

Nov/Dec 2007

The Philadelphia Remnant



Dedicated to the memory of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong and to the FAITHFUL
Philadelphia Remnant of The TRUE CHURCH OF GOD Scattered Worldwide



“...I [will] seek out My sheep, and will deliver them out of all places
where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.
I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was
driven away...” Ezekiel 34:12,16 KJV

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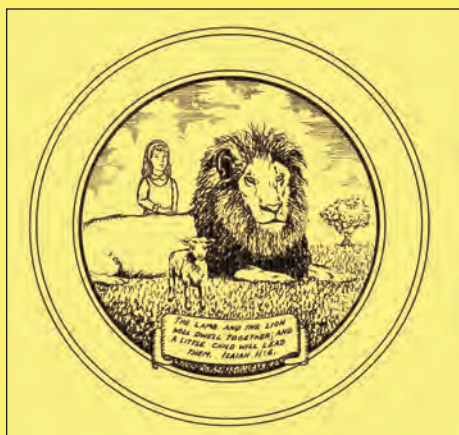
(The family series of articles will resume next issue)

Cover: The flock of sheep pictured on the cover of this magazine represent the scattered brethren of God's True Church. (**Photo courtesy** <http://phillip.greenspun.com>)

The Church of God Faithful Flock, with headquarters in Modesto, California, humbly presents this new magazine – The Philadelphia Remnant, which continues to provide a conduit for the work Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong spearheaded, the work of reaching out to people worldwide with the message of the soon-coming Kingdom of God through the preserved writings,

recorded telecasts, sermons and Bible study messages that Jesus Christ used him to do in his human ministry!

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Alton B. 'Don' Billingsley

MANAGING EDITOR

Gary Liebold

WRITERS

Alton B. 'Don' Billingsley
Gary Liebold
Mark Mendiola
Garfield Gregoire
Ron Wilcoxson
Tom Cooper

DESIGN/LAYOUT

Mark Mendiola

GRAPHICS

Jason Busa
Raymond Mills
Frank Olive

PHOTOS/GRAPHICS

Barbara Mendiola

PROOFING

Donna Bawiec
Barbara Mendiola

PUBLISHER

Alton B. 'Don' Billingsley

CIRCULATION/BUSINESS MANAGER

Joseph Duncan

SECRETARY

Richard G. Smith

Published by
Church of God Faithful Flock
P.O. Box 8819
www.cog-ff.com

God's Kingdom Now Very Near

By Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong
(Transcript from Nov. 27, 1982 sermon)

Greetings, everybody! I have really *a very serious and a very important announcement* for you this afternoon. Now, we've been talking about giving thanks, and we've had Thanksgiving Day. And I remember when I was just newly converted or being converted. I don't know whether I'd even been baptized yet, but I was attending different churches. I was looking into the truth for the first time in my life. This was about 55½ years ago now. I was attending a certain Baptist church one Sunday, and they had had a contest going on, and they gave an award for the one that could answer the question the best of what is the most prevalent sin, the most often committed sin, the most widespread sin. I don't know how you would answer that question. I'm not sure I'd answer it even the same way. But anyway, a young woman won the prize by saying that the most prevalent sin is *ingratitude*, failing to be thankful for what you have, and certainly it's a sin that just about everybody commits.

Now it happens that I sort of begin my prayers regularly by giving thanks. I'm not sure that's just the way it ought to be, but I don't think it's a wrong way. But, Jesus gave us a sample prayer. I want to mention that, and He didn't say give thanks the first thing. He might have, because it certainly is right, but the sample prayer He gave was: **"Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed by Thy name,"** exalting the name



MR. HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG

of God. In a sense, that is giving thanks; and giving thanks is hallowing God's name, because you are giving thanks to Him. But the next thing he said to pray: **"Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."** Now, brethren, we should be praying for that: **"Thy Kingdom come."** I have news for you. ***God's Kingdom is a lot nearer than we thought when I left on this trip!*** I learned a number of things in Europe. In Europe, I talked with heads of government, especially in Athens and in Spain.

But now, why the delay? I've known for years, and you've heard me proclaim again and again and again that the United States of Europe is coming. They are going to unite. Ten nations in Europe, and the Vatican will be on top of the heap. Why has it not happened? Forty-nine years have gone by and, at last, I can tell you that it is. *All of the pieces are falling into place now*, all of a sudden! Well, in Europe there are many nations. They speak different languages. They are divided by various languages. They are divided by different national aspirations and national patriotisms and by different currencies. They have the German mark,



the French franc, the English pound and the lira in Italy and the peso or whatever it is in Spain. They have different kinds of currency, different kinds of money. Now, they have gotten together in an economic system. That's been going on now for a good many years. The EEC or the European Economic Community, but that is only something that knocks down tariff barriers for international trade among the nations of Europe, but what they want is political union. What they want is one military force. What they want is one great world power, and actually they are right on the borderline of the Soviet Union.

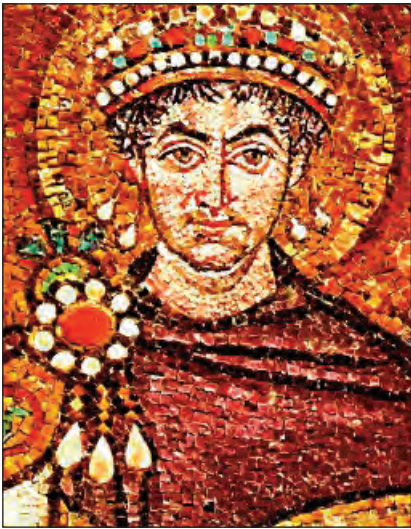


The euro – the European Union's currency – unites the European continent with the first common currency since the Roman Empire and now exceeds the U.S. dollar in value.

Now, we are a long ways from Russia, and we are fearing the Soviet Union. The two great powers in the world are the Soviet Union and the United States. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States, and we are really fearing Russia. Let me say right here, *I know of no prophecy in the Bible that speaks specifically of any war between Russia and the United States*, and I have been saying for years and years that is not the way that World War III will come.

However, let me say that the resurrection of this so-called Holy Roman Empire that existed from 554 on to 1814 in Europe will trigger World War III, *the nuclear World War III that is going to destroy our major cities*. I mean destroy them! One third of our people are going to be killed! Another third are going to die of famine and pestilence, according to Ezekiel's prophecies, and the third remaining are going to be taken as slaves into other nations and moved out of this country. Now this thing coming is going to immediately trigger all of that. I don't know, maybe that doesn't mean anything to you, brethren, but I want to tell you IT HAD BETTER! – because now it is really going to happen and soon! We are getting very, very close to it.

Now, they have even been divided in religion. The Roman Catholic Church was on top of the heap. Actually, the old Roman Empire had succeeded the Greco-Macedonian Empire, which had succeeded the Persian Empire, which had succeeded the ancient Babylon or the Chaldean Empire. That goes back to 604 B.C., 604-585 B.C., the first world empire. God had given Nebuchadnezzar, who had put that empire together, a message that God had given him his seat and power and authority. And through the prophet Daniel, God had told Nebuchadnezzar that He ruled everything, and He had given Nebuchadnezzar, the Gentile king, a chance and an opportunity to yield to God and to let God really rule him and his empire. I don't know what might have happened if Nebuchadnezzar had done it, but Nebuchadnezzar did not do it and as a result the empire was taken away from him. He was sent off for seven years, and he became like a wild man. Later his kingdom was restored to him, but his son denied God. You remember there was the handwriting on the wall. And his son Belshazzar, and in that very night the empire was overthrown. Darius the Mede came in and took it over, and then began the "Times of the Gentiles." And Jerusalem has been trodden down of the Gentiles ever since, except that Judah is back



EMPEROR JUSTINIAN

over there for a time now.

Now, in 554, well the Roman Empire actually started before the Greco-Macedonian Empire had been swallowed up. It really started in 31 B.C., but before the time of Christ, the Roman Empire was really ruling you might say



A frieze from the audience hall of the citadel of Darius I (548-486 B.C.) at Susa shows 'The Immortals,' bodyguards of Persian kings.

stone not of human hands but as a miracle from God come down out of the sky and smite the image on the feet and toes, on the 10 toes and destroy them. Now those 10 toes are the 10 divisions or 10 nations that are

the world, and in the days of the New Testament, the apostle Paul, the book of Acts, the Roman Empire was ruling. That lasted from 31 B.C. until 476 A.D. Then, it wasn't very much later, from 476 to 554, but in 554 Justinian, who was the emperor in the East at Constantinople. Constantinople has been changed now to Istanbul. I've been there a couple of times, and it's a large capital in the East, and it was the capital of the empire in the West.



1572 map of Constantinople, capital of eastern leg of Roman Empire

Now, the Roman Empire had two capitals – one at Constantinople in the East and one at Rome in the West. That is pictured by the great image in the second chapter of Daniel, the dream that Nebuchadnezzar had that the prophet Daniel interpreted for him. The two legs of that image were the Roman Empire, and it was a divided empire, both East and West. Now, in time sequence, it came clear down to the feet and toes and it says, let me just read that for you for a second. It's back here in Daniel, second chapter and verse 44, just the tail end. After Daniel had explained this dream to the Gentile king, Nebuchadnezzar, and he saw a great

going to form the United States of Europe now, that is coming together right now and here is what you read. Verse 44: **“And in the days of these kings ...”** Now half of them were in Eastern Europe and half in the West. That's the thing I want you to notice. **“The God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall ... not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”**

That will be the Kingdom of God. In other words, it is the time of the Second Coming of Christ. And, brethren, we are getting just that close to it. Now for the first time I can tell you that. I've never been able to tell you that before. I can't say now that this is going to go ... the pieces will all fall together, and it will actually come into being within a year, but it very possibly may. And there are reasons to believe that the Vatican is setting next year as the year. They are setting next year as a certain year of reunification in Europe, and the whole Catholic Church is proclaiming that. Well, I want to go on a little bit further. Now, even the religion has been divided. We have had the Eastern Orthodox Catholic Church and, of course, the

Roman Catholic Church in Rome, and the religion has continued to be divided down until now. Now, many of the political leaders, while they want a political union in Europe, they have all of these things to overcome, the various languages, different nationalities, different patriotisms, everything of that kind, but then the religion is divided. Now, many of the political leaders over there don't want religion to have anything to do with it. They would rather religion would stay out, but they cannot bring themselves together. The Pope of Rome knows that, and he made that very plain in his recent trip to Spain. I didn't discuss that part of it. I purposely didn't when I was talking with King Juan Carlos, but nevertheless, we have a report on everything that the Pope said reported in the press.

Now, the Eastern Orthodox Church has refused to go together with the Roman Church because the primary thing is they have rejected the papal supremacy. They have rejected the idea that the Pope has got to sit on top of the heap, and so now I would like to show you what we learned from this trip. Now, I arrived in Athens. I had come up from South Africa and from Nairobi. In Nairobi, I had started a college with President Kenyatta ... Now, I came on up to Athens. It was I think a day before I arrived that the, what is called, I think they call it, the European Parliament had had a meeting in Athens. Now, the European Parliament is not official, but it's a body that has been elected of leaders in Europe that are working for political union of Europe, trying to turn the Common Mar-

ket, which is only economic and a matter of trade, into something that is political, monetary, military, everything, as a super nation.

They had had a meeting in Athens, and Mr. LaRavia had flown over and had arrived, I think, about two days before I did in Athens, and he attended this meeting,



CONSTANTINE

which occurred before I arrived. Now here's what he wrote me about it that I could use to give you and for the *Plain Truth*. This is the information and statements made by the Rotary president, and, by the way, I gave an address to the Rotary Club in Athens. There were two very prominent men, both of them have been reading the *Plain Truth* for a long time, and one of them

is head of the big shipping concern over there that has freight ships going up and down the Mediterranean. It's quite a big concern. The other one is head of the Olympic Airlines, the national airlines of Greece, and both of them have been reading the *Plain Truth* for some time. So now let me read Mr. LaRavia's report: "This is information and statement made by the Rotary President Constantine R. Rengus ..." Mr. LaRavia, if I mispronounce it, pardon me. "President, Hellenic Mediterranean Shipping Lines, concerning the reunification of the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church." Now, by the way, let me interrupt right there and say the last time I was in Jerusalem, the patriarch of the Eastern Church at Jerusalem came to see me in my hotel suite, and he gave me what he considered the highest prize he could give, which was the Cross of Constantine, Constantine the Great, which dates back to 325 A.D., only 325 years after Christ, and Constantine you know is the one who called the Nicene Council, and who practically dictated a lot of the doctrines of the Catholic Church. Constantine was the ruler of the empire at Constantinople, and Constantinople was named after him. Well, this cross, it is quite a good-sized cross. If it was hanging, I think it is supposed to hang around your neck and hang down in front, and it would really show. It is gold and quite decorative, solid gold, and I was the 129th person to receive that award since 325 A.D. So, they consider it a very high honor because very few have ever received it. Anyway, I asked the patriarch of the Eastern Church, he is the patriarch at Jerusalem, he considers he's probably the highest man in the church, but I



Mr. Armstrong addresses the Athens Rotary Club in 1982.

Continued on Page 18

Personal from the Editor

By Alton B. 'Don' Billingsley

How close are we to THE SIGN Jesus Christ gave that would MARK the end of this age? Could it be that the OPEN DOOR to it is about to close?

In response to what Jesus Christ said to His disciples about the demolishing of the very beautiful Temple of God, the disciples asked Him: “Tell us, WHEN will these things be? And WHAT will the SIGN of Your coming, and of the END of the age?” (Matthew 24:1-3)

After enumerating the many bad things that would take place before His return to this earth, Christ then makes known to them the SIGN that His people need to be WATCHING FOR that will mark the actual time of His coming and of the end of this age:

“And this Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world AS A WITNESS to all the nations, and THEN the end will come” (Matthew 24:14). Then, the KEY all of us as God’s true people are in need of watching for is when the **“OPEN DOOR”** to the Gospel going out to Israel and the world is closed!

This leads to the question as to how much is there left before Jesus Christ will CLOSE THE DOOR – just as He did the DOOR to the Ark (Genesis 7:16)? It should be realized that it is Jesus Christ Himself who OPENS THE DOOR to the one He alone has chosen to go through that door just as the Scripture tells us:

“... He (Jesus Christ) who OPENS and no one shuts, and shuts, and no one opens” (Revelation 3:7-8).

In addition to the OPENING AND CLOSING OF THE DOOR to the Gospel message is another KEY to that DOOR. That KEY is the needful recognition of the MAN himself that Christ chose and used to go through that DOOR! This man’s identity is made known by these Scriptures for they are speaking of the Philadelphia Church era and of the end time:



Alton B. (Don) Billingsley

“And to the angel (margin, or ‘messenger’) of the Church in Philadelphia, write, ‘These things says He who is holy, He who is true, ‘He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens’: 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 have NOT denied My Name” (Revelation 3:7-8).

This man was none other than Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong! This we know by our Church history of the end time and also by his fruits! And though he has been dead for almost 22 years, his recorded works live on!

In this day of religious confusion this is very necessary for us to realize for there are the various ones who are trying to do the Work that God used Mr. Armstrong to do and Christ is not using them to do it! As to why, they have *failed* to follow in the footsteps, so to speak, of God’s late apostle in full belief and practice unlike Joshua who did not seek his own recognition, but followed fully in the steps of Moses! They have wandered away from keeping God’s word and in the process have denied Christ’s name.

Reviewing Our Church History

To make the effort of answering the question of the FINAL OPENING AND CLOSING OF THE DOOR to the Gospel and the Ezekiel warning message in this closing time of the end, as I really believe Christ has led me to understand, there is first a need to *briefly review* the history of Jesus Christ *opening the door* for the Gospel to go forth in the real beginning of the end

time and the special man He raised up and used in doing it. The building of the base to take the Gospel to the world took place between 1934 and 1953 with Jesus Christ using His late apostle, who also had the office of the end-time Elijah, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, to begin proclaiming the Gospel and crying out the Ezekiel warning message through the OPEN DOOR of radio and the printing press.



HYDROGEN BOMB EXPLOSION, NOVEMBER 1952

U.S. Department of Energy photo

The Ezekiel warning message came to be fully understood by him in 1953 when *test explosions of the H-bomb* took place by this country. Due to his God-given understanding of the prophecies, in Ezekiel and Jeremiah in particular, Mr. Armstrong fully realized the end time was very near when the time of Jacob's trouble would occur when all of the major cities of Israel, particularly in America and Britain, will be laid waste by nuclear bombings (Ezekiel 6:6; 12:20). Mr. Armstrong then began to cry out the end-time warning as never before with his untiring efforts to bring about their repentance before this terrible time comes upon the Church of God and the tribes of Israel (Jeremiah 30:4-7; Revelation 6:9-11)!

In one of his previous writings, he stated that to cry out this warning was like *a FIRE burning* within him! The prophet Jeremiah said the same thing: "... **But His word was in my heart like A BURNING FIRE shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, and I could not**" (Jeremiah 20:9).

Over the sum total years of his lifetime mission (1934-1986), Mr. Armstrong reached the nations of this world through the *ever-widening* OPEN DOOR of radio, television, the printing press and private meetings with the leaders of those nations.

Just before his death, he was asked if this was to be the end of the Work. He seemed somewhat perplexed about how to answer the question even though he did acknowledge his approval of the last letter that was

written by Mr. Aaron Dean who had written in that final letter, as from Mr. Armstrong, that "**the greatest Work lies yet ahead.**"

Though neither one realized it, these words were *prophetic* in meaning for truly the greatest work did lie ahead, but not in the way expected by either of them! Nor was it understood by the other corporate Churches of God who would be trying to do it some few years later in their own way and still trying at this present time. Jesus Christ alone knew the real answer to the *how, when and who* He would use to do it.

The Door was Closed at That Time

In retrospect, one can see that the *door was closed* by Jesus Christ at the time of Mr. Armstrong's death! And it would not be *RE-OPENED* by Him until some few years later when it fitted within His timetable. It would be at this time that *the greatest work* would be done! *Unbelievable* by all but the ELECT of God's Church, Jesus Christ would be using the very same man, though dead, that He had used for 52 years to go to Israel in particular just as Christ used the prophet Elijah to go to ancient Israel. No one else was/is prophesied to come at the end time other than the Two Witnesses!

The mission of the Two Witnesses will be to the Gentile nations and will last for 3½ years. This will be *AFTER* Israel has been conquered and gone into captivity and will end *when* they are *killed* by the Beast power just before the return of Jesus Christ (Revelation 11:3-15). Though it would appear they will be Moses and Elijah in type (Matthew 17:3), they are not in actuality due to the time elements involved along with those to whom they will witness.

How Can This Be?

How could the man who fulfilled the role of the Elijah give now *the final warning when* he has been dead for almost 22 years? The very simple answer: By using his many broadcasts, telecasts, sermons, Bible studies,

along with his writings: Articles, booklets and books! Knowing the need of *a last-ditch warning*, Jesus Christ had all of his works recorded over those many years for further use at this present time.

Web sites with His Works

Jesus Christ prepared the way by having the WARNING to go forth some few years ago by making possible various ones to develop web sites on which those RECORDED WORKS were downloaded after the breakup of the Worldwide Church of God and would then be used by His faithful remnant at a later time of His choosing.

It is interesting to realize that Jesus Christ began using these men to develop web sites and place his recorded works on them even though some of these men were in *disagreement* with some of the doctrinal teachings and openly wrote they were.

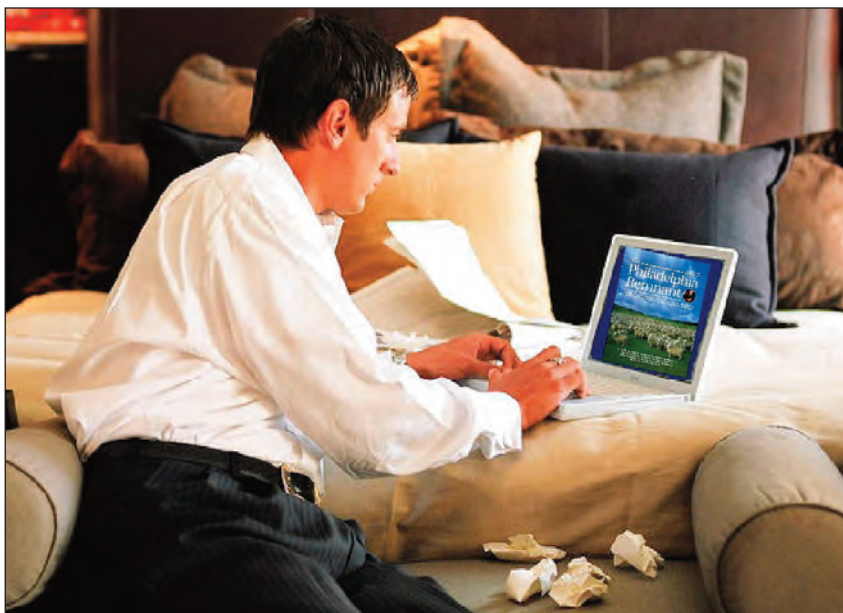
Others were more discreet and pretty much kept to themselves their disagreements, but still had the recorded works of Mr. Armstrong on their web sites. One can only wonder why except that Christ wanted them developed to pave the way for His own web sites.

Over the years after the breakup of the Worldwide Church of God, so many web sites were developed with those recorded works on them that the urge to struggle against them by legal departments seemed useless and too expensive to fight in the courts. Another point came to be in our favor was the realization there are some relaxed freedoms of copyrights by the legal system under correct usage. Those web sites paved the way though those years to make possible the direct involvement of Jesus Christ through the use of the actual web sites He would begin using Himself in once again OPENING THE DOOR for a final last-ditch warning.

Preparation for the Door to Open

Jesus Christ REOPENED THE DOOR just before and during the Passover season in 2006 for what appears

to be His FINAL WARNING to the Church of God (to all of the remaining eras) and to Israel. And Jesus Christ is *using* this part of the Church of God to do it.



A bold statement! Yes, it is! But based on miracles and fruits, I fully believe to be a true statement.

Numerous Miracles Begin Occuring in 2006

1) The preparation for the door to actually open began shortly before the Passover in 2006 when I was called by two web masters and asked if I would like to have all of Mr. Armstrong's recorded works on our web site. I then asked if this could be done legally. They assured me we could do it. I eagerly told them to do it; and they did.

2) The *door then began to really open* at the very beginning of the *Last Day of Unleavened Bread* when I was called by a wise web master who had the ownership of 13 web sites that had Mr. Armstrong's works on them.

He asked if I would like to have them. If so, he would give them to me without cost. He said to me that he no longer wanted to promote his web sites for he had come to realize he was building an *untempered wall* (Ezekiel 13). He then gave his web sites to me, and I eagerly accepted them.

3) A little later I was called by the same web master

and asked if I would like to have his major web site that had all of Mr. Armstrong's works on it. He said he had tried to make the web site to go away three times and it kept coming back so he figured God had a use for it. He then said I could have it if I wanted it. Again, I said that I did want it. That web site has more daily visits on it than we do on our own web site. (At the time of this writing, another web master has offered his web site to me with the recorded works of Mr. Armstrong on it without cost. I accepted it.)

4) Since then I have had men contact me whom I had not remembered from earlier years, or even know, who have freely given me DVDs they had recorded of Mr. Armstrong. One man told me how I could get all of the recorded CDs, cassette tapes, and DVDs by contacting a man who had them all. He told me I could get them for only the cost of duplicating and mailing. Afterwards, I contacted the man, and he duplicated and mailed them to me for cost. They are superior in quality to the others we had. We have taken advantage of all of these offers.

5) Other avenues for advertising the works of Mr. Armstrong have come to me of late that continue to reach out to the Church, Israel and the world. They are web sites of all of the major cities of this country that attract tourists to them; and on them is a link to our web site.

6) Christ has made it possible for us to begin publishing the *Philadelphia Remnant*, a very meaningful and beautiful bi-monthly magazine since January of this year. It is a combination of the Plain Truth and the Good News of former years. This has made it possible for the Gospel and the Ezekiel Warning message to be printed as well.

7) In developing the magazine, we were blessed by having a very talented, skilled man develop the cover of the magazine. We also were blessed for a while of having a man who also was very talented in putting the magazine together for the publisher. Recently, he left us, but Christ knowing this was going to take place brought to us a very converted man who has had 30 years in the field of publishing. Because of his taking it over, it now has a much more professional look

about it as well as being a very beautiful and meaningful magazine that supports the recorded works of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong.

Why Would Christ Use Us?

Why would Jesus Christ use this tiny handful of people instead of another corporate Church of God (that now number over 450)? To answer this question, I will quote the words of Mr. Armstrong when he said that Christ had used him because he **BELIEVED** God. The same is true with me and this little flock. We believe and live by ***the faith once delivered to the saints*** (Jude 3); the ***true doctrinal teachings*** Christ used His late apostle and the Elijah to **RESTORE** within His Church that had been lost over the centuries from the early Church of God that Christ began in 31 A.D.

And Christ has given me the strength of willingness to stand up to be counted when no one else would or yet will with all of the **RESTORED DOCTRINAL TEACHINGS** along with ***the ruling*** he made on **makeup** in place.

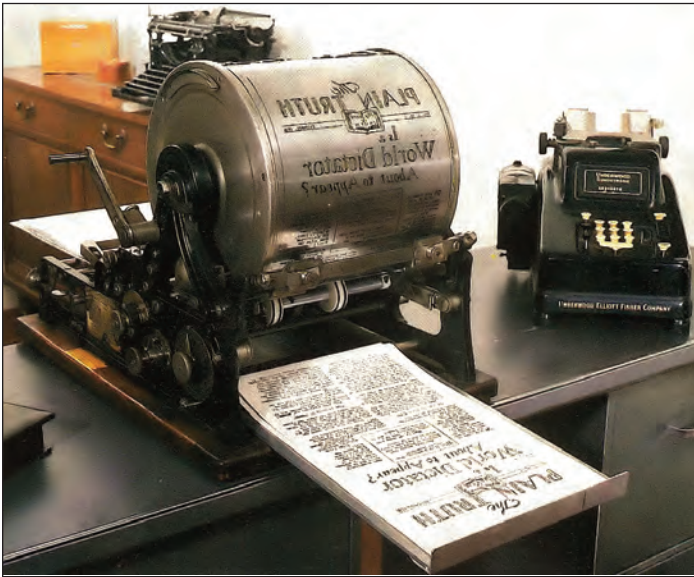
To the best of my knowledge, only one evangelist is willing to admit that Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong was the Elijah to come as prophesied by the prophet Malachi and also made known he would come in the end time by Jesus Christ to His disciples:

“And His disciples asked Him (Christ), ‘Why then do the scribes say that Elijah MUST COME FIRST?’ [Referring to Matthew 16:27] Then Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Elijah truly is coming FIRST and will RESTORE all things’ (Matthew 17:10-11; Mark 8:12-13; Malachi 4:4-6).”

And Christ did use Mr. Armstrong to restore the commandments, statutes and judgments (Malachi 4:4-6). He also used him to **RESTORE** more than 19 major doctrinal teachings that had been placed in the early Church by Jesus Christ through His apostles at that time (Ephesians 2:19-22).

Philadelphia Era Beginning of God's Church

Jesus Christ also used him to begin ***the Philadelphia era of His Church*** in October 1933 with 19 members



just prior to the beginning of the Work via a 100-watt radio station. He then developed the *Plain Truth* magazine, which was more like a hand-printed bulletin at the time. A few copies were run off on a hand-cranked mimeograph machine. This was the beginning, and it took place in Eugene, Oregon.

The **Name Book** defines the meaning of Eugene. **Inherent meaning: “Born to Nobility,” Spiritual connotation: Vivacious. Scripture: Isaiah 58:8 NKJV “Then your light shall BREAK FORTH like the morning, your healing shall SPRING FORTH SPEEDILY, and your righteousness shall go BEFORE you.”** (Emphasis mine).

It was to be a Church era of brotherly love that would give Mr. Armstrong the needed support and aid to enable him to walk through the door that had been opened to the work until the door was closed by Christ in January 1986 when he died. There are those who want to deny the Philadelphia era yet exists. In so doing, they are in opposition to what Jesus Christ said in that end-time letter:

“I KNOW your Works. See, I have set before you AN OPEN DOOR, and no one can SHUT IT (but Christ); for you HAVE A LITTLE STRENGTH, HAVE KEPT MY WORD, AND NOT DENIED MY NAME. Because you have KEPT MY command to persevere (faithfully – despite the deception and opposition), I also will KEEP you from the hour of trial (Great Tribulation) which shall come upon the whole world to TEST those who dwell on

the earth. Behold, I come quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one take your crown” (Revelation 3:10, 12). In view of these Scriptures, it seems almost beyond belief that anyone could deny the continued existence of the Philadelphia era of God’s Church.

No Longer a Need

“... You have a little strength ...” No longer is there a need of many thousands of members and co-workers to do the Work with their tithes and offerings as was needed during the life-time ministry of Mr. Armstrong.

In this highly advanced age of modern technology, one can operate any number of web sites by the use of a laptop computer along with the aid of a very small Gideon’s army – a few faithful spirit-filled members of God’s Church, members of the elect, and Christ leading and using through the **POWER** of His Holy Spirit (Zechariah 4:6).

God enabled His prophet to foresee this day and time when he wrote: **“Look among the nations and watch – Be utterly astounded! For I will do A WORK in your day (Christ’s day) which you would NOT believe though it were told you”** (Habakkuk 1:5; Isaiah 5:12).

And Jesus Christ did re-open the door to the beginning of possibly the last ditch warning during the Passover season in 2006. Now the question presents itself: Then when will the **DOOR CLOSE** for the final time this side of the **Great Tribulation**?

Famine, Disease Epidemics, Great Tribulation

The answer to this question is to be understood in view of these terrible times coming upon the Church and Israel when darkness will befall the world and no one will be able to work in the harvest.

This will be the time of the closure of the final work of the end-time Elijah, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, who Jesus Christ said He would use in the end-time! This second and last time is now through the use of his **RECORDED WORKS** that are available and accessible on the web sites He has given to us to keep alive and active. We are humbled that Jesus Christ

would see fit to use such an insignificant little group of people as we are, for we know we are nothing of ourselves. In actual fact, the apostle Paul defines this flock, including me, in I Corinthians 1:26-31. And I do not mean to say we are among the noble and the wise for we are not. We are among the foolish, the weak and the base. It is in this manner that Christ will have all of the honor and glory for what He is now doing, and not us.

We are simply *a conduit, an instrument*, that Christ is using to make possible His Work to go forth as very possibly the final and last warning before the door closes and the famine of the word begins. Though members will travel far and wide after that time to try and find a source of the needed oil to spare them from the *Great Tribulation*, none will be found (Amos 8:11; Matthew 25:8-10). The reason being is that shortly after the door will have been closed, the faithful remnant of God's Church will have already left for the place of refuge.

Jesus Christ Grieves for His People

Does Christ grieve for His Church that is not living by the same standards as is the remnant of the Philadelphia era while knowing of the horrible deaths that will be experienced by them during the Great Tribulation? When we consider how grieved God was to put to death the pre-Flood world (Genesis 6:6-7), along with His weeping over what would befall His people in Jerusalem in 70 A.D., we can well know that He indeed grieves for the Church and Israel of today for He takes no pleasure in the death of anyone, let alone those who are His begotten children.

To understand, think soberly and seriously about what is recorded by Luke of that time just shortly before the crucifixion of Jesus Christ: **“Now as He drew near, He saw the city (Jerusalem) and WEPT (cried) OVER IT, saying, ‘If you had known, even you (the people of Jerusalem and Judea), especially in this your day, the things that make for peace! But now they are HIDDEN from your eyes. For the days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one**



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Titus' Arch was erected in Rome in honor of the capture of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. This sculptured panel shows the victors carrying off treasures of the Temple.

stone upon another, BECAUSE you did NOT know the time of your visitation” (Luke 19:41-44).

This took place at the Passover season in Jerusalem in 70 A.D. when Titus and his enormous Roman army encircled Jerusalem and leveled it.

Christ again spoke of the sorrows the people would experience at the time when He was being taken by the Roman soldiers to be crucified:

“Now as they led Him (Christ) away ... a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him. But Jesus, turning to them, said, ‘Daughters of Jerusalem, do now weep for Me, but WEEP for yourselves and for your children. For indeed the days are coming in which they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, the wombs that never bore, and the breast which never nursed!’ Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us!’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us’ ” (Luke 23:26-30).

Church history from various sources makes known that horrible time did indeed come upon the Jewish people with great sufferings, horrible deaths and enslavement for the survivors!

Please realize that time is only a small type of what is soon to come upon the Church and the nations of Israel. A time of no compassion or pity by the enemy for anyone anymore than Hitler showed the Jewish people during World War II (Isaiah 47:6)!

How Long Before Christ CLOSES the DOOR?

How long will the FINAL WARNING be given before the door closes for the last time prior to the real beginning of the Great Tribulation? It seems very possible we can find the answer within the 70 weeks prophecy found in the Book of Daniel.

“But in the MIDDLE of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifices and offerings” (Daniel 9:27).

Though Jesus Christ brought an end to the need of the physical sacrificial system by His death by making the ultimate payment for sin by the offering of Himself in 31 A.D., the sacrificial system remained in place until the Temple was destroyed by Titus and his enormous Roman army in 70 A.D. that began during the Passover season.

The ministry of Jesus Christ covered the first half of the week as understood by the above Scripture. It has long been understood that Jesus Christ has yet the remainder of the week to fulfill His complete week. This would cover a 3½ year period of time (from the fall of 27 A.D. to the Passover of 31 A.D.) Consider the following:

There is no indication anywhere in Scripture that Jesus Christ will complete His week this side of His return to this earth in physical form. And when He does return, He will be here on earth forever – not just for 3½ years.

Even if this were ruled out, then there are the other 3½ year periods of time mentioned in the closing time of this age that would also indicate the DOOR will be closed at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles in 2009.

We must realize we are down to the end of time with little of it left before all these terrible things will happen that will bring to a close the DOOR to the Gospel message going forth this side of the **Great Tribulation**. With this in mind, is it possible that He has begun fulfilling His week NOW with a last ditch **WARNING** to the Church and to Israel?

If this be true, then it would appear that His 3½ years will cover the time element from the Passover season

in 2006 until the Feast of Tabernacles in 2009!

QUESTION: How can this be when He is NOT here in human form? We MUST remember as Jesus said He was sent here on earth to fulfill His Father’s will and the Work He did was in actuality the Father doing it through Him (John 5:36; 10:25; 14:10).

Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong also was only an instrument that Jesus Christ used, as he has said himself, that it was Christ doing the Work through him. This has always been true through time with the prophets of old and the early apostles from the beginning of the Church of God.

The Door Soon to Be Closed

With this in mind, I fully believe – based on miracles performed by Christ in this Church of God, along with fruits – that Jesus Christ is in actuality fulfilling the final half of His ministry as a last ditch warning while using this tiny flock. If this be true, and I fully believe it is, then we do not have much time left. Even notable ones on CNN Television give us no more than two to five years at the most before this nation has gone the way of Rome.

Regardless of what is believed, realizing the little time that is left before this age comes to a terrible end, it behooves all of us to be building a close and abiding relationship with our God while watching and praying that all of us might be accounted worthy to escape all of these things that shall come to pass and then be able to stand before the Son of Man in all of **HIS MAJESTIC AND AWESOME GLORY** (Luke 21:36).

In addition to the members of the Laodicean Church of God, all of us as true members of the Church of God are NOW being warned during this very limited time, the time when Jesus Christ is **KNOCKING** on the door of the hearts of His true people (Revelation 3:20). Hopefully and prayerfully, all of us will have the ears to hear and the eyes to see. Soon the door to the Gospel will be closed! At the same time the DOOR to the place of safety will also be closed! It will be then too late to try and replenish the oil in the lamps of those who have let them become extinguished (Matthew 25:8). It is as Jesus cautioned, **“He who ears to hear let him hear”** (Revelation 2 and 3).



Where is the True Church Today?

‘And I also say to you that you are Peter (*Greek, petros, a stone loose and movable, John 1:42*); and on this *ROCK (Greek, Petra, huge unmovable rock like Gibraltar, meaning Himself)* I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH, and the gates of Hades (the grave) shall NOT prevail against it (Matthew 16:18).’

By Alton B. ‘Don’ Billingsley

In this *fourth writing* of establishing where the true Church of God is today, the search will continue for the only Church on earth that belongs to God the Father and Jesus Christ. And to find it, the search has to *hinge* on the promise of Jesus Christ that it would always exist. This has to be *firmly established* in the minds of each and every member.

Holy Scripture, along with the historical research of the calendar of earlier years, makes known that it was on Sunday, June 17, 31 A. D., when Jesus Christ established His Church on the **Day of Pentecost**, just as He had promised to Peter and His other 11 disciples: **“And I also say to you that you are Peter (*Greek, petros, a stone loose and movable, John 1:42*); and on this *ROCK (Greek, Petra, huge unmovable rock like Gibraltar, meaning Himself)* I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH, and the gates of Hades (the grave) shall NOT prevail against it”** (Matthew 16:18).

Where is the True Church of God Today?

Though dwelling in the midst of the many worldly Christian churches, along with the 450-plus Churches of God that have split off from the parent corporate Worldwide Church of God, many members are in a state of confusion as to where the true Church of God is.

As an example of this important question that is in the minds of many, please note once again a short letter sent to me from one such member in Tennessee:

“I was associated with the Worldwide Church of God for many years. I left the Church on [in] 1993 when they fell away from the truth. Now there are many churches all claiming to [be] the one true Church. Mr. Armstrong often stated that Christ



Are you accusing others of being Laodiceans without considering your own spiritual condition?

would return to one church, not many. What is your stance on this subject? Thank you.” (Name withheld.)

The continued purpose of this writing and the ones to follow is to make known the answer to this troubling and perplexing question.

Major Corporate Churches of God

At the same time, there are many thousands of members who are in one or the other of the major corporate Churches of God today, whose leadership of well recognized and respected evangelists and pastors has car-

ried over from the parent Church. They follow closely enough the doctrinal teachings that Christ used His late apostle to restore that the members believe they are in the true Church of God, but have deviated from others! Each church claims that it is the true one, and it is believed by their membership.

Mr. Armstrong wrote that there is only one true Church of God and there is no other: **“Notice especially, there is only the ONE CHURCH. Not MANY churches. The CHURCH is not divided. There is only one Church. ... Divisions splintering off are NOT STILL IN THE CHURCH. ... Not a parent Church and apostate daughters. ...”** (*Mystery of the Ages*, page 243, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong).

In its original writing, the *Mystery of the Ages* is a book that not one of the major corporate Churches wants you as a member to read, for it would shed the light of God’s truth on their erroneous teachings and beliefs. And, in so doing, make known they are among those in the above writing by Mr. Armstrong – *apostates*! By using one’s Bible along with that book, the one and only true Church of God can be found by those who have the desire and the spiritual eyesight to see through Scripture and by its fruits.

Jesus Christ made known that He has never left His Church nor has He today: **“These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand** (angels or messengers), **WHO WALKS IN THE MIDST of the seven golden lampstands** (meaning the seven Churches, Revelation 2:1; 1:20).

The letters to each of those seven Church eras makes known His Church has always existed despite the heavy persecution and the many deaths by *martyrdom* through the ages by the Catholic Church (Revelation 17:6). It is ongoing today and can be seen existing in the eras of both Philadelphia and Laodicea.

There is also the need to understand from those letters that only **the remnant of the Philadelphia era** is being shown favor by Christ due to their vigilance and faithfulness, whereas **the Laodicean membership is sleeping** and will *perish* in the *Great Tribulation* (Revelation 3:8, 10, 16; 6:9-11)!



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Scattered sheep graze at the site of Philadelphia ruins.

Sadly, thousands of members are *deceived* into believing everyone else is Laodicean except the Church to which they belong while not considering their own spiritual condition. They will not be awakened until it is too late!

God-given Responsibility to True Ministry

God’s faithful ministers have the Christ-given responsibility to teach, feed and protect His true people (John 21:15-17; I Corinthians 12:27-28; Ephesians 4:1-16).

They also are to do all they can to prevent the people of God from being *swayed* into believing wrong teachings that would *endanger* their lives as can be seen in the following Scriptures:

“... that we should NO LONGER be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, BY THE TRICKERY OF MEN, in the CUNNING CRAFTINESS by which they lie in wait to *deceive*, BUT SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE, may GROW UP in ALL THINGS into HIM WHO IS THE HEAD – CHRIST” (Ephesians 4:11-15).

In view of the many problems beginning to plague the Church from ministers *apostatizing* and *deceiving* members in our time, God’s apostle wrote the following in his final year of life: **“It is the duty of Christ’s TRUE ministers (and how scarce today) to PROTECT the begotten but yet unborn saints from false doctrines, from false ministers”** (*Mystery of the Ages*, The Spiritual Embryo, page 262, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong).

Realizing the closeness of the **Great Tribulation**, there is a pressing and urgent need for God's true ministers to help His people work their way through *the maze of confusion* that now shrouds them with erroneous and pagan doctrinal teachings that are flourishing in the more than 450 Churches of God today before it is too late! We will be held accountable by Jesus Christ if we fail in this grave responsibility (Ezekiel 34:1-2, 8-10; James 3:1).

A Lonely Responsibility

Because of my **LOVE FOR THE TRUTH** of God that I have been so wonderfully graced and blessed with by Him, I feel *a passionate desire* to do all that Christ enables me to do in fulfilling that responsibility and try and help His true people.

There are those who call me arrogant, saying: "***Who is he to think he is the only one by being so bold and daring?***" I grieve to have to write and say these things, knowing I am turning all of the ministers and members that I love against me, but as a true minister of God I have no choice!

It is very sad to know of no truly ordained pastor who is fully embracing all of the doctrinal teachings, including the ruling on makeup, and also believes Mr. Armstrong was the Elijah to come in the end time.

The effort was made by me to get the United Church of God to do what I am now doing in the early part of 1995, but they chose to do otherwise! Even when I pointed out the errors they were making by rejecting Mr. Armstrong as the apostle who alone could make changes, I was told by a leading elder on the doctrinal committee in UCG that Mr. Armstrong was **not** infallible. That is true, but neither were Noah, Abraham, Moses, King David and Elijah, but Christ still used



God's true ministers must earnestly help His people work their way through the maze of spiritual confusion enshrouding more than 450 Church of God groups.

them to accomplish His will and purpose just as He did with Mr. Armstrong regardless of his humanity (James 5:17-18).

It encourages me to realize that my efforts are not in vain, for there is yet a true and faithful **REMNANT** today that is yet scattered here and there (Romans 11:5). I praise and honor Christ, for I am confident that within that remnant there will be other ministers who will begin standing up to be counted for Jesus Christ and His true teachings before the time for His people to flee. I eagerly look forward to those ministers who will help share this responsibility.

A Brief History of Today's Pagan Beliefs

To enable us to better understand where we are today in this mix of religious bewilderment and deception, it seems worthwhile to touch briefly on the history of where these bizarre and erroneous beliefs have come from that are being believed and taught by the *apostatizing* ministers in their corporate churches and in their colleges.

These are pagan beliefs and teachings that not only led to the breakup of the Worldwide Church of God, but also are to be found within the corporate churches of

God today due to unconverted ministers carrying them over from the errant parent Church into the corporate churches of God.

The Scattering and Falling Away

Jesus Christ, knowing the end from the beginning, spoke of, and also led His apostles in that early era to write of what we are experiencing in this end time – *the falling away of the tares*, and *the scattering* of the true Church members in this end time (see first and second writings on this subject).

This began taking place in very recent years through the ministers who *surreptitiously* entered the Church as members during the earlier years of the Philadelphia Era, dressed in sheep's clothing, and later were ordained into the ministry (Matthew 7:15; II Corinthians 11:13-15).

And over time they were used by Satan to begin *slaughtering* the sheep in *the guise* of preaching *new truths* – which are *lies* that can be traced all the way back to *Nimrod and Semaramis*! – in later history, to that of *Balaam*, and later on to *Jezebel*, and then to *Simon Magus* (who in reality was *the first pope*, though that title was not used until some years later by the Catholic Church).

Simon Magus was the Peter who went to Rome and worshiped there because of his *magical feats* accompanied by his *lawless* religious teachings. A statue was made in his honor and placed near the Tiber River in Rome.

A Real Need to Understand Church History

To fully grasp where the true Church is located today, one needs to see how the Catholic Church has existed side by side with the true Church of God from that early Church age to where it now is and the grave problems it fostered within the true Church of God.

The false church that was begun shortly after Jesus Christ began His true Church was just a continuation of the old pagan system of ancient Babylon in a different dress that was more suitable to move into the future with the intent of Satan to use it to replace the true



A pope worships at the foot of a famous statue at the Vatican in Rome, Italy, near the Tiber River.

Church of God. As such, it would be much more believable for it would be an almost exact counterfeit in many ways.

And over some little time that Church grew in such great power that it dominated the political and Christian world.

And that power was used not only to *persecute* the true Church of God but also to infiltrate it with Satan's ministers by way of *deception*, beginning with that very first era (Revelation 2:1-7). And from that time it has continued to adversely affect every era of the Church of God by both means!

Our recent history reflects the very influential and deceptive power of Satan through the representatives of the daughters of that Church to bring about huge losses to the Church of God after the death of Mr. Armstrong.

In addition to the very strong influence of deception that is yet being experienced and is prophesied to grow much stronger before the *Great Tribulation*

(Matthew 24:23-24), it will not be much longer before Satan will bring about **persecution** through the political process as he has done in past ages to try to completely **destroy** the faithful remnant of the Church of God (Revelation 12:12-16).

In brief, consider how the *Babylonian teachings* came to be fully accepted by this powerful church that has a membership of at least one billion members worldwide, and with such powerful influence that it reaches into all levels of government, including the House of Israel.

The Haunting ‘Ghost’ of Jezebel is Here

Through craftiness, the invisible but very powerful serpent, the devil, has in essence *embodied* the Catholic Church from its very beginning with *the spirit of Jezebel*! Though the pagan Babylonian teachings began with Semaramis, they were sensationalized and forcibly taught by *the pagan priestess Jezebel* in the kingdom of Israel.

Although she is dead, *Jezebel* also is very much alive and well today through her deceptive teachings, much like the *evil spirit* brought up through the medium at the request of King Saul, when God would no longer speak to him (I Samuel 28:7-13)!

Jezebel’s image is being used by Satan and has *overshadowed and entered* the Catholic Church and her

daughters through the same pagan teachings she *forced* on the people of Israel. Those who opposed those pagan teachings were **massacred** by her, and this has continued throughout Church history (I Kings 18:4, Revelation 17:1-6, 18).

Even Elijah the prophet of God fled to Petra in fear of her after she sought to kill him. In the depths of despair, he felt he was the only one on earth who was remaining faithful to God.

In His great compassion and love for Elijah the LORD then encouraged him by saying: “**Yet I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him**” (I Kings 19:10, 18).

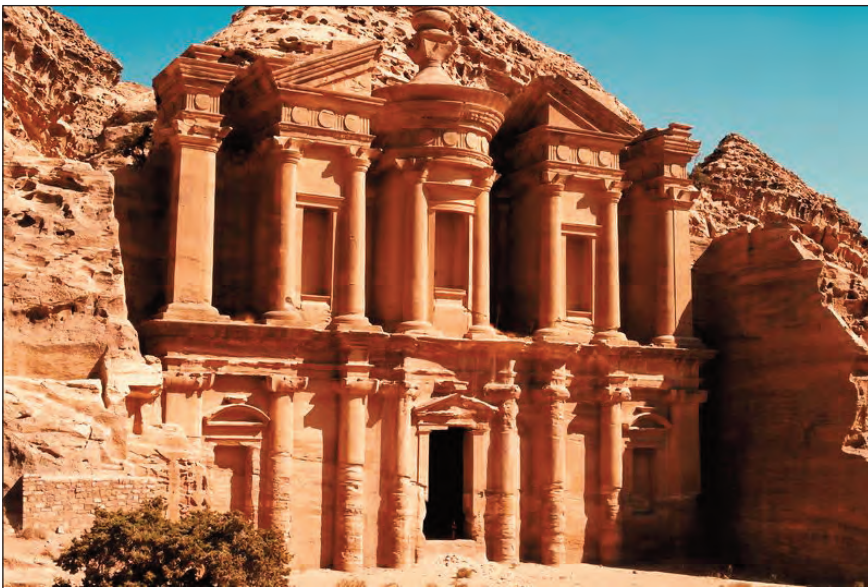
CLARKE COMMENTARY: “**And God preserved them from her (Jezebel’s) rage. Baal was the god of Jezebel and his worship was the worship of the nation.**”

The powerful deceptive influence of Satan through that evil woman has so impacted all of the Christian churches, and even the true Church of God, that the same feeling of despair expressed by Elijah also is felt by God’s faithful remnant.

It is both tragic and sad to see the verity of the Scripture that tells us the whole world is deceived and know this to be true (Revelation 12:9). Though unrealized,

Baal is yet worshipped in all the nations of Israel today due to their full acceptance of **Jezebel’s** teachings of *Balaam and Astarte*, which is the heart and soul of the teachings of the Catholic Church and her daughter churches.

As such, she personifies and overshadows that church by her evil spirit – the spirit of the queen of Israel, who was a priestess of **Baal and Astarte**! She is the **embodiment** of **the great whore** who sits on many waters, and is **drunk with the blood of the many martyrs** of Jesus (Revelation 17:1-6; 2:20; I Kings 16:31-32; 18:4; A/C Correspondence Course, **lessons 42, page 9; 51, page 12**).



Elijah fled to Petra in fear of his life when Jezebel sought to kill him.

Jezebel Entered Church through Open Door

The “ghost” of Jezebel *entered* the Church of God through Simon Magus shortly after its beginning, about 34 A.D. (Acts 8:9-24). The apostles *struggled* valiantly against those teachings as can be seen in many places in the New Testament. One of the first places we see is when the apostle Paul pronounced *a double curse* on any of those who had begun to preach a different gospel other than the true one (Galatians 1:6-9).

Jesus Christ used His apostles to write and **WARN** the true people of God that we would have the same struggles in this end time (I Timothy 4:1-2, II Timothy 4:3-4, Jude, II Peter 2, etc.).

As earlier noted, those *pagan teachings* can be seen in *the first five eras* of the Church of God (Revelation 2). Evidence of this also can be seen in the Sardis Church era that yet exists in this end time. Because of their acceptance of some of those pagan teachings, while refusing to accept new truths, along with the refusal to be corrected, it is virtually a dead Church era (Revelation 3:1)!

After Mr. Armstrong’s Death – *Apostasy!*

The same pagan teachings came to be fully accepted in the Worldwide Church of God by the top ministry and also by thousands of church members! And when the scattering of the true members of the Church of God took place, some of those same pagan teachings were carried over into the newly developed corporate Churches of God by false ministers and were tolerated by the weak ministers and members.

Jesus Christ inspired His apostles to **WARN** His true people about the acceptance of those pagan teachings and that He would destroy ministers and members alike who accepted them: **“But there were also FALSE PROPHETS (preachers) among the people, EVEN AS THERE WILL BE FALSE TEACHERS AMONG YOU, who will SECRETLY BRING IN DESTRUCTIVE HERESIES, even DENYING the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. And MANY WILL FOLLOW THEIR DESTRUCTIVE WAYS, BECAUSE OF**

WHOM THE WAY OF TRUTH WILL BE BLASPHEMED (maligned, NRSV). By covetousness they will EXPLOIT you with DECEPTIVE WORDS ...” (II Peter 2:1-22).

Along with the apostles, Peter, Paul and John, Jude also gave *grave warning* as well in urging all of God’s people to break away from such erroneous teachings: **“Beloved ... concerning our common salvation ... contend earnestly for THE FAITH WHICH WAS ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS (BODY OF DOCTRINES, II Timothy 3:14). For CERTAIN MEN have crept in unnoticed ... ungodly men ...”** (Jude 3-4).

There was no question what **THE FAITH** was for they got it *firsthand* from the apostles and some from Christ. Because of false ministers and weak ministers, who refuse to stand up for the true teachings and as such are giving support to them, thousands of members remain with them having been duped into believing these men are yet true ministers who are there to protect them and prepare them to be counted worthy to *escape* the *Great Tribulation* and then meet Christ when He returns to this earth.

Based on end-time prophetic *warnings*, they are in for a *heart-breaking* disappointment for it may very well be too late for them!

While there is yet some daylight, it is imperative that God’s true people take the needed action *now* to *escape* the *deceptive traps* that have *ensnared* them by the many corporate churches of God.

It is encouraging at the same time to realize there are those who are among the ELECT who are trying to work their way through the *maze of bewilderment and confusion* in search of the Church of God that Jesus Christ built in 31 A.D. and true to His promise still exists today!

The one and only true Church that fully embodies **THE FAITH** that was once delivered to the saints; the very same teachings of that early Church of God that were restored in this end time within the Church of God by Jesus Christ through His true apostle and the Elijah to come, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong. *(To be continued)*



God's Kingdom Very Near

Continued from Page 4

think generally the one at Athens is considered the highest. Nevertheless, I asked him, "Do you think that there will be an ecumenical movement so that the Eastern and the Roman Church will go together and be rejoined?" And the answer was, "We are praying for it." Now, here is what I learned on this trip, which I had never known before, and I think this is a banner headline news story: One, the disagreement on the giving of the Holy Spirit, that had been a problem with them, has been resolved. The issue had been this: The Roman Catholic Church dogma concerning the Holy Spirit states that the Holy Spirit is given by both God and Jesus Christ. The Eastern Orthodox Church contended that the Holy Spirit is only given by

God the Father. The Roman Catholic Church was willing to concede on this. Now the Roman Church conceded on that. Well, it was a little trade made.

Now second, the issue as to whom will head the united church has already been resolved. Now that was news to me. The Eastern Orthodox Church has already agreed to accept a secondary position for the patriarch, that is, of the Eastern Church, in deference to the Pope, so that the Pope will be on top of the heap, just as the Bible says, exactly. "We only want," this is a quote, "We only want to have our input and impact. The Pope will be the leader of the combined churches."

Now, third, the only disagreement that remains to be resolved is the infallibility of the Pope. "We can't buy that, they say in the East. He is only a human being."

Well, let me say that it is my understanding that the Pope does not claim to be anything but a fallible human being and their contention is that he does not claim to speak infallibly, only when he speaks officially for the Church and he makes it known that it is like an encyclical or an official pronouncement, and he does not make, apparently, such an official announcement without having consulted the heads of the Curia in Rome. They are the chiefs, of course, the top

men ... cardinals, that wear the red beanies on their back. That's what they seem to me. Anyway, the chief cardinals, which is the highest office next to Pope, and we have something like in our Church. We have a number of the highest people here in office next to Pastor General who are the Evangelists. And

we have a certain number of Evangelists here at headquarters. Now, on the Advisory Council of Elders, I have a number of the Evangelists who are residents here in Pasadena. There are other Evangelists that are residents in other parts of the world, England and, well, I guess Canada and other places that would qualify perfectly to be on the Advisory Council, but they are just not as convenient. They are not handy, and we don't have a Curia, however, but the Roman Catholic Church does. So, my understanding is that the Pope does not speak infallibly, except that is to claim infallibility, except when he has checked it with this Curia, and I think that Rome will now make the concession that they will also listen to the top Greek officials before he makes any such pronouncement, but that won't be much of a give and take for him, and I am quite sure that will be done, and ... very quickly. Now, something else has happened on this trip. It is putting



THE VATICAN IN ROME

all of these things right together. It is all of a sudden going together and that is that while I was in South Africa, and I was having a meeting that night at the home of Dr. McCarthy, and they announced, and it sort of startled me, because I couldn't get my mind on much of anything else for that evening because

I could realize the very importance of it. President Brezhnev of the Soviet Union had died, and we just got the news. They held it up 24 hours. This was just 24 hours later when they made the announcement that day, and someone got the news there and told me that night. Well, Brezhnev is gone and Andropov, former head of their, well the same thing as our, not Secret Service, but FBI. He has been a real tough guy as they say. He is now president and has taken over everything that Brezhnev had, and he is starting out in a very tough manner. His speeches are very tough. Now one of the great things that is urging Europe on and perhaps the greatest thing that will cause them to hurry and get together on this is their fear of what is going

on in the Kremlin and the Soviet Union. And Andropov is frightening them, and that is going to rush them. They are losing confidence in the United States as having a military umbrella over them to protect them. They want their own military force to protect themselves. That's the



THE KREMLIN IN MOSCOW, RUSSIA

way they feel over there. Now, that is a chief incentive to unite them, and that is taking place. Now, furthermore, while the Pope was in Rome, I don't mean Rome, I mean in Spain, the Pope just recently just a short time before I was there had made a tour of Spain, and it was a terrific tour. It was the first time that any Pope has ever visited Spain, and yet Spain is the most Catholic of all the Catholic countries and was just 100 percent Catholic under, there again I had his name, I mentioned it already and I can't think of it again now, the dictator who just died recently. Anyway, this whole United States of Europe when it goes together is going to trigger nuclear World War III. Now, let me tell you what else it is going to do. It is going to end our work! Our work will be through of getting the Gospel to the world!!

That is, very shortly after it goes into force and effect because they will move in such a way that it will end it, and then I will tell you what will happen! As you read here in Amos 8:11, "**Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread ... but of hearing the words of the LORD.**" In other words, the Gospel has not been preached for 1900 years until, it didn't go to the world until I went on Radio Luxemburg the first week in January of 1953, exactly one century of time cycles from the time the apostle Paul wrote to the churches in Galatia that the Gospel had been suppressed and was not being proclaimed any longer. Now I want to read you some of the things about that. Matthew 24, the disciples had asked Jesus, "**Tell us,**



when shall these things be?” He’d been talking about the destruction of the temple, which did happen in 70 A.D., and something else, **“What will be the sign of thy coming and the end of the world?”** Now, He went on to tell them that they should not be deceived, that many would come preaching about Him, claiming to be His ministers, come in His name, saying that Jesus is the Christ and yet deceiving the world. How can they preach Christ and deceive people? How can they believe in Christ and how can they accept Christ and still be deceived and lost? Well, Jesus said, **“In vain do they worship Me.”** You can even worship Christ all in vain. How? He said, **“Teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, making the law of God and the commandments of God of no effect by your tradition.”**

They will not accept the commandments of God, neither the Protestants nor the Catholic Church. A very prominent cardinal of the Catholic Church, Cardinal Gibbons, this goes back about 60 or 70 years ago, but I remember it very well. He said, *“You may search the Bible from beginning to end, and you cannot find one word authorizing Sunday worship. Everywhere the Bible enforces the Sabbath, Saturday. The only authority you have for Sunday is the authority of the Roman Catholic Church, and you Protestants are bowing down to us, the Roman Catholic Church, in accepting our authority every Sunday morning.”* It is, **Sunday, is the mark of the Beast** and the Sabbath is the sign of God, and God made it a Sabbath covenant for all eternity, the 31st chapter of Exodus and verse 12-18. Now then, Jesus said many would come preaching in His name, and they did and they have up until now. They have not preached the Gospel of the Kingdom, the Gospel He preached and finally He got down to their second question, about the sign of his coming and He said, **“And this gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and THEN shall the end come.”**

Brethren, I wanted you to realize that that Gospel was not preached for one thousand nine hundred years. Now 19 years is a time cycle. The sun and the moon and the earth are set in conjunction to set off spaces of time. One revolution of the earth measured by the sun is a 24-hour day. One revolution of the moon around



The earth, moon and sun in alignment

the earth is a lunar month. One revolution of the earth around the sun is a solar year. So you see, the sun, moon and the earth mark off days, months and years, time, and they only come into conjunction exactly every 19 years. So, 19 years is a time cycle.

God does things on time, and precisely a century of time cycles after the Gospel was suppressed and not preached to the world, God raised up this Church to preach it through me through the most powerful radio station in the world, Radio Luxemburg, and for 19 years, and beginning precisely 19 years before that right down to the same week the first week in 1934, I began preaching it in the United States and had gotten it coast to coast all over the United States in that 19th year and then it began going to the whole world. Now, let’s go on a little further. After that Gospel is proclaimed to the world in verse 21, **“For then shall be great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this same time no nor ever shall be and except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved alive.”** In other words, humanity would be erased. There would not be a man, woman or child left alive if God did not supernaturally intervene to stop it before it goes that far. Now it is going to start, but it just isn’t going to go that far. God will stop it before it gets that far. You know it did happen once that God blotted out all the lives except eight on the earth, a flood in Noah’s day. Jesus said, **“As it was in the time of Noah, so will it be in the days ...”** just before His Second Coming. Now, let’s go on a little further when He said, **“For the elect’s sake.”** Brethren, that is you and the rest of our brethren around the world in the Church of God,

“For the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened,” before it’s too late, before all humanity is destroyed! It got down to eight people in Noah’s day. I think it will not get down to that small a number this time, but a great many million, millions and hundreds of millions of people that are now living are going to be killed in the next few years, brethren! You are right on the threshold of things!

I don’t know. I think sometimes we sit there and think it was a nice sermon Mr. Armstrong preached. I was entertained by it. Well, I think you better be startled by it because the end of our work is at hand, and the end of this life is about at hand! Things are going to happen that are going to shake you up, brethren, and shake the whole world in a way it has never been shaken before!! Now dropping down to verse 29, same chapter, **“Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens,”** which means *Satan and his demons*, **“shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and ... all the tribes of the earth shall mourn,”** that’s all of the nations, **“and shall see the Son of Man, Jesus Christ, coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”** In all the supernatural power of the great God, to take over this earth and to rule!

That’s what we celebrated on the Day of Atonement. I wonder if we just think that we celebrate these annual Holy Days just as sort of a custom. It doesn’t mean anything. You know they are looking forward to the greatest events that are just going to stagger this world beyond words! I don’t know how to put it in a way to, sometimes **I think I need to shake everybody up and make us realize the seriousness of these things, and I just feel like I am totally unable. I just don’t have the power to do it.** I read in the Bible how people have been just so *nonchalant*, and *they are just not interested*, just like on Thanksgiving Day they were interested in football and turkey and things like that, *not* interested in what they should be, but that means the Second Coming of Christ. Now, to see what this thing in Europe is going to *trigger*, I say it will trigger World War III. Well, let’s go on. Let me prove that

now. Let me go on and show you a little bit more. The 13th chapter of Revelation, let’s get back to that now. John is telling what he saw in his vision here in the book of Revelation 13:1, **“And I stood on the sand of the seashore, and I saw a beast.”**

Now, he takes a wild animal and this wild animal is only a type of a great nation, and he uses the kind of animal whose nature typifies the nature of the nation or the empire it is talking about. **“And he saw a beast rise up out of the sea having seven heads and ten horns and upon his horns ten crowns.”** Now, they were not on the heads, but on the horns. **“And upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard.”** Now, it wasn’t a leopard. A leopard is cat-like, and a cat is a very quick animal. It moves quickly and gracefully. **“And his feet were the feet of a bear.”** That is the preponderant part of a bear, its feet. **“And his mouth as the mouth of a lion.”** That is the strongest part especially of a male lion, the mouth, and even the female lion. They catch their prey. They break its neck or they snap it, and they kill it with the mouth. **“And the dragon gave him his power and seat and great authority.”** Now Revelation 12:9, “The dragon, that old serpent called Satan and the devil.” And it identifies him right just ahead of this in chapter 12:9. “The dragon gave him his power and his seat and great authority.” Now, Satan is sitting on the throne of the earth, and this is Satan’s world, not God’s world, and it is Satan. Now, God gave Nebuchadnezzar his seat. Nebuchadnezzar did not take it, but Satan has given that seat to those in the times of the Gentiles ever since Belshazzar saw the handwriting on the wall, and his kingdom was taken that night. Satan has given the power, and seat, and great authority; and they have served ... Well, he is the god of the world. He appears as an angel of light. And deceived people don’t know they are deceived. Brethren, I don’t say this thing to accuse. I don’t say it because I am



Benito Mussolini, Adolph Hitler represented sixth resurrection of the Roman Empire in Europe.



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Rembrandt's portrayal of 'Belshazzar's Feast' in which the Chaldean emperor saw the handwriting on the wall.

angry at the people of the so-called beast or beast power or the person, and maybe I already know in person somewhat intimately, the one who will be that beast. If so, I feel sorry for him, and I don't accuse him of anything because he believes he is right. He's sincere, and we need to realize that. God has not called us to sit in judgment. Christ is the judge. Let us be thankful God has opened our eyes, our minds and called us out, **"Come out from among them,"** in this world, **"and be separate."** The world is deceived, but there is a lot of good in this world. You know the people in this world, they have their professional ethics. There are people with what they call high morals, of high standards, good standards. Oh, yes, they think they are right, and yet they don't have God's spirit so they don't have the love of God. It isn't their fault, and they don't know any better. We're not to sit in judgment of them. We're not to hate them. We are not their enemies. They are not our enemies. Well, I hope they are not our enemies anyhow.

"And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death." That's the last head, the Roman Empire. **"And his deadly wound was healed."** That was in 554 as I just told you, the Holy Roman Empire. **"And all the world wondered after the beast."** Now, you have to go back to Daniel 7 to what is meant by the symbol "beast." In Daniel 7, Daniel saw four beasts. The first was like a lion, the second like a bear, the third was a leopard that had four heads, and the last one had to be

sort of a combination of all of those first four but different from all of them. It had one head, but it had 10 horns so there you have the seven heads and 10 horns and so on. Now it said that they are kings or kingdoms or empires. The beasts then are kings or kingdoms as you read in Daniel 7. Now, also it says in Daniel 7, I won't take time to go back and read all of that, the saints are finally going to take the kingdom and rule the kingdom forever, but the gentile empires from the Chaldean Empire on down through the Roman Empire and to this coming reunion in Europe, it is finally going to be taken over by the saints, and we will rule under Christ forever.

Now, I read to you from Daniel 2:44, that in Daniel 2 you will find who those empires are, the lion, the head was the same as the head of the image and that was Nebuchadnezzar of the Chaldean Empire. The bear then was the Persian Empire. The leopard was the Greco-Macedonian Empire divided into four divisions for its four heads. And the other strong as iron was the Roman Empire. Now it had 10 horns and each of those horns became another head as you find in the seventh chapter of Daniel. Now then, I want to go back to the 17th chapter of Revelation and notice the first six verses: **"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials,"** now, these are the seven last plagues poured out at the time of Christ's coming. Remember I am reading you what John saw in a vision, and what he saw in a vision is just before the coming of Christ, and so the seven angels having the seven vials that are poured out are *plagues poured out at the very time of the coming of Christ*. **"And he talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew thee the judgment of the great whore,"** that is, God is doing the judging or Christ is doing the judging on a great whore, a fallen woman, **"that sitteth upon many waters."** Now, she sits on many waters.

Down here in verse, let me see, verse 10 or verse 9, I guess it is. I've got so many marks on there I can't even read it. **"The seven heads are seven mountains,"** no, it's another place. Oh, here. **"And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples. and multitudes, and nations, and languages or tongues."** In other words, many nations speaking many different languages, in

other words, Europe. Same thing, all that I've just been telling you about. So the **"great whore that sitteth on many waters,"** that is many nations speaking different languages, **"with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication."** They claim to be the Church. The Church is supposed to be the affianced bride of Christ, but she didn't wait to be married to Christ at his Second Coming. She was married to the kings of this world.



Pope Pius XII, a 'Vicar of Christ'

Now, the Pope's name, he's called the Vicar of Christ. I wonder if you know what Vicar means. Look it up in the dictionary. Vicar of Christ means *in place of* Christ. It doesn't mean a representative of Christ. It means one who has just shoved Christ aside and knocked Him out of the way and taken over. One who said, "Christ get out of here. I'm taking over for you. I'm running it now." *In PLACE of Christ!* The Roman Catholic Church has claimed that the Kingdom of God is the Roman Catholic Church. That the Pope is in the place of Christ! The Second Coming of Christ occurred. He is ruling the nations of the world, and they ruled for 1,260 years the nations of Europe by calling it *the Holy Roman Empire*. That is why the Bible speaks of her in such terms of rottenness, of filthiness. Let me go on and read it to you. **"I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast."** Now, the beast is the civil government, the political government. The woman is a church. **"A beast full of names of blasphemy having seven heads and 10 horns and the**

woman was arrayed in purple," the color of royalty, **"and scarlet,"** the color of a harlot or a whore, **"and scarlet color and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls having a golden cup in her hand."**

A woman is always a symbol of a church. A civil government is spoken of in the masculine gender, in symbol, in the Bible. **"In her hand full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication and upon her forehead,"** the church's forehead, **"was a name written, Mystery Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots."** In other words, the Babylonian Mystery Religion. The ancient pagan Babylonian Mystery Religion now called falsely Christianity and claiming to be the original church. Notice that, and the mother of harlots who came out of her protesting and calling themselves protestant in protest. God calls them harlots, brethren. Now, they are deceived. They don't know it. I'm not calling them names. I'm reading you what God says. It is God. God has a right to call them names if he wants to. I'm not doing it. Harlots and abominations of the earth. This thing is *filthy* in God's sight. And yet we've come up among some of that. We've believed a lot of that, and Christ has said, **"Come out from among them and be separate."** Christ has called His Church out from among all of that to be separate, brethren, and we have to live a different kind of life. **"And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints."** You know that she called them, if they kept the Sabbath instead of Sunday, they were declared *heretic* or *anathema* from Christ.

Now, the accusation *anathema* from Christ made by the church was considered a capital crime by the government, and the government, the political state, *put them to death and they were martyred*, and the woman is *drunken* on **the blood of the saints**. The woman says, "Oh, I never killed anybody. Oh, no, we didn't put anyone to death! No, we just pronounced them *anathema* from Christ. It was the government, the government put them to death." But the woman sat on top of the beast. A woman riding a horse is weaker. The horse is much stronger. It carries her, but she makes it go gee or haw, turn right or left, and she controls it and guides it which way it goes and what it

does and that is exactly what happened. A woman riding a beast. **“And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus and when I saw her I wondered in great admiration.”**

Now we come down to verse 8: **“The beast that thou sawest was and is not.”** Now, I have to get the time of this prophecy. At what time was John seeing in his vision, and I think it was right around the year of 1934, and that’s about the time that *Mussolini* claimed that he had revived the so-called Holy Roman Empire. As I say, I don’t think it even made front-page headlines, but I saw it, and I announced it on the air at the time myself. **“The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit.”** You see it’s to come out, one more head yet. **“And go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder,”** when they behold, “whose names,” that is that **“were not written in the book.”** All, except those in the Church, that are going to look on with *absolute, dumbfounded wonder* when they see this United States of Europe rise up! Now undoubtedly Greece will be in. The Pope is going back to Poland in just a few months, and they’re declaring this coming year a certain year of rejuvenation of Europe, and I know that they are planning to try to put it over in this coming year. They are really, they know they have got to work fast now, and it is going to go to pieces, fit in piece, not to pieces, very, very soon. Now let me show you a little bit of the final and the end of it. The 10 horns in verse 12, **“The 10 horns which thou sawest are 10 kings which have received no kingdom as yet but received power as kings one hour with the beast.”**

The beast will be over the 10 nations. Each nation will have a king on its throne. It may be five in Western Europe, five in Eastern Europe. Poland may break away. Czechoslovakia would like to. I’m pretty sure that Romania would. I’ve been there three times, and I’ve had even the top people from Romania right near the top of the government as our guest here in Pasadena, and they say, “We are communists, but we certainly are not Moscow communists,” and they would like to cut loose from Moscow and also so would the former nation of Tito or Yugoslavia. Now, Yugoslavia seems to be hanging together.



EASTERN EUROPE

It is really several nations put together, and I thought they might split after Tito died, but they seem to be holding, and I think that they might come in. Undoubtedly, Greece will come in. The people I saw in Athens are very anxious to come into this, and strangely enough even the United States politicians want this thing to go through in Europe. They are all for it. But now notice this, **“These have one mind and shall give their power and (their) strength to the beast.”** That’s the military power of their nations. **“And these shall make war with the lamb and the lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings.”** That means the Second Coming of Christ. They will fight against Christ when He comes. Now that gets you right down to the very time just before the Second Coming of Christ. Now, I’m afraid I’m going to have to take a little extra time. I’ve still got a little time. I hope I can get this without going overtime. But, now, next I want to show you what connection that has with the **Great Tribulation** and with the United States and with us. Isaiah 47 now, back in Isaiah 47 and beginning in verse 1. No, let me see I want the first seven verses of Isaiah 47. **“Come down,”** this

is a prophecy, **“Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon.”** Now, remember that ancient Babylon was always a he, masculine gender, under king Nebuchadnezzar 604 years before Christ down to 554 B.C. That was in the masculine gender, but this is a daughter of that Babylon. This is a church! Remember the “her” is always a church. **“Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans.”** A church that has been riding on top of governments speaking different languages. This ties right in with what I just read you in the book of Revelation. **“For thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate.” In female terms. “Take the millstones, and grind meal; uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers. Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen: and I will take vengeance** (that’s God speaking), **and I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man.”** That is God won’t meet as a man. **“As for our redeemer, the Eternal of hosts is His name, the Holy One of Israel,”** meaning Christ. **“Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called, the lady of kingdoms.”**

A church riding over governments, “the lady of kingdoms.” God says, **“I was wroth with My people,”** and His people were Israel, and we are Israel and you have to know who is Israel and who is Judah to understand this. **“I was wroth with My people, I have polluted Mine inheritance,”** which is Israel, **“and given them into thine hand.”** This church riding over the kingdoms. **“And given them into thine hand: and thou didst show them no mercy.”** Now notice that. **“Thou didst show them no mercy; upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke.”** Notice that yoke is going to be on our people by this very United Europe. **“And thou said, I shall be a lady for ever.”** This is the daughter of Babylon. **“So that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it.”** Now there is a great deal more to the prophecy, and I’m just cutting it short to give you the general idea of it as quickly as possi-

ble. It is addressed to the House of Israel. The next chapter starts out **“Hear this O you House of Israel”** and so on. This message all the way through is to the House of Israel, which is Britain and the United States and the English-speaking people. Now next I am going to go to Jeremiah 30. Jeremiah 30 and beginning with verse 2 (3). **“For, lo, the days come, saith the Eternal, that I will bring again the captivity of My people Israel and Judah.”** Now, for example, the Israelis are really Judah and not Israel, but there are more Jews in New York City than there are in Palestine or in the country called Israel, and there are almost as many out here in Los Angeles. There are a great many Jews in Los Angeles. For some reason, the Los Angeles Jews, they misunderstand us and have been against us, and I wish they weren’t. I wish they knew how we have cooperated with their own people over in the nation Israel and what friends we have with them over there. **“For, lo, the days come, that I will bring again the captivity of My people Israel and Judah, saith the Eternal of Hosts: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers.”** That is back in Palestine. **“And they shall possess it.”**

Now that is after the Second Coming of Christ. **“And these are the words that the Eternal spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah.”** Showing they are two different peoples altogether, but they were divided. **“For thus saith the Eternal, we have heard a voice of trembling and of fear and not of peace. Ask you now and see whether a man doth travail with child. Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins as a woman in travail and all faces are turned into paleness. Alas, for the day is great so that there is none like it.”** In other words, there can only be one time so great and so terrible that nothing has never been like it before or ever will again. Again, this is the **Great Tribulation**. **“So that none is like it even the time of Jacob’s trouble.”** Now Jacob means Israel, not Judah, in this case because the dying Jacob crossed his hands on the sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, and said let my name, Jacob, be named on them so we have that name Jacob, not Judah. **“Alas, for that day is great so that none is like it. It is the**

day of Jacob's trouble. But he shall be saved out of it." He'll get into it, but be saved out of it after he gets into it, but it's going to be terrible. **"For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Eternal of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck."** Remember I said that Babylon, the daughter of the ancient Babylon will have a yoke on us. And here it is again. **"From off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: But they shall serve the Eternal their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them."**

That is in the resurrection at the coming of Christ. David is to be resurrected and is to be king over all the nations that come from the 12 tribes of Israel. That includes the United States and the Israelis, Britain, France, Holland, Sweden, Norway, all of these countries, and David will be resurrected and be king over



Merodach-Baladan, left, king of Babylonia, sought an alliance with Hezekiah against Assyria.

us. Now the next scripture that I want to read is Jeremiah 50, and the first four verses: **"The word of the Eternal against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah the prophet."** Let's see, I want the first four verses. **"Declare ye among the nations and publish and set up a standard, publish and conceal not, say Babylon**

is taken. Bel is confounded. Merodach is broken in pieces. Her idols are confounded. Her images are broken in pieces for out of the north there cometh up a nation against her."

Now this is against Babylon, and this is speaking of the Communist countries finally coming against what you would call a Catholic Europe. Russia is to the north, and they are to the south. **"Out of the north there cometh up a nation against her, they shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein: and they shall remove, and shall depart both man and beast. In those days, and in that that time, saith the Eternal, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together,**

going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the Eternal their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Eternal in a perpetual covenant." That is a new covenant. And then it goes on to say, **"My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray."** Their ministers! **"They have turned them away on the mountains."** That is various nations it means here. **"They have gone from mountain to hill, and have forgotten their restingplace."**

Then it says, beginning with verse 8, **"Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he goats before the flocks."** To Israel God says a lot of those things, and there is a lot more here, but it shows that he is talking about the time just before the Second Coming of Christ and going into that time. Our people are going to be taken *as slaves*, the third that are left alive. Now, in all of our dwelling places our cities are going to be destroyed. That is in Ezekiel, well let me see, I think I have that all marked out here to read that. Here it is in Ezekiel 6:6, 8. **"In all your dwellingplaces the cities shall be laid waste."** Again in verse 8 (7), **"And the slain shall fall in the midst of you,"** again this is to the house of Israel, not to Judah.

This is to the United States, Britain and our people and our nations. If you don't know that you can't understand it. **"And the slain shall fall in the midst before you, and you shall know that I am the Lord."** Now that expression, "You shall know that I am the Lord or the Eternal" is one that occurs several times in Ezekiel's prophecy and always it refers to the Second Coming of Christ. They did not know he is the Eternal. They will know it when He comes the second time and that is mentioned a good many times there. Now, that is repeated here just a few verses later. Let me see, it's over in the 12th chapter and verse 20.

"And the cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste, and the land shall be desolate: and ye shall know that I am the Eternal." At the Second Coming of Christ. These are things that will happen just before the coming of Christ, and then He is going to take us, those that are left alive of our people, back. Now then, you also have to read in the third chapter of Revelation speaking of the Philadelphia era of the Church.

We are going to be taken to *a place of safety* or to *a place of protection* during this time, and I don't know how to make anything else out of it, and that is in two different places in the Bible. Again in the 12th chapter of Revelation. We're to fly unto a place that is prepared. Now, how God is going to do that, how he is going to bring it, well, we just have to *trust Him in faith* to open our minds to understand it when the time comes, and I think it is now going to come very, very soon.

Well, brethren, I have been preaching this now for the last 48 or 49 years. That is before a great many, I'd say half of you, have been born since that time. And now it is all coming to pass and it is reality! It is going to come very soon! You can laugh it off. You can go out and say, "Well, I think that we called Mr. Armstrong God's apostle. I guess he's just a crackpot" if you want to or you can heed and be protected!

Now, let me tell you what else is going to happen, and this is one thing that has been seen in Rome very lately. Tags – giving the days of the week and showing that the seventh day of the week is Sunday and that Monday is the first day of the week and that *Saturday is the sixth day of the week!* Do you get the significance of that, brethren? They have been trying to change the calendar in Europe for the past 20, 30, 40 years. They have not changed it yet. The new United States of Europe will do it. Now there is one commandment that is the test commandment. I want to tell you, the people of the world and of Protestantism and Catholicism; they will admit that we shouldn't have other gods before the true God, the first commandment. They will admit that we should not make images. I don't know if the Catholic Church will or not, but the Protestants most of them will. ... That we shouldn't take His name in vain. They will admit that we should honor our parents. They will admit that we shouldn't commit adultery, that we shouldn't lie. We shouldn't steal. It's wrong to steal. Murder is wrong. Oh yes, we have human laws against those things, against stealing and murder especially and, of course,



The Roman Coliseum where Christians were martyred was built with the wealth Romans centurions plundered when they sacked the temple in Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

lying sometimes. If you lie in court, it's called perjury. Why, you can be held in contempt of court and get fined. Of course, it's done all the time anyway. And it's wrong to covet.

But they won't admit that *the seventh day is the Sabbath and it is holy to God and we are commanded to keep it holy!* There is one commandment they will not accept. That is God's test commandment, and it is going to be **a test** for us and the mark of the beast is soon going to be enforced, and you are going to find that you will not be able to have a job. You will not be able to buy anything. You will not be able to receive any money unless you turn back to Sunday. Brethren, I tell you that is going to happen in the very next few years, and it may happen by next year or the year after. The mark of the beast is going to be enforced, which is Sunday instead of Sabbath. The Sabbath is God's sign!

I've got to preach some more sermons on that, and I just heard that I didn't realize that when this Church was beginning to go liberal, just before I began to work with might and man to put it back on the track here only three, four years ago that they were also beginning to say, "Oh, well, you can buy all your merchandise. You can work if you have to, anything on the Sabbath." They were saying that, even the ministers in this Church. They are gone. They are out of here now, and you show me any minister who will say that now, and I'll see that he gets out of the Church in

a hurry because no such minister belongs in the Church of God. It's time this Church gets cleaned up. It's time we get all the way back on the track. I've been moving every way I could to get us back on the track. I'm pretty well torn apart physically. I'm past 90 years of age, and I still have to be the dynamo that keeps it going. I can hardly read. I can just see out of one eye, and it's so blind I've bothered you, and I'm sorry. I apologize for having had you have to sit there while I struggle to try to read the Bible to you, but I do the best I can, and I hope you will do the best you can, brethren.

You know, I'm just reminded last time I saw Mrs. Thatcher of England, the Prime Minister. As we were leaving she said, "Well, there's one thing, our two countries the United States and Britain must absolutely continue to hang together." I said, "Well, if we don't hang together we'll probably hang separately," and that's the way it is with us, brethren. We had better get on the track. And be sure that we are there. I wish you could all have heard the sermon this morning. I have to preach on things like this. I have to bring these things to you. Other ministers can bring you spiritual food for your everyday living, but there are things like this that I have to bring to you. Now, we are going to have to get back onto the Sabbath question and what is the mark of the beast. I've been giving you a little bit about who the beast is now this afternoon. All of a sudden, I've been preaching this for years and now all of a sudden these things are all falling into place! It is going to happen!! The question is are we ready? **We are going to be put into a test that you can't dream of!**

The test commandment is going to be **a test** and your life is going to depend on whether you can trust God or whether you will give in, and I predict that some of you are going to give up the Sabbath and give in and go with the world, but the plagues of God will be on you if you do that, but everything that the civil gov-



ernment and police and the power of man can do to you will be on you IF you don't give in on the Sabbath-Sunday question!!! Where are you going to stand? You are going to be put to **a test** such as you have never had before brethren and very soon, and I tell you the time is coming when you better do a little fasting and praying and get back close to God and be sure that you are so close to Him that you can rely on Him, that you can trust Him, because you are going to have to trust Him with your life and very soon.

Now I hope this shakes you up a little bit because if I can shake you up now that is fine, but if I don't the conditions in the world are going to shake you up and very soon! Well, let's all get back, and we better hang together so pray for me as I pray for you. We need to pray for one another now as never before. Thank you, brethren.



Comments by Mr. Don Billingsley: "Though this sermon was given some years ago, it needs to be put into perspective of where we are now in time. What Mr. Armstrong spoke of at that time can now take place very, very, soon! As he said, 'The pieces are coming together!' And they truly are! We MUST be vigilant while building and maintaining as close a relationship with our Father and His Son Jesus Christ as possible. This will be our only means of survival (Luke 21:36). Some of the content was edited out due to the relevance of the times and does not take away from the very important message he was giving at the time that has far more meaning today than it did at that time."

Doing the Work

By Gary Liebold

‘The only thing worse than being blind, is having sight but no vision.’



Library of Congress photo
Helen Keller, Alexander Gra-
ham Bell

Those inspiring words are quoted from a well-known author and lecturer in our American history, Helen Keller. Before the age of 2, due to illness, Helen became physically and permanently blind and deaf. Though she experienced many struggles and trials

due to her physical disabilities, as a mature adult she saw a much bigger picture for her *own life* that extended far beyond **eyes** and **ears**. The BIG *picture* she saw, she termed as “*vision*.” Helen grew from a beginning point in understanding a “simple word” spelled out on her hand, to eventually graduating with honors from Radcliffe College. As she later wrote, “Once I knew only darkness and stillness ... my life was without past or future ... but a little word from the fingers of another fell into my hand that clutched at emptiness, and my heart leaped to the rapture of living.”

We in the Church of God also could apply Helen’s words about “*vision*” in a *spiritual* way. Many people can have physical **eyesight**, but God’s called-out ones must have real spiritual “*vision*” (Proverbs 29:18). As we draw ever closer to the return of Jesus Christ, *vision* is paramount to each of us. Through spiritual “*eye salve*” and “*hearing*,” we can begin to see the BIG *picture* of just what Christ is doing in this end time (Revelation 3:18-22; John 10:27-30).

In Habakkuk 1:5 we read, **“Look among the nations and watch – be utterly astounded! For I will work a work in your days which you would not believe, though it were told you.”** Mr. Don Billingsley recently wrote in his “Pastor’s Comments” dated July 21, 2007:



Treacherous seas often require the teamwork of many to ensure the survival of all.

“Though the majority of the elect members of the Philadelphia Church era are yet scattered, as always Jesus Christ continues to move forward using a Congregation that remains fully faithful to the doctrinal teachings, ruling, and is being used as an instrument or conduit to make all of the **RESTORED TEACHINGS** of God’s late apostle and the Elijah of the end time available and accessible on our numerous web sites.”

Today, we see a “*scattered*” condition in the Church of God (Daniel 12:7), but with true “*vision*,” we can begin to see just how Christ is leading, and understand our roles as a unified **TEAM together**, in the WORK of the Living God! (Ephesians 4:15-16, Romans 12:4-5, I Corinthians 12:12-31.)

A Successful TEAM

On the January 12, 1899, a *true-life* event occurred in British history that beautifully illustrates what a *unified* team can achieve. This story is about the *Lynmouth lifeboat crew*, a crew of 12 courageous individuals (along with the help of others), who displayed a sense of purpose, drive and determination. They worked solidly together, as a cohesive team, all in an effort to rescue lives aboard a ship in *distress*. Due to **high** gale-force winds and storm-driven waves, the 1,900-ton ship *Forest Hall*, could have potentially become the final “graveyard” for the people aboard. They could have very well lost their lives to the sea, if it were not for the *Lynmouth lifeboat crew*.

As the story goes, a severe storm had been raging around the Bristol Channel. On the same day, a steam tug had left Bristol bound for Liverpool towing the *Forest Hall*. During the storm, the tow broke, and the tug was forced to return to port for repairs, leaving the *Forest Hall* dragging its anchor. About 7:52 p.m., a telegraphed message revealed that a sea vessel was in *distress*. Immediately, villagers and crew hurried to the lifeboat house near the harbor to prepare a launch of the lifeboat, *Louisa*, only to realize that it was futile to try to launch from Lynmouth due to the roiling seas. The only way the Lynmouth crew could save those aboard the helpless vessel would be to launch from *Porlock*, 15 miles away. Making the journey to *Porlock* would encompass climbing a steep 1,423-foot hill and crossing some of England’s most rugged terrain. By eight o’clock, the men and women had prepared the horses and carriage to pull the lifeboat over land for the long haul ahead. Along the way, the *10-ton carriage* collapsed when a wheel fell off, but as a unified **team**, they lifted the broken carriage to fix the wheel and proceed onward.

Over the evening hours, the journey proved to be too much for many of the villagers, who turned back to Lynmouth, leaving only a stout-hearted party of 12 to continue the journey. At 6:30 a.m., they arrived at *Porlock Weir*. Although tired and hungry, the crew took up their stations on the *Louisa* as helpers pushed the boat



into the churning sea. After an hour of battling intense waves unlike any they had ever seen, the crew found the *Forest Hall* and boarded the stricken vessel, safely towing her to port. They finally arrived in the Welsh port of Barry at 5 p.m., more than **21 hours** after they had received the original *distress* call. The gallant lifeboat crew had returned, successfully ending the most famous rescue in all British lifeboat history.

In reflecting on this true story we can realize that even though the *Lynmouth lifeboat crew* could be viewed as “small in numbers,” that resolute team of 12 overcame unbelievable *obstacles* and kept their *focus* in mind in order to fulfill their responsibilities. The lifeboat crew wasn’t concerned with only their **own** lives, for if they had been, they wouldn’t have put themselves at such great risk. What an example for us to think about, and even more so when we think of this story in a *spiritual* context.

From the very first issue of the *Philadelphia Remnant* magazine (January/February, 2007), on each front cover has been placed the two verses of **Ezekiel 34:12, 16:**

“... I [will] seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away ...”

We are a “little flock” (Luke 12:32), but we must never take our responsibilities lightly. Through prophetic events following the death of Mr. Herbert W.



Armstrong, in retrospect, we can see how prophecies unfolded, making clear the current scattered condition of the Church (II Thessalonians 2:3, Jeremiah 23:2, Daniel 12:7, Ezekiel 34:5-6). But, as Christ **leads** in doing His WORK, we can more fully realize **our** roles and responsibilities to those who are “scattered.” As has always been the case, God wants our **HEARTS** truly in **His** Work! (Matthew 24:45-46)

The BIG Picture

It's important for God's True Church to understand the *BIG picture* of what He, the Great God, is doing! In the book of Acts, Chapter 13 (quoted from Habakkuk 1:5), we can plainly see that there always will be individuals who will *scoff* at what God is doing. **“Behold, you despisers, marvel and perish, for I work a work in your days, a work which you will by no means believe, though one were to declare it to you”** (Acts 13:41). *Scoffers* don't see the *BIG picture*! God, through Jesus Christ, is gathering His sheep together (Ezekiel 34:12,16), and although some might think they only see a “trickle” or a “mustard seed,” God sees much farther ahead into the future (Mark 4:31-32). He doesn't stay focused on a “mustard seed,” He sees on beyond into the soon-coming Kingdom of God. **“Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David, and over His kingdom, to order it, and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts**

will perform this.” (Isaiah 9:7) God isn't stuck on the word “trickle.” He has the *BIG picture* in mind!

Mr. Billingsley wrote in the January 2007 introduction of our magazine, the *Philadelphia Remnant*:

“What Jesus Christ is now doing by using this tiny handful of Gideon's army, so to speak, is as a **CONDUIT** for those **RESTORED AND REACTIVATED WORKS** to be made available and accessible for any and all anywhere on earth who desire to learn the truth and begin changing their lives.

Please know this little flock is insignificant! We are well aware of who we are and realize we fit the description that was given by the apostle Paul; the bottom of the barrel (I Corinthians 1:27-29).

We should remember at the same time Christ said He could raise up rocks if need be to fulfill His will (Luke 19:40). And this is the way we look at ourselves.”

The ‘End-Time Elijah’

As we begin to more firmly realize our roles in what Christ is doing, with scriptures like **Malachi 4:5**, the understanding should become all the more clear. **“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.”** This end-time Elijah is spoken of as preceding **“the great and dreadful day of the Lord.”** In the book, *Mystery of the Ages* by Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, we realize that he *knew* of his role as the end-time Elijah. On pages 9 and 10 of the original hardbound edition, we can see his understanding, as he wrote the following:

“In the book of Isaiah is a ‘NOW’ prophecy: “The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord. ... lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say

... Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him" (Isaiah 40:3, 9-10).

That voice now cries out!

The prophet Malachi confirmed this: "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts" (Mal. 3:1)."

Under the subtitle, "**The Elijah to Come**," Mr. Armstrong continued:

"Both of these prophecies have a dual application. First, they refer to John the Baptist, who prepared the way before Jesus' human ministry more than 1,900 years ago. BUT, as a prototype, or forerunner, these prophecies foretell one to prepare the way before Christ's Second Coming as the King of kings and Lord of lords to RULE over ALL NATIONS!

Malachi's prophecy, like Isaiah's, if you will read on past the first verse, refers to **a human messenger** (emphasis mine) preparing the way before Christ's now imminent Second Coming, this time in supreme POWER AND GLORY as Ruler over all nations! Understand the duality principle here. These prophecies refer to a type and its fulfillment. John the Baptist was a voice crying out in the *physical* wilderness of the Jordan River area, preparing for the human *physical* Jesus' First Coming to a *material* temple at Jerusalem, to a *physical* Judah.

But that was a prototype, or forerunner of a voice "lifted up" (greatly amplified by modern printing, radio and TV), crying out in the midst of today's *spiritual* wilderness of religious confusion, announcing the imminency of Christ's Second Coming as the spiritually GLORIFIED Christ, to his spiritual temple (the Church resurrected to spirimortality) (Ephesians 2:21-22).

Clearly, Mr. Armstrong realized the responsibility he was given! Mr. Billingsley also wrote the following in his *Pastor's Comments* (July 21, 2007):

"To aid one in making the right decision where he or she should be in the Congregation Christ is using, and also doing His Work, one should ask the question: Who did Jesus Christ send at the end time as His apostle and the Elijah to come to **RESTORE** all things lest Christ should come and strike the earth with utter destruction? Malachi 4:1-4; Matthew 17:10-11; Mark 9:11-12. The answer should be obvious.

While considering these Scriptures that make known the special man Christ would use at the very end time should help one to realize he would also be the man to **finish** this Work that would lead to the **Great Tribulation**. And even though he is dead, the Works Christ used him to do have been revitalized and is being used at this last moment in time on our web sites. **No one else is mentioned!** ... Jesus Christ had all of those works preserved and held in safe keeping to be revitalized during this time for the need has become urgent to reach out once again in a final warning to Israel and to the Church of God!"

Christ is still using Mr. Armstrong for **His** purpose today. **We have a part in the Work of Jesus Christ.** The recorded works of God's end-time Elijah, the key web sites given to us for use in this crucial time, as well as this very magazine, (the *Philadelphia Remnant*), are tools necessary to get the Work done. As a solid team, we must be **serious** about God's Work; **serious** about helping the scattered brethren; serious about "feeding the sheep," and **serious** about the "warning message." We don't *sit on our hands*, waiting for someone else! God has given us "**purpose**" and a job laden with responsibility. We must do the Work of God while it is still day (John 9:4).

Again, as Helen Keller once stated, "**The only thing worse than being blind, is having sight but no vision.**" Spiritually, we too must have real vision, working as a TEAM seeing the **BIG picture** in DOING THE WORK of the Living God!



Running Low on Oil

Over the years, it's been said, 'So goes the nation, so goes the Church.' As the United States and the rest of the world experience petroleum prices hitting record highs with demand outstripping supplies, the Church of God at large has been undergoing its own energy crisis by allowing the oil of God's Holy Spirit to dwindle to dangerously low levels. Painful lessons are yet to be learned on both fronts.

By Mark Mendiola

Global petroleum prices dipped below \$50 a barrel at the start of 2007, but by October 2007 they careened past \$90 a barrel on their way to possibly hitting an unprecedented \$100 a barrel, **nearly doubling in cost in less than a year!** On Nov. 7, crude oil prices touched a record \$98.62 a barrel after it was reported that crude oil inventories had declined for a third straight week.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) reported U.S. crude oil inventories were down by 800,000 barrels after they had dropped 3.9 million and 5.3 million barrels the previous two weeks. On Oct. 31, unexpected drops in those inventories to a two-year low caused oil futures to rocket to a record \$96 a barrel, **equaling the inflation-adjusted highs hit in 1980 at the time of the Iranian Revolution!**

On that date, crude oil for December delivery gained as much as \$1.68 or 1.8 percent to hit \$96.21 a barrel in trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange, **the highest since trading began in 1983**, the Associated

Press reported, noting crude prices had risen 39 percent from August to October. On the previous day, the contract surged \$4.15 or 4.6 percent to settle at \$94.53 barrel, **the biggest jump since Sept. 19, 2005**, when Hurricane Rita threatened Gulf of Mexico petroleum production. **Oil prices are up 63 percent from a year ago**, the AP reported. **They have more than quadrupled since 2002.**

"It's not a question of when we'll hit \$100, but how quickly," Nauman Barakat, senior vice president of global energy futures at Macquarie Futures USA Inc. in New York, told the Bloomberg news service. "The door is open to \$100," said Kevin Norrish, an energy analyst at Barclays Capital Inc. in London.

The spiraling, record-breaking oil prices have been a crude awakening for many motorists accustomed to inexpensive fuel for many years. Those days are now well behind us in the rearview mirror as we cruise toward a bruising at gasoline pumps. The full impact of the oil price spike has yet to be felt by consumers and the general economy.

Average prices for regular grade gasoline returned to more than \$3 a gallon on Nov. 5, **up nearly 25 cents in three weeks**, according to the Lundberg survey of about 7,000 U.S. gasoline stations. "I could see easily another 15 cents of upward pressure at the pump hitting very soon if crude remains at approximately current levels," Trilby Lundberg said in a Reuters interview.

Meanwhile, **heating oil costs are expected to leap more than 20 percent this winter**. On Nov. 7, the U.S. residential heating oil price soared nearly 16 cents a gallon over the previous week to \$3.11 although the coldest part of winter was yet to come, Reuters reported. The EIA said **it was the first time ever the average price of heating oil, gas and diesel simultaneously topped \$3 a gallon**. Diesel hit a record \$3.30 a gallon. Heating oil was up 73 cents a gallon from the previous year while inventories were down 15.3 million barrels from a year ago.

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), supplier of more than 40 percent of the world's oil, and the International Energy Agency have warned that demand for oil will increase during the fourth quarter of 2007, intensifying upward pressure on energy costs. The Reuters news service reported that drivers will face more acute pain if the cost of crude remains high into the spring of 2008.

"Analysts expect gasoline prices could rise to a never-before-seen \$3.50 or \$4 a gallon if oil prices



hold near current levels into next spring when drivers hit the roads in greater numbers. That could further strain consumers already facing a housing slowdown," Robert Campbell, a Reuters analyst, wrote in mid-October, noting that U.S. government data show that **U.S. gasoline stocks are more than 22 million barrels or about 10 percent lower than they were at the same time in 2006**.

Fears of a major disruption in the flow of oil from the Middle East are weighing heavily on the minds of traders.

On Oct. 26, crude oil prices surged as much as \$1.76 a barrel or 2 percent to \$92 a barrel on the Nymex after the United States slapped sanctions on Iran, the world's fourth largest oil exporter, and Turkey rattled its sharp sabers by threatening to invade the oil-rich region of northern Iraq and crush Kurdish rebels.

On Oct. 25, contracts vaulted \$3.36 a barrel or 3.9 percent – **the largest one-day gain since April 23**.

"When you're talking Iran and Iraq, two of the biggest holders of oil reserves, no wonder markets are nervous," Gavin Wendt, senior resources analyst in Sydney, Australia, told the Bloomberg news service.

Kevin Norrish stated in a report cited by the AP: "On the back of mounting evidence that the oil balances are tight, and tightening, markets are becoming increasingly uneasy over the prospects of entering the winter high-demand season with inventories at too-low levels."



An oil refinery in Saudi Arabia



Unexpected Shortfalls

Oil futures spiked nearly \$7 a barrel, or 8 percent, in only a few days after the U.S. government on Oct. 24 reported surprisingly sharp drawdowns in crude and gasoline inventories in the United States, showing that oil supplies were falling when they should have been rising to meet expected strong fourth quarter demand. The government said **U.S. oil inventories are about 5 percent lower than a year ago. The U.S. has enough oil stored to meet demand for only 21 days.**

"Distillates and gasoline supplies compared to last year are down significantly," Antoine Halff, head of energy research at Fimat in New York, told CNN-Money.com. Commercial crude stocks fell to their lowest level since March 2005 with imports dropping to a 33-week low. Gasoline imports fell to a 31-week low, while distillate output slid sharply, dropping inventories 6.6 percent lower on the year.

Much of the decline in crude supplies was due to a sharp drop in imports, which fell by 1.3 million barrels a day to an average of 9.1 million barrels a day. Gasoline inventories dropped by two million barrels rather than increase by 1.1 million barrels as expected. Gas imports fell by 255,000 barrels a day to an average of 838,000 barrels a day. Meanwhile, demand for gasoline rose by 120,000 barrels.

OPEC has said it will boost production by about 500,000 barrels a day, starting Nov. 1, but it doesn't plan additional output increases, even with record oil prices, a Venezuelan energy minister said in Caracas

on Oct. 25. Soaring world oil prices have prompted the U.S. and China, the world's largest consumers of petroleum, to call on OPEC to raise output even more, but OPEC has been reluctant to ramp up its oil production because of a steep slide in the U.S. dollar, which reduces the value of its petroleum sales.

A Dangerous Addiction

The extreme rise in petroleum prices and increasing dependence on imported oil is jeopardizing the general economy and national security of the United States. Analysts worry that the sharp run-up in oil costs could fuel inflation as it spreads throughout all economic sectors, adversely affecting the price of virtually all products and services. They also are concerned the U.S. is too beholden to hostile countries for its vitally important oil imports.

The U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve has nearly 700 million barrels or **enough to cover about 68 days of U.S. oil imports** from all sources. As of July 2007, according to the EIA, the United States was importing about 12.5 million barrels (525 million gallons) of net petroleum products per day or **about 60 percent of its daily oil consumption.** About 5.6 million barrels of those imports were from OPEC, whose members include such blatantly belligerent U.S. adversaries as Iran and Venezuela.

Some observers have expressed concerns the U.S. decision to impose economic sanctions on Iran is a precursor to a military attack on Iran's nuclear weapons installations. Iran exports 2.5 million barrels of the four million barrels of oil it produces in a day, but none of it to the United States.

The *Washington Post* reported on Oct. 26 that oil industry experts say a U.S. military strike against Iran could cause pandemonium in petroleum markets and oil prices could skyrocket. In addition to having its oil production and deliveries disrupted, Iran could retaliate by cutting off Iraq's roughly 1.7 million barrels of daily oil production via allied Shiite forces in southern Iraq, further driving up oil prices.

The United States is playing Russian roulette by importing more than 50 percent of the massive volumes of petroleum it needs from foreign sources. It's plac-

ing itself in a perilous predicament that could bring its huge economy grinding to an abrupt halt with dire repercussions for the rest of the world.

Olive Oil: An Illuminating Energy Source

How did the United States get to the point of recklessly gambling its economic future on the ability to replenish its petroleum supplies by spending at least \$920 million a day or about \$33.5 billion annually on foreign oil imports? In the Holy Bible, Proverbs 21:20 states, **“There is desirable treasure, and oil in the dwelling of the wise, but a foolish man squanders it.”**

The United States has foolishly squandered its birthright blessings, treasures and natural resources over many decades to the point the U.S. has become the tail while other countries are ascending as the predominant head internationally. Those foreign oil imports have a ruinous impact on the nation’s balance of trade deficit (Deuteronomy 28:19, 44).

In the context of His Second Coming and the end of the age, Jesus Christ gave an intriguing parable in the context of His famous Olivet Prophecy that provides important lessons for us at both the national and personal levels.

While at the Mount of Olives prior to His crucifixion, Christ warned His disciples of key signs that would precede His return to the earth as the Messiah to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. In His parable of the wise and foolish virgins, Christ said that Kingdom “shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom” (Matthew 25:1).

At that time, olive oil was used as a source of light in lamps to illuminate dark evenings. It also was a power source used to light God’s temple. It’s a tremendous energy source symbolic of the power of God’s Holy Spirit. An orchard of olive trees blanketed the Mount of Olives and was not far from the temple, making it easily accessible for the priests who needed oil to keep the temple’s interior bright. Exodus 25:6, Exodus 35:8 and Exodus 39:37 all refer to “oil for the light.”

Christ and His disciples were accustomed to going to the Mount of Olives, which is a mile-long ridge paralleling the eastern part of Jerusalem across the Kidron Valley. It provided a serene, beautiful environment for them to relax, reflect

and recharge. The Garden of Gethsemane was at its base, across the Brook of Kidron. “Gethsemane” or “Gat Shemen” literally means “oil press” in Hebrew, suggesting the garden was a secluded grove of olive trees where an oil press was located. It was close to the temple or within a “Sabbath day’s journey” (Acts 1:12) of Jerusalem – so, if the temple ran low on oil, it wouldn’t be far to get it and replenish supplies. The area is still covered with olive trees.

The olives had to be pressed to squeeze out the oil needed to keep the lamps aflame and the temple illuminated. On their rotating shifts, the priests of God were to keep the lamps inside the temple burning continually, much like the eternal flame at U.S. President John F. Kennedy’s grave. “And you shall command the children of Israel that they bring you pure oil of pressed olives (or what we might call “cold-pressed oil”) for the light, to cause the lamp to burn continually. In the tabernacle of meeting, outside the veil which is before the Testimony, Aaron and his sons shall tend it from evening until morning (the dark hours) before the LORD. It shall be a statute forever to their generations on behalf of the children of Israel (Exodus 27:20-21, Leviticus 24:1-4).”

The Parable of the ‘Fuelish’ Virgins

Remember. As Proverbs 21:20 strongly implies, the wise store up their oil while fools stupidly squander theirs. The United States for years has foolishly pursued an idiotic energy policy of squandering its petroleum reserves while importing at least 50 percent of the precious oil needed to lubricate its economic engine. Notice again Christ’s parable of the wise and foolish virgins. There’s a 50 percent split between the two. “Now five of them were wise, and five were fool-



ish. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps” (Matthew 25:2-4).

Here we see 50 percent maintaining their reserves and 50 percent needing to import theirs from an outside source. The wise took extra oil with them. The foolish depleted what they had. The oil here is an obvious reference to God’s Holy Spirit that gives energy, warmth and light. Some have called this the parable of the “foolish virgins.” **In recent years, the entire Church of God was nearly blacked out by apostasy, suffering a major energy crisis, and many members were caught off guard by it. They were asleep at the switch.**

“But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept (V. 5).” Many are still asleep just like the disciples fell asleep in the Garden of Gethsemane before Christ was crucified. Hopefully, we’re heeding the wakeup call and stirring ourselves to get ready for the return of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God, which will come unexpectedly at an hour we do not expect. We need to be vigilant and prepared.

“And at midnight a cry was heard: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’ Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps (cropping the charred part of a wick so it will burn better). And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out’. (V. 6-8)”

The foolish want to get and let others give. They quench or extinguish God’s spirit, turn inward and have little outgoing concern for others. They let their lamps get dangerously low of olive oil and are running on fumes, running on empty, expecting others to bail them out. They let their batteries lose their charge and need a jump start. They make last-minute preparations after squandering their time and oil like fools, but are stunned to learn it’s too late.

“But the wise answered, saying, ‘No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’ And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’ But He answered and

said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming” (V. 9-13).

Christ concluded the parable of the foolish virgins by urging his disciples to watch like Christ later would tell His disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane, where they would ignorantly fall asleep like the foolish virgins (Matthew 26:36-41). In Luke 21, where we read of another version of the Olivet prophecy, Christ warns us: “**Watch therefore**, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and stand before the Son of Man” (Luke 21:36).

We cannot enter God’s Kingdom on someone else’s reserves. The foolish ended up having to pay any price after midnight if they could even find any oil at that dark hour. The parable does not say the foolish were able to find any oil to purchase. They were left out in the cold and had the door slammed in their faces as they scrambled at the last minute to replenish their oil reserves.



Yes, national trends often mirror conditions within God’s Church. The physical often parallels the spiritual. Ignoring their national fuel gauge, which has dipped into the red danger zone, Americans seem to have the attitude, “We’re speeding at 85 miles per hour. We can’t possibly be running on empty.”

Meanwhile, many members of God’s Church are oblivious to the fact they also are confronting a crisis that portends disastrous consequences. By neglecting God’s Holy Spirit, their lamps also are ready to black out as the United States plunges headlong into what will be the darkest episode in its entire history. The cry has gone out. May God help us to heed the warning!



Holding onto God's Precious Truth

'And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free' (John 8:32)

By Ron Wilcoxson

Is it possible to know the truth and yet become entangled in heresy? In John 8:32-40, when Jesus Christ told the Jews who believed Him that "the truth shall make you free," He greatly offended them. After all, they were descended from Abraham. They believed they had the truth. Furthermore, they believed they were free.



The colors of chameleons change to blend in with their surroundings.

At one time, most of Israel had God's truth. The tribe of Judah had clung to the truth longer than any of the other tribes (I Kings 12:20, 26-33, Hosea 11:12). But eventually even Judah went into captivity because of disobedience (II Kings 23-25, Lamentations 1:3-5). Jesus Christ knew that while the Jews had the truth at one time, they had become seriously entangled in self-righteous hypocrisy and entrapped in confusing deceit and heresy.

Of course, God never gave His Holy Spirit to ancient Israel, so in actuality the Israelites couldn't keep God's truth. But the elect do have God's Holy Spirit.

Could losing God's truth happen to God's spiritual Jews today? How can we know for sure that we have not gotten off track and that we still have God's truth? With so many past evangelists and former WCG leaders having veered from the truth once delivered, will

you trust your eternal salvation totally on the teachings of the organization in which you are involved?

Christ warned the Jews of his time, "And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch" (Matthew 15:14, Luke 6:39).

Truly God's elect have the daunting responsibility of separating truth from falsehood because we know we must ultimately *work out our own salvation with fear and trembling* (Philippians 2:12), and *test (prove) all things ...* (I Thessalonians 5:21).

After the death of Moses, Joshua was admonished by God, "Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go" (Joshua 1:7). These words are

surely prophetic when we consider that God never changes (Malachi 3:6). Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8).

Seven Vital Necessities for Keeping God's Precious Truth

• We Must Use the Power of God's Holy Spirit

The Apostle Paul reminded Timothy that having God's Spirit and being a third generation Christian were not enough. Timothy was admonished to stir up God's spirit (II Timothy 1:5-7).

Paul also understood that using God's Spirit would strengthen our faith, love and the knowledge of God's truth "... according to the riches of His glory, to be *strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man*, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height – to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:16-19).

David, a man after God's own heart, realized even at the lowest point in his life that if God's Spirit is not used, the results can be devastating. When he had failed to use the power of God's Holy Spirit, he committed both adultery and murder. But upon deep repentance David cried out to God, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and *renew a steadfast spirit within me*. Do not cast me away from Your presence, *and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me*. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with Your generous Spirit" (Psalm 51:10-12).

• Realize God's Truth Never Changes

The truth is always the truth! ***It is not a chameleon that changes colors with its environment.*** David's inspired perspective about God's truth tells us that the entire Bible is truth and always will be relevant. "The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your



righteous judgments endures forever" (Psalm 119:160). Sad to say, but with more than 400 different Church of God groups that have splintered from the original doctrines we once received from Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong – an apostle and the Elijah to come – we now see many different teachings. Mr. Armstrong received those truths one doctrine at a time from Jesus Christ, the Head of God's Church (Colossians 1:18).

Can we choose whatever "flavor" we may want? ***Have we changed our colors?***

As Paul pleaded to the brethren of his day, Christ pleads with us today "... that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Corinthians 1:10). The doctrines of the Church were built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20).

We need to re-establish our roots. How long has it been since we read *Mystery of the Ages, The Wonderful World Tomorrow, Our Incredible Human Potential, A World Held Captive, The United States and Britain in Prophecy* or any of the other wonderful books, booklets and articles written by Mr. Armstrong?

Our circumstances may have changed since his death in 1986, but Christ remains the same. He is still alive and has not given authority to anyone to change His true doctrines (Revelation 22:18-19).



•Prayerfully Ask God for His Intervention and Help

Christ told us to ask and it will be given to us; seek and we will find; knock and it will be opened to us (Matthew 7:7). Using the tool of fasting as God intends will loosen Satan's hold on us and make us more humble before God (Isaiah 58:6-10). Fasting also helps us to be more earnest, fervent and persistent. It strengthens us for endurance until God gives us His answer. We can be secure knowing that God's promises are sure. Remember, God cannot lie (Titus 1:2, Hebrews 6:18).

By using persistent, diligent prayer and beseeching God in fasting, we get answers that dispel confusion and doubts. We then have God's guidance continually. Finally, we are set free from deceitful works that lie against the truth. Let God be true but *every man* a liar (Romans 3:4).

• Study God's Word

How much time do we really spend in Bible study? Are we using all of our Bible study time just to read

volumes of material sent to us from particular corporate church organizations or just listen to tapes all of the time and not study God's Word? This could prove to be a very costly mistake. *"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth"* (II Timothy 2:15). We simply must put more pressure on ourselves to invest more time in our own Bible study if we are to "... grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Peter 3:18).

God wants to see greater effort from all of us. Then, the Bible will start coming alive for us as His truth and His Holy Spirit begin to flow within us. Then, our Bible study will become more challenging and more inspiring in a way that we may have not known in years, or perhaps have never truly experienced at all. Like reading a good book, we won't be able to put it down. We must study as if our life depends on it – because it does! (See I Peter 4:17).

• Walk the Walk and Talk the Talk

"But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty *and continues in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does" (James 1:25). We must literally *live* by every word of God (Matthew 4:4, Luke 4:4, Deuteronomy 8:3) and all the truths He reveals to us. As we begin our "renewed quest" to keep God's full truth again, God "renews" in us the truths that may have become dormant and "rejuvenates" His Spirit in us to understand things we had never really fully understood before. As we grow in grace and knowledge, God begins removing the blinders. For Paul said "... we see in a mirror, dimly ..." (I Corinthians 13:12).

King David knew that fearing God goes deeper than just talk or going through the motions. It involves personally experiencing it by living fully that way of life. "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who *do* His commandments. ..." (Psalm 111:10).

• Become Pliable, Moldable and Teachable

No doubt, this requires GREAT humility! Our carnal nature is full of pride and can easily fool us into thinking we are something that we are not. Several years



ago, I heard a very good sermon on humility. The minister gave a very impressive definition of pride and humility. He said, "Pride is a deception that brings forth strife and contention, and its end result is eternal death." Proverbs 16:18 bears this out, "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." The same minister continued, "Humility is a sound perception of reality, which

would bring peace and eternal life." Wise King Solomon taught, "before honor is humility" (Proverbs 15:33). Not only must we fight off deceptions of Satan, but also deceptions that we may contrive in our own hearts (Jeremiah 17:9). Our carnal hearts are deceitful. But we truly do have hope because God says He will revive our sick hearts if we are humble. Read Isaiah 57:15. God can work with a contrite, humble spirit. He revives the spirit of the humble and the heart of the contrite ones. A very **BIG** part of humility is the proper fear and respect of God's Word. "But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word" (Isaiah 66:2). When we are humble, we view God and ourselves in a totally different light (Isaiah 64:5-9).

•Love God's Truth and His Way More Than Our Own Lives

This is the most important necessity in keeping God's precious truth. We must be willing to forsake everything in this life for God's way of truth. Christ explained this in the context of the parable of the Great Supper (Luke 14:26, 33). When we let human reason take over, it will turn us away from God's truth. It doesn't matter if it is our own human reasoning or that of the leadership of the corporate churches that has gotten us off track from the original truths once deliv-



GOD'S TRUTH: A pearl of great price

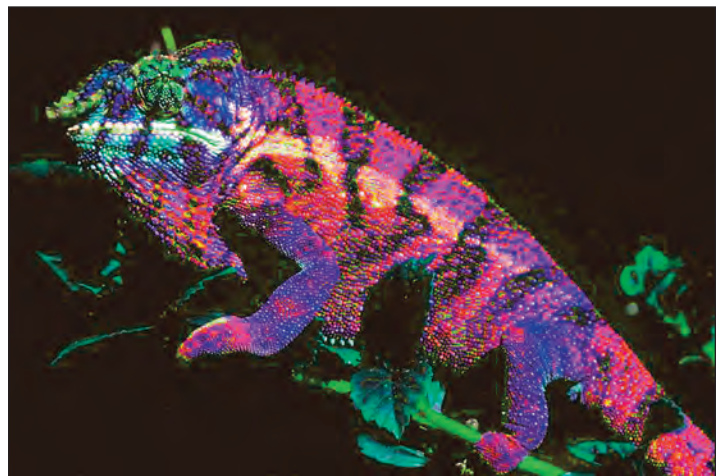
ered to the saints (Jude 3, II Peter 2:1-2, I Timothy 4:1-2, II Timothy 4:3-4).

What happens if we don't love the truth?

Paul was inspired to write, "The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish (are perishing), *be-*

cause they did not receive THE LOVE OF THE TRUTH, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie" (II Thessalonians 2:9-11).

How valuable is truth? Living in such a world as we do, it is easy to get off track and lose clear vision of what we were taught (Proverbs 29:18). We need a clear picture in our mind's eye of God's overall plan, His future kingdom and the reality of all the wonderful things God's kingdom will bring (Isaiah 2:2-4; 9:6-7; 11:4-9). As Philadelphians, we must recapture the most important thing in our life, that pearl of great price (Matthew 13:45-46), which is **God's perfect, righteous truth!**





Our web sites

Below are web sites made available by the Church of God Faithful Flock as Bible resource tools.

Church of God Faithful Flock
www.cog-ff.com

Pagan Holidays or God's Holy Days?
www.holy-days.org

World News Bulletin
www.worldnewsbulletin.com

Lost 10 Tribes of Israel
www.losttribes.org

The Ten Commandments
www.10commandments.ws

Prophetic Events
www.propheticevents.us

What Do You Mean Born Again?
www.begotten.net

Restored Truths of God
www.restoredtruths.net

Watchman for House of Israel
www.ezekielwatchman.org

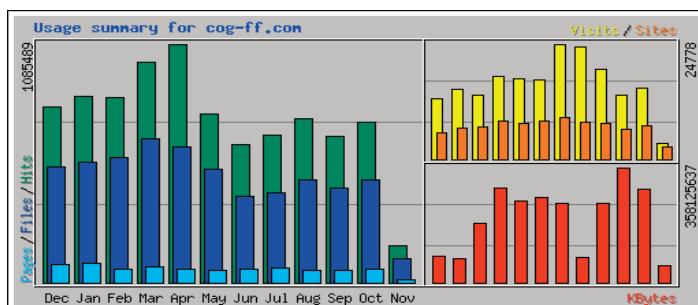
Which Day is the Christian Sabbath?
www.sabbathcentral.com

Herbert W. Armstrong – Apostle of God
www.herbertarmstrong.net

COGFF – Home School Association
www.coghomeschool.org

Herbert W. Armstrong – His Life & Work
www.herbertwarmstrong.info

3 World Views – Only One Will Happen!
www.newworldahead.org



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