columbus. Spanish Pizarro and Cortez, like Columbus, were financed and directed by crypto-Jews and Jesuits. Jesuits directed plunder of Incas and Aztecs, even to Indians in Utah, forcing them in concentration camps to mine precious metals and in refineries. Jesuits became a secret intelligence service.

In the US, 3 states officially promoted scalp bounty on dead Indians, so even murdering Indians became a business (told in the book *A Little Matter of Genocide: Holocaust and Denial in the Americas*). Indians were defined as subhuman or lower than animals. George Washington compared them to beasts of prey and called for their total destruction. The *Constitution* stated men created equal were to be free, but evidently not Indians and slaves. Some Indians were placed in reservation-concentration camps on land white men did not want.

David Ovason on secret US architecture

A Mason himself and he is endorsed by 33° Mason and former NASA head Kleinknecht: George Washington wore a Masonic apron with a sprig coming out of a coffin to mean rebirth [of Nimrod-Osiris]. The Washington Monument's top represents the Eye of Osiris that can be seen most everywhere in DC, hovering over all. DC has key points aligned with Orion's (Osiris') belt, like the Egyptian pyramids. [George is pictured in the Capitol's prayer room in stained glass praying to the Eye, the Masonic god Lucifer.]

Corn is used profusely in DC to mean Ceres or Isis of the mysteries. The US 5-point star can be traced back to the Egyptian hieroglyphic symbol for a spiritual being (includes an obelisk and dome—also featured at DC). The many Minerva statues in the Library of Congress relate to Virgo, Virgin Mary, Isis or the Queen of Heaven. Minerva is displayed with an owl or snake standing for wisdom.

Creating mind control slaves:

Vivisectionists have conducted live experiments on a million animals per year in the US. They silence them so they can't cry out, by severing vocal cords. Human experiments continue the cruel trend.

Wikipedia on Project UKUltra—CIA mind control: "The program engaged in many illegal activities, in particular it used unwitting U.S. and Canadian citizens as its test subjects . . . Drugs (especially LSD) and other chemicals, hypnosis, sensory deprivation, isolation, verbal and sexual abuse, as well as various forms of torture."

Tests were conducted by 80 institutions: hospitals, prisons, drug companies, colleges and universities. "The CIA operated through these institutions using front organizations, although sometimes top officials at these institutions were aware of the CIA's involvement."

CIA Director Richard Helms ordered all MKUltra files destroyed in 1973, and it was officially abandoned. Though 20,000 documents survived, and it likely continues under other names.

"The CIA was also interested in being able to manipulate foreign leaders with such techniques . . . Experiments were often conducted without the subjects' knowledge or consent."

"Some historians assert creating a Manchurian Candidate subject through mind control techniques was a goal of MKUltra." (Acting normal until given a trigger word to then perform a task, as assassinate someone.)

"Heroin addicts were bribed into taking LSD and offers of more heroin . . . Experiments included administering LSD to mental patients, prisoners, drug addicts and prostitutes, *people who could not fight back* as one agency officer put it . . . LSD was also administered to CIA

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Now and New World Order

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employees, military personnel, doctors, other government agents and members of the general public in order to study their reactions. LSD and other drugs were usually administered without the subject's knowledge or informed consent, a violation of the Nuremberg Code that the U.S. agreed to follow after WWII. The aim of this was to find drugs which would irresistibly bring out deep confessions or wipe a subject's mind clean and program him or her as a robot agent."

Canadian Donald Cameron worked in the US to perfect *psychic driving*. Subjects were put into comas for weeks while playing looped recordings of statements or noise over and over. "His experiments were typically carried out on patients who had entered the institute for minor problems such as anxiety disorders and postpartum depression, many of whom suffered permanently from his actions." Some forgot how to talk. Others forgot their parents and thought the controllers were their parents.

"It was during this era that Cameron became known worldwide as the first chairman of the World Psychiatric Association as well as president of the American and Canadian Psychiatric Association. Cameron had also been a member of the Nuremberg medical tribunal in 1946-47."

"Working with the CIA, the Dept. of Defense gave hallucinogenic drugs to thousands of 'volunteer' soldiers in 1950s-60s."

The Supreme Court noted: "The U.S. played an instrumental role in the criminal prosecution of Nazi officials who experimented with human subjects during WWII, and the standards that the Nuremberg Military Tribunals developed to judge the behavior of the defendants stated that the voluntary consent of the human subject is absolutely essential."

[The US hired many Nazis (as Dr. Mengele) to continue their evil work in the US. Though the US acted outwardly to condemn and judge these practices as wrong and crimes against humanity. Respected global leaders as Cameron were really most evil.]

Wikipedia on Unethical human experiments in the US—Regarding radiation tests on humans: "Nasal radium irradiation went on to become a standard medical treatment used in over two and half million Americans." So patients were given radiation for various reason (none good). Horrific experiments were conducted on people without their consent or were lied to about the risks. "As of 2007, not a single U.S. government researcher had been prosecuted for human experimentation, and many of the victims of U.S. government experiments have not received compensation, or in many cases, acknowledgment of what was done to them."

"After the eugenics movement was well established in the U.S., it spread to Germany. California eugenicists began producing literature promoting eugenics and sterilization and sending it overseas to German scientists and medical professionals . . . The Rockefeller Foundation helped develop and fund various German eugenics programs, including the one that Josef Mengele worked in before he went to Auschwitz." When Nazis after the war were prosecuted for crimes against humanity, they cited as defense US involvement in these same things, even initiating them with Germans.

MKUltra used mind controlled people as sex slaves to blackmail high federal officials in illicit sex by filming their acts, to keep its funds coming. The CIA Project Bluebird, later named Artichoke, was to develop mind control, forced on anyone. "The purpose of the project was outlined in a memo dated Jan. 1952 that stated *Can we get control of an individual to the point where he will do our bidding against his will and even against fundamental laws of nature, such as self-preservation?*"

See the *Wikipedia* article for more details on unethical practices in the US.

Fritz Springmeier and Cisco Wheeler on Mind Control—Dissociate in psychiatry means to separate off areas of the mind, to set apart a group of mental processes from the rest of the mind. So it becomes compartmentalized, sectioned off. Already, humans have two hemispheres which function quite differently. When traumatized, the mind focuses away from extreme pain and can become unattached from it. An awful experience can be forgotten, though the reaction to it can be manifested later in weird behavior.

It was learned that the ability to disassociate is passed genetically from one generation to the next. American Indian tribes had traumatic ritual dances and could wait motionless for hours when hunting. Children of Fakirs in India would sleep on a bed of nails or walk on hot coals.

Children of Yogis (those skilled in Yoga) had total control over their body in a trance. [Some prisoners under extreme pain found they suffered less if they concentrated on a mental project of their own.]

Pavlov and Skinner pioneered behavior modification on animals, later their techniques were used on humans. Dr. Mengele was hired in the US to continue his horrific science of the Nazis, traumatizing people close to death to force his will on them. Of course, there were many deaths and the bodies were dissected to learn more. Scientific methods used controlled monitoring them to develop Multiple Personality Disorder, even thousands of alters. Many died in the process despite the 'exact' science developed.

"The MC victim can be programmed with thousands of alter personalities and function in thousands of different capacities. [In Mark 5:2-13 a demon-possessed man was called Legion (4500-6000) and resulted in 2000 dead pigs.] Programmed alters can fluently speak in another language (unknown to the front alter), or physical body traits can change radically (deeper voice, more strength, endurance to pain), or possess a photographic mind . . . yet be highly forgetful when using the front personality."

When the Master dies, the slave tends to die also from suicide-programming installed. The Master is loved by the slave. Similar to the Stockholm syndrome—the captive dependent on the Master, loves him despite the horrid treatment. Mengele was known to his victims as Daddy and loved by them.

"Sleepers—there are millions of MC programmed individuals here in America who will be used during the 'end times' scenario to create massive chaos and destruction so as to justify the imposition of martial law and eliminate perceived enemies of the Illuminati (you)."

"The Illuminati and the Mob have controlled Hollywood [telling much in films as *Telethon* and *Manchurian Candidate*] . . . a lot of slaves are actors, Madonna and Marilyn Monroe, each a programmed multiple . . . Anton LaVey, head of the Church of Satan, was a mind control programmer and very close with Hollywood."

The "music industry here in the USA is actually an intelligence front for the Illuminati . . . songs played over the radio are used in triggering mind controlled slaves."

High ranking Freemason and Rosicrucian leader Swinbourne Kleimer in *Ancient Mystic Oriental Freemasonry* told of a secret body that ruled all the various ancient mystery religions in the ancient world. The Illuminati continue that body. "Freemasonry is the outer symbol of the ancient mystery religions."

"In Australia this madman went in and he gunned down a lot of innocent people—children and families. Right after that they ram-rodged through gun legislation and about half a million weapons were turned in without a fight by Australians because of this horrendous massacre. The same things are going to happen in this country." Mock terrorism by the state to confiscate guns and begin martial law. Many policies started in Australia are slated for the rest of the world, too.

"Admiral Stansfield Turner on 8-3-1977 told the Senate Investigating Committee that in the USA, prisons, drug companies, hospitals, medical colleges, universities and corporations were helping the CIA carry out mind control and using the slaves for tasks."

Monarch programming: "The Monarch butterfly learns where it was born and it passes this knowledge via genetics on to its offspring. This was one of the key animals that tipped scientists off, that knowledge can be passed genetically. The Monarch program is based upon Illuminati and Nazi goals to create a Master race in part through genetics."

"Illuminati created the CIA: Satanists within the CIA took over Boy's Town, New England, in the early 1950s and used that orphanage for a constant supply of boys for programming . . . there are whole long list of other orphanages [involved]." [FBI head Gunderson investigated Satanic rituals at a school. Finding tunnels underneath, that sacrifice of small animals was shown in front of kids. The children were not believed at first, so the perpetrators almost got away. He found other schools were also involved with pedophilia.]

Primary and initial torture of children in western US (as Charles Manson) was at China Lake, California. Part of tests labeled New Weapons—as 'human robots' turned out in large numbers. The kids were first locked in electrified cages or Woodpecker Grids, trapped as animals to train them. Top US leaders sacrifice some of these slaves as victims at Bohemian Grove rituals. [They pretend

mock sacrifices, but actually do human ones. About 800,000 children go missing each year in the US. Of course, not all due to sacrifices.]

The CIA ran mind control experiments at Jonestown, Guyana. Survivors told of gruesome drug tests and one footlocker alone had 11,000 doses. So the many deaths were not from mass suicide.

"The power of hypnosis is often underrated because the power of the mind is underrated. The mind can decide to control its breathing, heart beat, blood pressure and other things that were once thought to be involuntary only. The brain produces a substance which is a tiny peptide molecule called enkephalin which acts just like morphine and reduces pain. The brain can be hypnotically trained to release enkephalin so that the brain doesn't perceive pain. Drugs are used to facilitate hypnosis. Modern drugs do almost all the work for the hypnotist. They place the person in an altered state and make them willing to take any order."

Order of Osiris: "One of the secrets of the mystery religions was the ability to use drugs and torture to create multiple personalities. The word Oz is known to have been used by its author as an abbreviation for Osiris. Monarch victims have the *golden* [part] of *Osiris* placed into them. The Grimm brothers were cabalistic Jews who gathered folk occult stories together. Their stories are full of spells, trances and drugs. *Sleeping Beauty* is put to sleep, and the trigger to wake her is a kiss on the lips."

L. Frank Baum, a member of the Theosophical Society, wrote 14 Oz books. Was inspired by a spirit to write the *Wizard of Oz* book that came out in 1900. "The book's story is full of devilish activity and thinking, and chosen in late 1940s as the basis for Illuminati-Intelligence community's trauma-based total mind control programming. In Baum's time the head of the Theosophical Society was Blavastsky who put out her journal called *Lucifer*."

"The Royal families of Europe are secret Satanists, from powerful occult bloodlines." (Depicted on the US Great Seal by the pyramid's 13 steps.)

In the mind set of Satanism, reality and fantasy are blurred, as in brainwashing. The brainwashed have trouble differentiating the two. [Satan encourages people to live in a fantasy world.]

"One nurse quit the University Hospital because newborns were secretly given implants. A few years ago it was discovered that Upjohn, an American multinational company, was involved in placing radio-transmitting material in with their liquid cortisone preparation Depomedrone." "Under stress, the brain converts nerve signals into messenger molecules that direct the endocrine system to produce steroid hormones, which reach the nucleus of various cells and cause them to change how the body's genes are written out . . . to make a variety of molecules which are used in growth, metabolism, sexuality and the immune system. In other words, the mind can rewrite genetics. This was the secret that helped get the Monarch program off to its scientific foundation."

"According to Dwight Kinman's book *The World's Last Dictator*, VISA has begun issuing VISA cards using the BEAST 18-digit number. When an American makes a bank transaction on an auto teller, the BEAST has been informed of the activity. These computers use UNIX." The BEAST computer (actually many in different places) is used to record all electronic transactions.

Cisco: "The New World Order is a body of people within the Illuminati, 13 major bloodlines that rule the world and they set the stage, they play out the script and there will be a complete fulfillment of what they have staged for the American people, Canadians and the world." Illuminati think they are gods. "If you are not generational, you are not going to get into the Illuminati because this is passed from generation to generation from son to daughter to son." Cisco knows from her own mind slave experience firsthand that "US presidents are rotten . . . pedophiles, drug addicts, high magic, even sacrifice live small children."

Fritz notes that traumatizing a person keeps them in survival mode. "Syntel. That's short for synthetic telepathy which means sending to victims voices and thoughts . . . electronically."

Wikipedia on the CIA—Influencing public opinion: "The Office of Public Affairs is often in charge of creating state-funded propaganda for the masses. Such as the 9/11 counter terror administration advises the Director of the CIA on all media, public policy and employee communications issues relating to this person's role. This office, among other functions, works with the entertainment industry."

"This article does not address . . . possible illegal domestic surveillance. Nor psychological warfare in support of covert or military action.

The focus of this article is on long-term influence on opinion leaders, including journalists, artists, labor leaders, etc., rather than starting rumors to assist in supporting a coup."

The FBI was assigned domestic activities, while the CIA was suppose to focus on outside the nation only.

Gray Propaganda: "The activity engaged in plausibly appears to emanate from a non-official American source, or an indigenous, non-hostile source."

"Black Propaganda: The activity engaged in appears to emanate from a source usually hostile in nature. The interest of the U.S. Government is concealed and it would deny responsibility. The content may be partially or completely fabricated, but that which is fabricated is made to appear credible to the target audience."

The CIA use of mass media manipulation was leaked out, from Congress's Pike Committee investigating the CIA: "The CIA, as no doubt every other major intelligence agency in the world, has manipulated the media. Full-time foreign correspondents for major U.S. publications have worked concurrently for the CIA . . . 'stringers' and others with whom the Agency has a relationship are often directed to insert Agency-composed 'news' articles into foreign publications and wire serves. U.S. intelligence officials do not rule out the possibility that these planted stories may find their way into American newspapers from time to time, but insist that the CIA does not intentionally propagandize in this country."

If a movie came out against the CIA, movie studios used to bury it quickly, but not any more, since they can garner big bucks. "In 2012, Tricia Jenkins released her book *The CIA in Hollywood: How the Agency Shapes Film and Television* . . . [that] documents the CIA's efforts at manipulating its public image through entertainment media . . . CIA has used motion pictures to boost recruitment, mitigate public affairs disasters."

Human rights concerns: CIA "tactics have included torture, funding and training of groups that would later participate in killing of civilians . . . overthrowing democratically elected governments, human experimentation and targeting killings and assassinations."

Drug trafficking: "CIA involvement in narcotics trafficking across the globe, although the CIA officially denies such allegations . . . numerous soldiers participated in transport of Southeast Asian heroin to the U.S. by the airline Air America. [Including drugs for US addicts stuffed in US corpses of troops shipped back in body bags.]

Rep. Nancy Pelosi "stated that the CIA repeatedly misled the Congress since 2001 about waterboarding and other torture."

"U.S. Intelligence Chief Dennis Blair testified before the House Intelligence Committee on Feb. 3, 2010, that the U.S. intelligence community is prepared to kill U.S. citizens if they threaten other Americans or the United States. The American Civil Liberties Union has said this policy is *particularly troubling* because U.S. citizens retain their constitutional right to due process even when abroad."

[NBC TV news announced in April 2013 about the Bush legacy: He invaded Iraq on bad intel, Saddam did not have WMD. So at least half his wars were unjust, naked aggression (to exploit their natural resources.)]

From conspiracyplanet.com

"As a former aerospace research engineer, the writer is aware that the US Dept. of Defense delegated its research arm known as DARPA to develop a black box specifically to prevent hijacking of airliners. If communication between air traffic controllers and the flight crew [cease] and the aircraft deviates from its pre-planned flight path, the DARPA black box enables a covert Federal ground control facility to remotely fly the aircraft and safely land it."

"With the cockpit flight controls deactivated, it would be impossible for hijackers to deliberately cause the 9/11 disaster. A visual link between the ground facility and the aircraft could be accomplished by means of a Global Hawk remotely controlled surveillance aircraft." [At 5 miles high it would not be seen. If the records of the black boxes were revealed, they would tell nothing after they became remotely controlled. Remotely controlled armed drones now kill targeted US citizens in the US.]

"[In the] 1783 Treaty of Paris, King George III of Britain was introduced as Prince Elector of the Holy Roman Empire and the USA. The signatories representing America were John Adams and Ben Franklin . . . their signing of the document indicates they acknowledged that King George was still the covert ruler of America."

[*Wikipedia* on George III: "He was concurrently Duke and prince-elect of Brunswick-Lüneberg ('Hanover') in the Holy Roman Empire." He was from Germany and hired German Hessian soldiers (part of Roman Empire) to fight Americans.]

~Mr. Jan Young

Prophecy Today

Ñ PART 1 Ñ

Most Sabbath observers have an interest in the topic of prophecy.

These same believers feel that their specific church organization has a relatively clear understanding of what is going to take place in the future—at least to the extent that their ordained ministers have told them.

But is there really an understanding of what will take place in the future? Or have the “COG” prophets been deceived?

Read on, and then consider.

It would seem that the most common teaching of today’s “prophets” centers on the following scenario. There is coming a time when foreign armies (primarily a revived Roman Empire) will invade the present-day nations of Israel and will defeat them.

Multiple millions will be killed, and any who live through this warfare will be taken into captivity where they will be persecuted and a majority will be killed.

This scenario basically began with a man named Herbert Armstrong and was propounded through his church, the Worldwide Church of God.

But, as most do not realize or will not admit to themselves, Herbert Armstrong was, according to scriptural instructions, a “false prophet.” As Scripture also shows, any who continue to teach the

Armstrong theories are also “false prophets.”

We, as believers, are clearly told in Scripture that it is up to us personally to “Search, Study, Prove and Try” the inspired teachings contained within Scripture. I imagine that this is what Armstrong and those who continue to teach his doctrines as they relate to prophecy feel that they have done.

I also assume that they have done so based on the teaching of the “duality of prophecy”—mean-

ing that what happened to the nations of Israel in Old Covenant times will happen to them again in the future.

But is that true? Does Scripture actually tell us this? You may be surprised.

We know that the peoples of Israel were punished for their sins, and this resulted in their having to leave their homelands. We understand that, in the first invasions of Assyria’s armies, the two and one-half tribes living east of the Jordan River were indeed taken into captivity and settled somewhere within that empire. But there is no record that the majority of those tribes were killed off and, after their captivity, persecuted.

But what of the other ten and one-half tribes, those living west of the Jordan?

Well, basically, only one thing happened to them as a whole, that being that, before the final invasion of Assyria, almost all of those tribes “fled” from their homelands and settled in areas

outside of the borders of Assyria. Many of Ephraim and the half tribe of Manasseh moved south and settled in the land of Judea. Scripture says that only a few thousand remained in the land and that those few who lived through the final battle went into captivity. But, again, it does not say that even they suffered persecutions.

As mentioned earlier, Scripture shows that Armstrong was a “false prophet,” and those who continue his false teachings are

themselves “false prophets.” Thus I sincerely hope that any who read these words will take the following scriptural teaching to heart. For, unless one does, then it would be almost impossible for them to understand the real Truth of what the Old Covenant prophecies are trying to teach us.

Note the lesson that Scripture clearly shows us: Any prophecy made by those called “false prophets” never, at any time, ever become a True prophecy in the

future. If it is called false, it remains false.

That is no different today. If Armstrong and his followers continue to teach false prophecies, there will never come a time when their prophecies will come to pass. Israel’s peoples will not be invaded by foreign armies, such as a revived Roman Empire. Israel’s peoples will not go into captivity.

Yes, just as Israel was punished for their sins in the past, so will they be punished for their sins in the future. Yes, they will once

again have to leave their new homelands.

But it will not be as a result of warfare (though there may be a lot of “warfare” within the nations’ themselves).

They will not go into forced captivity, at least not the great majority of those who live through the punishments that are coming. Any who are scattered through the nations will basically not be “persecuted” and murdered—at least as we are shown in Scripture.

Actually, the future state of the peoples of Israel is nothing like what the “false prophets” tell us today. What will take place is something that few, if any, will believe.

But, when their future situations do come to pass, they will know that the happenings were predicted, and then they will act on such predictions.

There will be a future fulfillment of the words of Amos 3:7: “Surely [God Almighty] will do nothing, unless he reveals it to his servants, the prophets”!

The True prophets are not yet “crying aloud.” But they will. They will be few, as opposed to the many “false prophets”—the false prophets who are speaking lies today and will speak lies in the future.

In Part 2 (at the bottom of this page), I begin to examine the beginning of the future as prophecy tells us it will come about.

Ñ PART 2 Ñ

In Part 1 (at the top of this page), I point out that the end-time prophecies that have been made in our recent past have, to date, almost all failed.

Actually, one could say “all have failed”—thus making those who uttered such predictions to be “false prophets.”

I also note that those today who are continuing to propound such failed predictions are themselves “false prophets”!

I also encourage the readers to “Search, Study, Prove and Try” the Scriptures in order to see that “no failed prophecy ever became a ‘True prophecy at a future time.’”

A false prophecy is always a false prophecy.

All who are students of Scripture need to realize the meaning and intent of what it entails to Truly follow Scripture entails. Israel will indeed be punished for their sins, but not in the ways that the false prophets have been saying.

Note what is said to those who are to be the True prophets prior to the destruction of the nations of Israel as we see them today:

Ezekiel 2:4-5: “For they [Israel] are impudent children and stiff

hearted. I send you to them, and you shall say to them, Thus says Adonai YeHoVeH [No. 3069, not YeHoVah, No. 3068].

“And they, whether they will hear [or not], . . . yet shall they know that there has been a prophet among them!”

This means that, even though True prophets speak True predictions, as a general rule few will believe and accept their words

until those words begin to be fulfilled.

This will be the state of those of the coming work of the Philadelphia church (Revelation 3:7-12), which will have the responsibility to warn the peoples of Israel of their coming punishments and also to tell them of their means of escape.

Matthew 11:13 tells us: “For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John”! This refers to

John the Baptist. Both Scripture and history show that the author of the “prophetic” Book of Revelation was indeed this very John: John the Baptist. The only “proof” outside of Scripture, and recorded in history, that John the apostle wrote this book does not appear until the mid to late 300s AD. Even then, when Augustine, bishop of North Africa, finally “forced” Rome to make our pres-

ent-day canon “official,” Rome did not want to include Revelation because there was no “apostolic proof of its authorship by the apostle John.”

The above scripture, Matthew 11:13, shows that Revelation ought to be the last book of the Old Covenant (Old Testament) writings.

I will now give that which will be the beginning of the punishments that are to befall Israel’s peoples in the future. This “pun-

ishment” will be but the “first step” in that which is generally referred to as the “end times.”

I will paraphrase for brevity. But, if further understanding and clarifications are desired by readers, then that path is certainly open, for there is much understanding that can be added.

There will be an incredible “earthquake” of such great magnitude that mountain ranges

will change positions. These mountains also, of course, include those beneath the waters of the oceans.

Along with the earthquakes there will be great volcanic activity—mostly, to begin with, within the range of the northern latitudes. Great clouds of smoke and ash will be spewed into the upper atmosphere.

The result of these gases and ashes will be that the light of the sun will be darkened to such a

degree that nothing on the earth will be able to grow: no foods for man or beast. Famine will become widespread.

But, again, for this time, famine will spread only over the lands of Israel in the latitudes of the north areas. The Scandinavian countries, Britain, Canada and perhaps the northern areas of the United States will be deeply affected.

The Israelite peoples who live in the southern latitudes (Australia, New Zealand and South Africa) will also be punished at this time, but in a different way that will be shown later.

However, though those in the south will have to leave their present homelands, Scripture does not say that they will be those who will migrate as a result of the famine taking place in the north.

The above is well documented in Scripture. As I mentioned earlier, the coming work of the Philadelphia church will make these scriptural facts well known to the chosen peoples, thus allowing the great numbers of millions to escape when the troubles actually begin.

In Part 3, I will begin to cover the “scriptural specifics,” of that which I have given only an introductory overview.

Ñ Ray E. Daly ¥ rayedaly@bis.midco.net

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From the Last Days to the End Time

By Art Mokarow

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The Bible—*The Word of God*—is certainly a great mystery. This is especially so regarding The Mystery of The Kingdom, which is “Christ—In You” (Colossians 1:22-27). Does The Kingdom begin in The Last Days, The End of Days or The End of Time? Are they different, or are they all the same?



Art Mokarow

vation (Philippians 2:12).

How do The Last Days, The End of Days and The End of Time connect with The Kingdom of God?

What Last Days?

The Last Days began when Jesus died. Jesus was the one to reveal The Truth of The Gospel of The Kingdom of God (Hebrews 1:1–2). In *The Bible*, Jesus Himself defines The Last Days.

Christ, before His “crucifixion,” makes a

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Christ in You

Paul wrote in Colossians that “Christ—In You” is “The Mystery of God.” If you have “Christ—In You,” you are part of The Mystery of God. All repentant Christians are included. But what does that mean? Christ, in heaven, shares His Father’s “throne” and is equal with God (Philippians 2:6). Paul, The Apostle, follows up with the solution, “*For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure*” (Philippians 2:13).

God works—“In Christ”—for you to have The Mind of God (Philippians 2:5). This includes Christians and The Messianic Jews. That is why Paul concludes that everyone following Jesus is working out their own Sal-

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prophetic statement that with His “death” world judgment would begin. Satan no longer was allowed to enter heaven (John 12:31). Satan and one-third of his angels had to leave heaven. The Savior, by His “death,” is The Body Prepared by God to pay for the sins of the world (Hebrews 10:5).

Scripturally, Jesus clearly defines The Last Days: “Yet a little while is the light [of Truth] with you. Walk while you [disciples] have the light, lest darkness [without truth] come on you: for he that walks in darkness knows not where he goes. While you have light, believe in the light [truth] that you may be the children of light” (John 12:35-36). How wonderful and simple.

Before Jesus came to give “grace” [pardon] and “truth,” The Prophets preached The Gospel of The Kingdom of God (John 1:17). When The Messiah came, He became more than The Prophets to give “grace” and “truth” after The Order of Melchizedek. When Israel and The Jews were taken captive, it was their Last Days to find “the truth.” The Prophet Joel proclaimed it was a day of thick darkness. Israel rejected God and, then, they were on their own, not knowing what to do. The Last Days are not “the days” for The Kingdom of God to come, but for you to know “the truth” of The Kingdom of God. These are The Last Days.

Well, when will The End of Days come?

End of Days

The End of Days does not refer to one particular event but many events. The word “Days” in

Hebrew means “to time not necessarily as a clock clicks as twenty-four hours a day.” But, with God, as Peter said, a day can be 1,000 years or just counted and regarded as one day. “Time” with God is “any age or a series of events.” The First Day, in *The Book of Genesis*, “was counted” on The Clock of God as “an evening to a morning.” That “evening to morning” could have been a thousand earthly years, a day or even eternal.

Daniel, The Prophet and Friend of God, called God The Ancient of Days (Daniel 7:13). Ancient of Days is open-ended both from its past and its future.

End of Days includes many *Biblical* events which will happen

in the future and are historical. “The End of Days” should be considered as “the end of an age” or “ages.”

End of Time

Yes, The End of Time can refer to many ages, as well. The Aztecs, The Mayans and other cultures speak of The End of Days including The End of Time. The Mayans’ End of Days, specifically, foretold the end of Esau’s time and the beginning of Jacob–Israel’s age or time. Jacob–Israel, will become first and not The Gentiles, who will complete their time or days. Mathematically it is who is first, last or last, first. It is not the end of the world in any of the cultures, prophetically. They all believe in a restructuring of The Earth by God, as He did in The Days of Peleg (Genesis 10:25), but it is not the destruction of the world.

“A new age” will begin with The Return of

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

The First Day in Genesis could have been a thousand earthly years, a day or even eternal.

Last Days Prophetic, Not Like Clock Time

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The Messiah. He will begin The Millennium with The Kingdom of God ruling on the earth. The Last Days, end of the age or The End of Time are involved with many events. The Intended Purpose of God for specific conditions and events to transpire will be according to The Pleasure of God—declaring The End from The Beginning and from ancient times (by The Prophets) the things that are not yet done (prophecy), saying, “*My Counsel [God] shall stand and I will do all my [God’s] pleasure*” (Isaiah 46).

God’s Pleasure

Paul writes to The Saints and The Faithful that God has predestined (self-counsel) for the world to become Sons of God (Ephesians 1), “*Having made known to you the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he [God] has purposed in himself*” (Ephesians 1:9), “*That in the dispensation [distribute—come to pass] of the fulness [all fulfilled] of times [last age, time] he might gather [potential] together in one [like God, Genesis 1:26] all things in Christ [the mystery], both which are in heaven [spirits, men and angels] and which are on earth [dead and alive] even in Him*” (Ephesians 1:10).

You have, prophetically, come to the time of The New Heavens and The New Earth, united as one, when God dwells with man and makes all things new (Revelation 21:5).

The Last Days, The End of Days and The End of Time cover different times as “ages,” as last days. You need to know the prophecy and the history to place the context of what God is doing.

Free Choice

God, from the beginning, gave Adam and Eve free choice—“*eternal life*”—in Paradise. The alternative would be death. You have the same choice. That event is not timed like a clock but by conditional events.

For God to reproduce Himself so He can be “*All In All,*” He must give you absolute “*liberty*” to decide if you want to follow God—or not (Hebrews 1:1-3). You must have the same freedom to choose. God, also, wants to do whatever He chooses (I Corinthians 15:28). The Pleasure of God

For God to reproduce Himself as ‘All In All,’ He must give you absolute ‘liberty’ to decide if you want to follow God.

comprises all of The Goodness of His “glory,” which is your Hope of Glory, to be just like your loving Father (Colossians 1:27).

The Last Days or End of Time is prophetic rather than a certain time on a clock. Both The Last Days in each time frame and The End of Time are conditional and they are *Biblically* recorded. “Time” refers to “events” as ages, which can be forever.

The Bible covers many Last Days as well as The End of Time, but does not mean “the end of this earth.”

It is all prophetic and in each case refers to a specific event. When this world has to be made new again (after World War III), The White Throne Judgment follows with a New Heaven and a New Earth.

It is all there—The Words of God and His “definitions” are all important words in *The Bible*. God will help you decipher all the clues so you will benefit in being able to live forever.

What does the Bible say about sex including homosexuality?

Continued from page 6

turn his instructions to the Corinthian church into universally applicable principles should be careful in how he proceeds.

Note that Paul regarded some of what he said as personal advice, not as a directive from the Lord (verses 6-8, 12).

We may reasonably conclude that nothing Paul wrote to the Corinthians should be interpreted to embellish or change Christ's clear instructions on these topics.

If I'm right in this line of reasoning, Paul had no authority to override or modify Christ's statement on the subject.

Jesus the conservative

Indeed, if we extract all of the statements on divorce in Scripture and compare them with each other, we find that Christ's "harsh" statement on the subject appear to be consistent with more of them than Moses' or Paul's "liberal" teachings.

God "divorced" Israel for adultery (Jeremiah 3:8). Malachi wrote that God makes a man and woman one and that He hates divorce (Malachi 2:14-16).

How do literal interpretations make you feel?

The great spiritual principle is clear: Man cannot nullify the marriage covenant. Only sin can dissolve it, according to God's standard.

How many of my fundamentalist friends will find such an interpretation of the scriptural teaching on divorce to be offensive?

Although these criteria will seem narrow and harsh to many of my readers (especially those whose current circumstances do not accord with the criteria), one could legitimately argue they are the standards Christ established for divorce.

Perhaps I have just succeeded in making some of my readers feel what homosexuals must experience when literal interpretations of Scripture are applied to them.

Nevertheless, lest we leave some of our readers in a state of despair and hopelessness, we should also note that the breaking of any of God's laws or standards can be repented of and forgiven.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

Christ paid the penalty for all our sins and thus provided the means for our forgiveness.

Paul wrote that a person who has gone through the process of repentance and forgiveness emerges from it as a "new creature" and that all of his or her former sinful behavior is forgotten (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Christ indicated that the Samaritan woman (who had five husbands in her lifetime) still had access to the "living water" that only He could provide (John 4:4-26).

Brethren, there is always hope, even for those who have gone through a divorce.

Is homosexuality, per se, a perversion?

Before concluding this study of sex, I would be remiss not to address the topic of what constitutes perverse sexual behavior in the eyes of Almighty God.

As a student of the Bible for many years, I perceive that God's opinion of this subject is guided by the principles implied in the following questions:

■ Does the behavior bring joy and happiness to both parties? (Matthew 7:12).

■ Does the behavior harm anyone? (Romans 13:10).

■ Is the behavior the product of two consenting equals? (Acts 10:34; Romans 10:12; Galatians 3:28).

Employing these criteria, we can see why rape, incest, prostitution, pedophilia and bestiality are properly regarded as perverse.

But what about homosexuality?

'All homosexual behavior is sin' not in Bible

In the sense that any transgression of the Law was considered a sin, the

act of homosexual intercourse could be considered such.

Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 are part of what many refer to as the Law of Moses or Torah.

However, it will no doubt come as a shock to many of the readers of this article to learn that using these scriptures to label all homosexual behavior as sin is tantamount to twisting the Scriptures and distorting God's will in the matter.

God cannot be unfair

First, the scriptures in question describe the act of intercourse. They say absolutely nothing about sexual orientation.

Why? First, because a general condemnation of homosexuality would make God unfair.

Science and personal testimony have demonstrated that human beings do not choose their sexual orientation.

It is true that the question of the roles played by nature and nurture in determining our orientation is unsettled, but the verdict is in on whether our orientation represents a conscious choice on our part. *It does not.*

In the same way that a heterosexual finds the opposite sex attractive without any conscious effort on his or her part, homosexuals find members of the same sex attractive.

Think about it. A sin is a *conscious* decision to choose a bad behavior over the good alternative. Hence the mere predisposition to find one sex more attractive or appealing than the other cannot be a sin.

Consulting mediums

Second, even though these scriptures are explicit about the act of homosexual intercourse, they are not superior to (or more enduring than) the other "laws" that are part of the same text.

Why is it appropriate to single out this law and ignore so many of the other ones?

■ What about people who consult mediums? (Leviticus 20:6).

■ What about someone who curses his mother or father? (verse 9).

■ What about a man who has intercourse with a woman during the time of her monthly period? (verse 18).

■ What about perverters of justice, those who discriminate against the poor or show favoritism to the rich and powerful? (Leviticus 19:15).

■ What about a farmer who cross-breeds different kinds of animals or plants? (verse 19).

■ What about people who wear cotton-poly- or poly-wool-blended clothing? (verse 19).

■ What about the regulations governing skin diseases (Leviticus 13) and

mildew (Leviticus 14)?

■ What about people who like their meat cooked rare rather than well done? (verse 26).

■ What about those guys who trim the sides of their beards? (verse 27).

■ What about those monsters who get tattoos? (verse 28).

Am I being ridiculous enough yet to demonstrate my point? I could go on.

What was the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah?

Why is it appropriate to ignore or dismiss all of these regulations and uphold the injunction against homosexual intercourse?

What about Sodom and Gomorrah? What was the sin of those cities? Why were they destroyed?

We all remember the story, but many of us have glossed over what was actually going on in the plain of Jordan?

Our churches and preachers and traditions have told us the men of Sodom conspired together to attempt to gang-rape the two angels God had sent to check up on the behavior of the city's

residents (Genesis 19:4-5).

I know of no one who argues in favor of the acceptance of gang rape. I am certainly not arguing for its acceptance.

According to the standard outlined above, gang rape would definitely be labeled as abominable and perverse.

Even so, what does "righteous" Lot do next? He offers his own virgin daughters to divert the mobsters away from the angels! (Genesis 19:6-8).

Is Lot's response appropriate? I, for one, would certainly not offer my daughters to a mob.

Was Ezekiel forgetful?

Does Scripture anywhere address the question of the sins of the two cities?

As a matter of fact, the prophet Ezekiel directly addressed the topic:

"Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good" (Ezekiel 16:49-50).

Did Ezekiel simply forget to refer to homosexuality as one of their sins?

The sins of two cities

Likewise, other scriptures put the sins of the two cities into perspective relative to other people who have sinned.

Christ told His disciples that "it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment" than for the cities that would reject His disciples' missionary efforts (Matthew 10:14-15).

On another occasion Jesus said: "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day" (Matthew 11:23).

"But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee" (verse 24).

Campaigns against Sodomites

Even so, some will still argue that homosexual behavior was a special case and that the Israelites were not even permitted to allow these people to live in their midst (Deuteronomy 23:17).

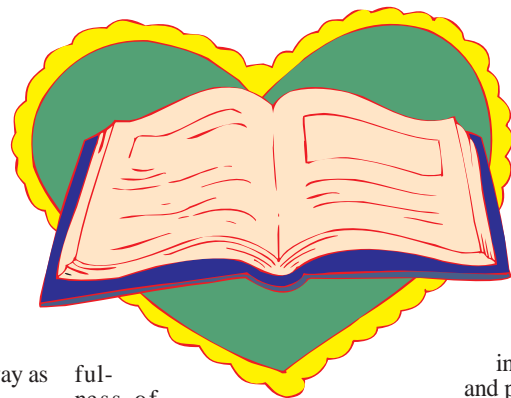
We also read in the accounts of the kingdom period that Asa, Jehoshaphat and Josiah launched major campaigns against the Sodomites within their

the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet" (verse 27).

Paul spelled out 'vile affections'

Who was Paul talking about? Remember, context is an important part of properly understanding any scripture.

In the verses immediately preceding the passage quoted above, Paul wrote that God's wrath had been manifested against all of the wickedness and sin-



fulness of people who were suppressing the truth (verse 18).

He went on to say that those people had no excuse for their behavior, because God's character and nature can be understood by the things He has created (verses 19-20).

These people, however, refused to acknowledge God's power and position in the universe (verse 21).

Instead, they gloried in their own understanding and attempted to remake God in their own image (verses 22-23).

This caused God to abandon them to their own devices and condemn their high regard for the creation, which exceeded their regard for the Creator (verses 24-25).

These are the people who were given to "vile affections" Paul was talking about (verses 26-27).

"And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despisers, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection [heart-

less], implacable, unmerciful" (verses 28-31).

Sinfully consumed

In other words, these folks had a lot of problems. They were *consumed* with sins.

Hence, it is misleading to make this scripture apply to all homosexuals.

Paul was pointing to extremely wicked individuals who had turned their backs on God.

I acknowledge that Paul also lists male prostitutes and homosexual offenders among those who will not inherit the Kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9). It is clear, however, that he was singling out homosexuals' "perverse" behavior (prostitution and promiscuity) as the object of his condemnation.

It is misleading to characterize this passage as a blanket condemnation of homosexuality. Likewise, Paul uses similar language in his letter to Timothy (1 Timothy 1:10).

The life and times of Paul

Even so, what if we were to allow that Paul intended his remarks as a general condemnation of homosexuality?

We would still be forced to contend with the context of the times and culture Paul was part of.

It is clear there was already a Jewish bias (Paul was a Jew) against homosexuality.

Remember, too, this is the same man who said women should not speak in church and that it was shameful for a man to have long hair (1 Timothy 2:11-12; 1 Corinthians 11:14).

Is it possible that cultural bias intruded on Paul's writings on occasion? Taking into consideration the scriptures I just quoted, I believe it is certainly possible.

A homosexual's potential

A homosexual has the same potential for sinful or moral behavior as any heterosexual person.

Like their heterosexual counterparts, homosexuals are capable of pedophilia, incest, bestiality, prostitution, rape and promiscuity.

On the other hand, homosexuals are capable of love, fidelity, honesty, kindness and a host of other Christian behaviors.

Almost any sexual behavior—heterosexual or homosexual—can result in idolatry, theft, infidelity, covetousness, etc., if indulged in with evil intent.

Determining God's will

Christians have espoused many erroneous notions about human sexuality and have presented them as if they originated in the mind of God.

It is apparent that some of those notions have found their way into the pages of the Bible. The contradictions and inconsistencies noted at the beginning of this article demonstrate that this has happened.

Therefore, when we evaluate the scriptural evidence in trying to determine God's will in the matter, the only safe way to proceed is by discerning broad principles that reflect God's character and intent in God's criteria for designating a behavior as deviant.

If a point or teaching is inconsistent with those broad principles, then it must be discarded.

Likewise, if a teaching is consistent with the overall understanding of the divine character, it should be retained.

God's will should be our standard, *not* what someone wrote about his or her perception of God's will in one or two instances.

Moreover, the standards of a culture extant on earth 3,000 years ago should not be adopted as God's standard or ours.

Atheists, secularists, fundamentalists

In preaching this method for determining God's will, I think my most vociferous critics will be atheists, secularists and fundamentalists. They all look at the Bible as an all-or-nothing proposition.

Atheists and secularists look at the contradictions and inconsistencies in Scripture and reject it as having no value to inform us of God's will.

Similarly, fundamentalists argue that we must accept all of the teachings of Scripture—entirely dismissing or ignoring the glaring contradictions I have pointed out and reserving the right to exclude those portions of Scripture with which they happen to disagree.

In the end, fundamentalist Christians come to the same conclusion as atheists and secularists: If you can't believe it all, you can't believe any of it.

Satan has deceived the whole world (Revelation 12:9). This truth is nowhere more apparent than in the realm of human sexuality.

May God help us cease making what is good into something that is bad, shameful and dirty.

In preaching this method for determining God's will, I think my most vociferous critics will be atheists, secularists and fundamentalists. They all look at the Bible as an all-or-nothing proposition.

Former AC students meet decades later

IRVING, Texas—Former students and employees of Ambassador College, Big Sandy, and their guests met in a hotel near the Dallas-Fort Worth airport Sept. 5-8, 2013, for a major reunion.

A total of 134 people from many states and a few from other countries made the trip to visit old friends.

Organizer Tom Williams of Lacey Spring, Ala., said a total of 134 people attended this year's event.

Mr. Williams, who organized a similar event in 2011, said he will probably not plan another reunion targeting the same group of AC alumni: students and employees who were on campus from 1965 through 1977 including classes through 1980.

See a Web site operated by Mr. Williams and his wife, Nancy, at ambassadorbigandyalumni.com.

Whether another reunion is in the



AC REUNION—Former AC Big Sandy students, employees, spouses and friends attended a reunion in September 2013 in the Dallas area. **Above:** John Sash (left) and Tim Combs. **Above right:** Tom and Nancy Williams. **Right:** Walt and Carol Deptula. [Photos by Dixon Cartwright]



Dickerson at txndwnunder@yahoo.com for more information.

offing or not, the Williamses plan to keep the Web site going.

A small reunion, probably in the Houston area, is planned for next year by Big Sandy former student John Dickerson of Lincoln, Ark. Write Mr.

60 years and counting: RCG, WCG, GCI

Continued from page 1

Marion McNair, 1953-54; Raymond Cole, 1954-55; Jimmy Friddle, 1955-57; Ken Swisher, 1957-64; Leroy Neff, 1964-65; Les McCullough, 1965-73; Ron Dart, 1973-76; Selmer Hegvold, 1976-79; Don Ward, 1979-82; Burk McNair, 1982-88; Richard Thompson, pastor for AC students, ca. 1988-90; Randal Dick, 1990-91; Ken Giese, 1988-91 and Big Sandy P.M. pastor 1991-95; Dave Havir, Big Sandy A.M., 1991-95; Russell Duke, 1995; Don Mears, 1995; David Orban, 1996-2002; Sonny Parsons, 2002 to present.

Big Sandy's beginnings

Doris Cole of Tyler, Texas, who attended the reunion with her husband, Wayne, remembers Big Sandy's beginnings.

"The Big Sandy Church was started when the Radio Church of God was not only very small in number of church congregations but also in number of available personnel to pastor churches," she told *THE JOURNAL*.

Farthest east

"When the Big Sandy church was established [in 1953], there was no other local congregation of the Radio Church of God east of it. Chicago and St. Louis started in 1954.

"In the spring of 1953 the first Passover-Unleavened Bread festival in this area was held in the Gladewater home of Mr. and Mrs. Roy Hammer. For a short time thereafter, small Sabbath services were held in their home.

"Incidentally, among the notables at that first Passover service was a young man from San Angelo, Texas, named Gerald Waterhouse. Gerald then en-

rolled in Ambassador after that."

Some reflection

Mrs. Cole said attending the 60th-anniversary reunion brought back memories for her and Mr. Cole.

"Wayne was grateful for the opportunity Scott Hammer gave him to make some comments [from the audience] during the program," she commented.

"However, on



Amos Gilley

Mrs. Cole remembered an early elderly Feast attendee, Amos Gilley of Floresville, Texas.

"One cold night for services," she

CHURCH REUNION

About 160 people attended a reunion of the Big Sandy church Oct. 26, 2013. **Above:** Ian and Thalia Huf-ton. **Above right:** Ron and Linda Avey. **Right:** Clyde Kilo-lough. **Far right:** Nancy Bald. See a related photo on page 1. [Photos by Dixon Cartwright and Mac Overton]



some reflection afterwards, he commented that had he formally addressed the group he would have emphasized that in spite of all that hardship of sand piles, sandburs, chiggers, lack of bathroom and shower facilities, etc., etc., of which there was much, the people came to Big Sandy to observe the Feast of Tabernacles and nothing was going to deter that.

"When we would ask people if they were enjoying the Feast, even though someone may have just kicked sand in the stew pot on the campfire, the answer was generally, 'We're having a great time' and 'We're here to keep God's Feast.'"

said, "Mr. Gilley tied a flannel scarf around his head, over his ears and under his chin and then put his hat over that. He was going to be at the services no matter what.

"That is the determination and attitude that the growth and development of the Radio Church of God in Big Sandy and elsewhere was built upon."

Contact the CGWA

Contact reunion sponsor Church of God a Worldwide Association at 1301 Central Expressway S., Allen, Texas 75013, U.S.A., or cogwa.org.

Notes and quotes

Lexington Winter Family Weekend

CINCINNATI, Ohio—Jim O'Brien announced the 2013 Lexington Winter Family Weekend, set for Dec. 25-29.

"This annual family event has been a huge success since 1997, when it was created as a weekend where friends can meet as equals to worship, fellowship, play, grow and learn," Mr. O'Brien said.

This year's event will feature seminars, Sabbath services and classes, music, sports, games and crafts, food, a family fun night and a family dance.

Accommodations will be at the Griffin Gate Marriott Resort and Spa, 1800 Newtown Pike, Lexington, phone (877) 901-6632.

For more information write Mr. O'Brien at jimobri@gmail.com.

Ambassador Gardens

PASADENA, Calif.—A company called City Ventures plans a luxury development called



DEVELOPING—This is an artist's conception of one of several upscale housing units to be built on the former Ambassador College campus in Pasadena. [Courtesy photo]

Ambassador Gardens on the former site of Ambassador College.

See much more information about it at insigniacv.com.

Is Jesus a myth?

LINCOLN, England—According to so-called mythicists, Jesus never existed as a real human being.

James McBride of the Churches of God Outreach Ministries would like to put to rest the confusion and controversy surrounding the nature of Jesus.

In issue No. 101 of the CGOM's magazine, *New Horizons*, Mr. McBride presents "evidence that Jesus truly is God."

To subscribe, write CGOM, P.O. Box 54621, Tulsa, Okla. 74155, U.S.A., or P.O. Box 2525, Lincoln LN5 7PF, U.K. Or go to cgom.org.

Change of address

COVINGTON, La.—Joseph and Barbara Willie and their ministry, Christian Straighttalk, have a new contact address:

P.O. Box 946, Covington, La. 70434.

The Willies also have a blog: williestraighttalk.blogspot.com.

Homeless ministry's third year

PORT AUSTIN, Mich.—The Port Austin Bible Campus Homeless Ministry, founded and operated by Norman Edwards and family and friends, completes its third year in 2013.

According to a press release from the PABC, in its short history it has helped 317 homeless people: 132 men, 108 women and 77 children.

"All but one of those have moved on, nearly all to stable housing situations," the release stated.

For more information see the campus's Web site at portaustin.net.

Could simple DNA testing prove or disprove US&BC?

Continued from page 3

the investigators wrote.

So the tools are available and the time has come to put Anglo-Israelism to the test.

The theory traditionally used name markers as indicators of migration patterns, but now it's possible to use genetic markers to indicate population transfers across geographic boundaries.

A well-designed research project could produce results that would either buttress the theory or lay it to rest. Either result should be viewed as a positive outcome. If scientific results support the theory, great. If they do not, then the truth will set us free from error.

Reinvigorate your outreach

Such a project could potentially also provide a great opportunity for Church of God groups and individu-

als that already use Anglo-Israelism as a marketing tool to reinvigorate their outreach.

Further, since the theory has garnered such groups and individuals many supporters and much income, perhaps they could also provide some generous seed funding for the project.

This is a chance for Anglo-Israelism proponents to be proactive and act now that the door of opportunity is open.

Research will continue apace, and, if the interested parties don't get involved at this time, other researchers sooner or later will.

The truth will set you free

It would redound to their credit if these groups were the ones who funded efforts to search out the truth.

After all, if we seek the truth we have nothing to fear.

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