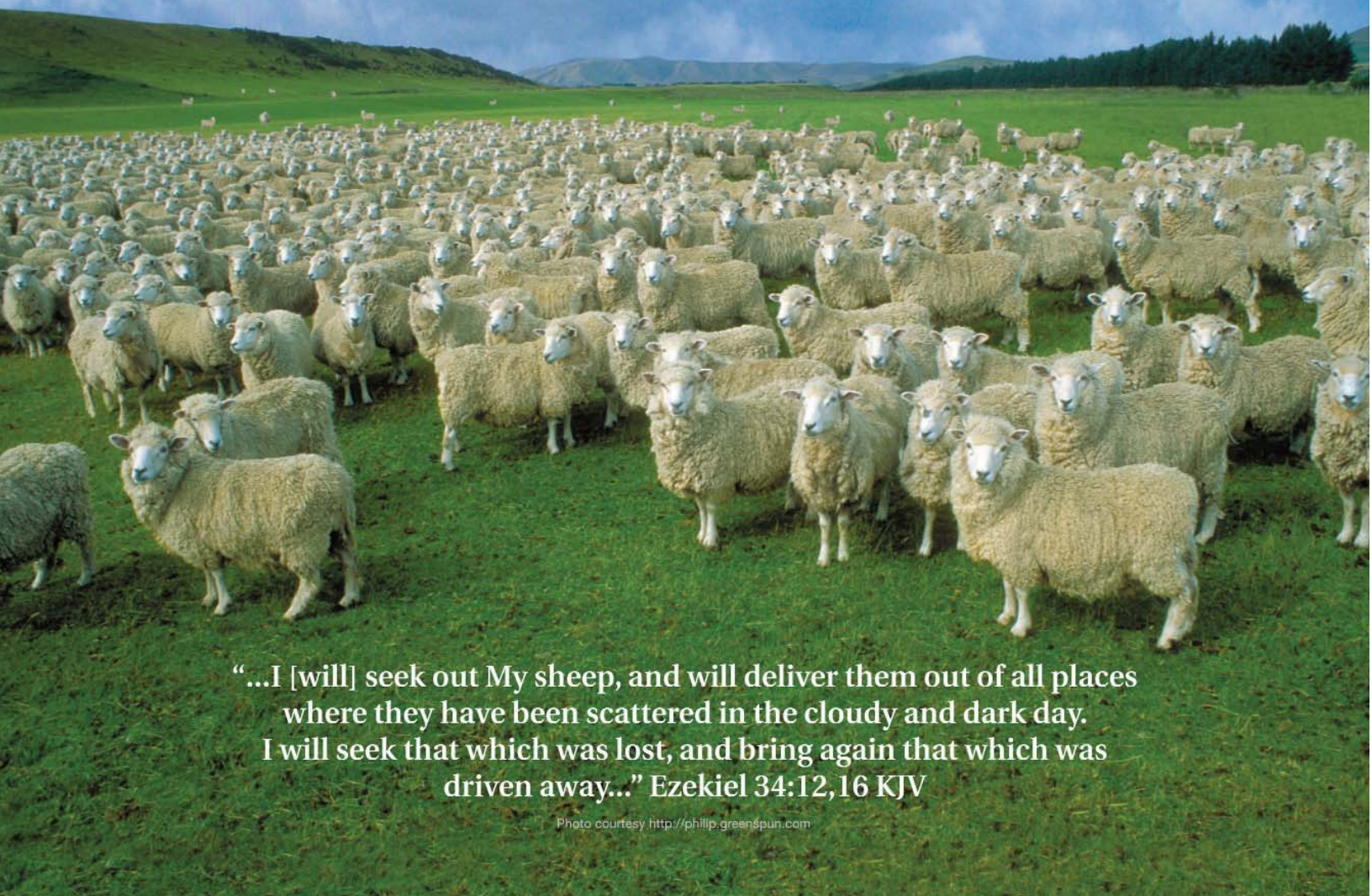


The _____ Philadelphia Remnant

Nov/Dec 2008



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

Photo courtesy <http://philip.greenspun.com>

The Philadelphia Remnant

NOV/DEC 2008

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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 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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Apostasy from God's Truth

By Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong

Greetings once again, everybody. This afternoon I want to get back to prophecy once again, but this time events that have to do with God's Church. As in the prophecies of world events, and the Bible has many of those, there is virtually nothing that was prophesied to occur between the first century, the time of the apostles and Christ, until now except what we find in the second chapter of Revelation to the churches that are mentioned there – four of them. ...

When I was speaking out at the little school house eight miles west of Eugene, Oregon, in the campaign that raised up the parent church of this era of the Church of God, we had a heckler there. He came quite often. In fact, there was more than one, but there was one in particular who was a repeater, and he came a number of times.

One of the questions he had for me, he said, "May I ask you a question?" His name was Belshaw, and I said, "Yes, Mr. Belshaw, you may." He said, "Have you been saved, Mr. Armstrong?"

I said, "Mr. Belshaw, do you not know what Christ said as recorded in Matthew 24:13? 'He that endureth unto the end the same SHALL BE SAVED.'" And he looked rather fool-



MR. HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG

ish because he was expecting to quote that to me if I said I was already saved. Of course, I knew that. That is something that we should remember. ...

Revelation 2 and the third chapter of Revelation are dealing with the seven churches. Let's get one thing straight, and this is something I have been saying for the last 42 years, and many do not realize I have been saying it. They are

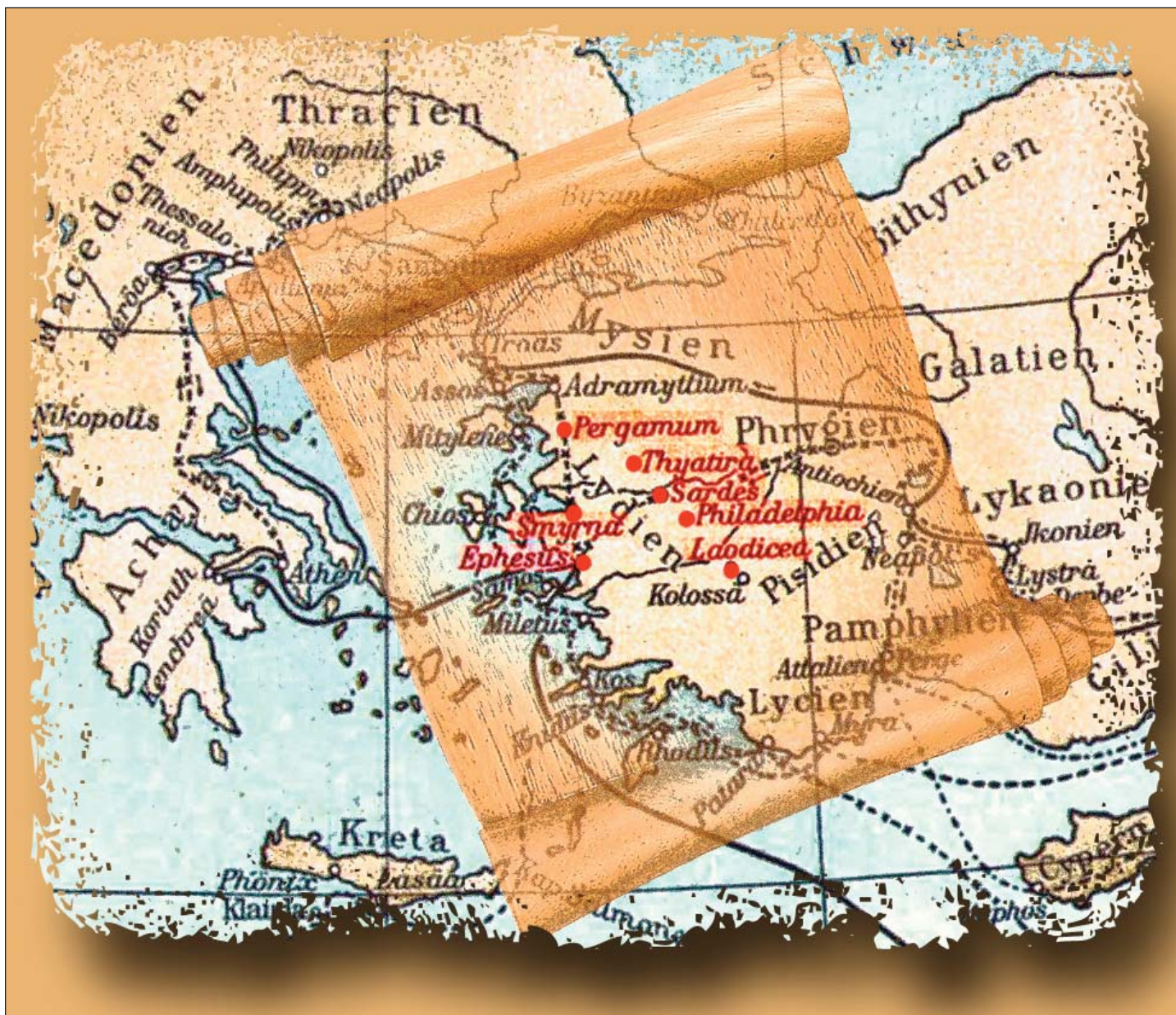
speaking of seven successive churches or seven successive eras of the one church, but at the same time they are speaking of the seven dominant conditions that would be found in the Church of every era.

So, the things that you find in the Church at Ephesus really do apply to us now, the same as they did to them then. The difference is that what is mentioned in the Philadelphia era dominates at this time and what was mentioned in the message to the Church at Ephesus dominated back in the beginning of the Church.

Then, beside that, in Matthew 24 for example, and, of course, Mark 13 and Luke 21 are just you might say a different re-



THE JEANS SCHOOL HOUSE IN OREGON



THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF REVELATION

porter's account of the same prophecy of Jesus. It speaks there of the apostasy, of false ministers deceiving the people. In other words, of the fact that they would come with another gospel, and that the gospel that Jesus Christ taught, His message, would not be preached. It would be sabotaged and then a famine, pestilence, wars, and there have been continuing wars all through.

Now most of those things they were having then, and we have had them continuously. Apparently with a great sudden upswing now at the time of the end, which is occurring.

Then, the next thing to happen, the one thing that Jesus said would be the sign that we are at the end and prior to His

Second Coming would be what we read in verse 14 that *this gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end of this age come*. After that has happened; that is referred to in the Bible as the Day of the Lord in over 30 different prophecies.

In other words, we have been in you might call it the day of man or perhaps you could just as accurately call it the day of Satan because it is the day of man cut off from God primarily, but swayed by Satan who is the god of this world. Some people I think tell you what God wants done and the only thing is they have their own god. They mean Satan. Then, after this, and you see the getting of this message out

to the world has taken 42 years so it is not something that just happens in one day. It is a continuous thing for quite a while. It takes a long time to get this job done.

The next thing that is foretold there, is the **Great Tribulation** and then comes the Day of the Lord, and that is the time when God supernaturally intervenes in this world's affairs. In other words, God, so to speak, just adopted a hands-off policy and told humanity: Go ahead form your own governments; decide for yourself what is right and what is wrong.

When Adam and Eve took – mother Eve took and Adam took it with her – of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they took to themselves the knowledge or the production of the knowledge of what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is evil. Now, the Law of God determines that, and God had just been teaching them about that. I know that He did, even though it isn't recorded, for the simple reason that for the violation of that law He pronounced a death sentence upon them, and He could not have done that if He had not explained to them the law whose penalty He was telling them would happen to them on violation. I know that God taught Adam and Eve



MANKIND'S HISTORY IS WRITTEN IN BLOOD

a great many things that are not recorded at all, because in the first 11 chapters of the Bible it just skips over and gives us the barest outline hitting only the high spots. We don't get down to specific details of history or anything of that kind until we come to the 12th chapter of Genesis, and it begins about Abraham.

Then, when we get down to the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph and then later the children of Israel de-



deceiveth the whole world."

Now, when the Bible says the whole world, it means the whole world. That is the world as a whole. ***"He was cast out into the earth, and his angels," who are now demons, "were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the Kingdom of our God ..."*** That only comes with the Second Coming of Christ so this is just preceding that.

Now Jesus said in Matthew 24, when they asked Him for the

scended from them or from Abraham. Then we get into more detail in the history of the Old Testament scriptures. But the thing that is prophesied for now is precisely what God has raised this Church up to do, and that is the reason He called YOU.

sign about His coming so that they would know that we are getting near to that time, it was a time when this gospel of the Kingdom would be preached, because it hadn't been for 18½ centuries.

"For the accuser of our brethren is cast down." Don't accuse any of God's brethren. That is something Satan is doing. You'll be doing Satan's job for him if you do that.

"Which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb," which is Christ, ***"and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death."***

They were willing to risk their lives for the truth, which was more precious to them than even this mortal life.

"Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them."

Also now let's come to a prophecy in the 12th chapter of the book of Revelation and beginning now with verse 7. Speaking here is the time of the old apostasy, the beginning of the Church. A flight of a church so to speak, underground, which it did through the Middle Ages, 1260 years. Then, we come to verse 7 and this gets down to our time. ***"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels."*** Now that is speaking of the angels which sinned as you will read of in II Peter. ... ***"And the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which***

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Personal from the Editor

By Alton B. 'Don' Billingsley

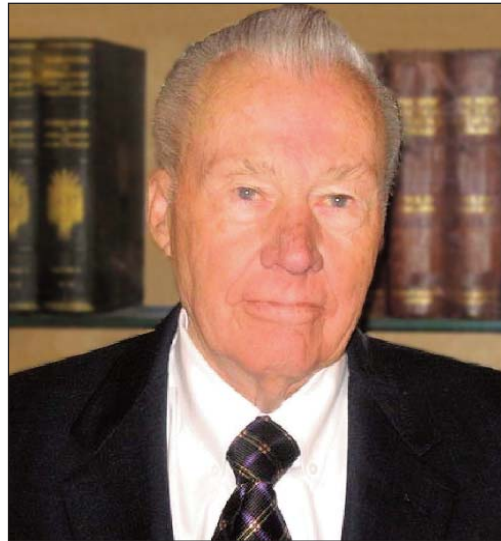
Are you prepared for what is coming next?
Some will survive, some will not. Guess who?

This was the heading of a recent article, and one that each of us should take very seriously for all of us are going to be affected in major ways – and soon! **Warnings** are to be found in many places by prominent and respected professionals of this nation and the world of terrible times ahead for mankind! Even President Reagan wondered if we were not living in the time of **Armageddon**.

Consider the recent crash of the stock market falling 777 points – the very worst in this nation's history! How serious was it?

The *New York Post* wrote on September 21: "**The market was 500 trades away from **Armageddon** on Thursday. ... Had the Treasury and Fed not quickly stepped into the fray that morning with a quick \$105 billion injection of liquidity, the Dow could have collapsed. ... Money market funds were inundated with \$500 billion in sell orders prior to the opening ...**"

Reuters reported on September 24: "**President George W. Bush on Wednesday said the United States was in a serious financial crisis as he tried to convince Americans to support a \$700 billion financial rescue plan. ... He warned that 'the market is not functioning properly,' there is widespread loss of confidence, major sectors are**



Alton B. 'Don' Billingsley

at risk, and more banks could fail and threaten sending the U.S. economy into recession. 'We must not let this happen,' Bush said."

With the realization of the terrible impact

this is having on the economy, Congress in desperation will have propped the economy up by bailing out Wall Street with hundreds of billions of dollars! It is only a Band-Aid and will not stop the hemorrhaging! As it was said on the Glenn Beck program on CNN, "**Be encouraged! It is only going to get worse!**"

And it will as can be seen by quotes from an Oct. 10, 2008 article in **Time Magazine**, by Nial Ferguson, titled "The End of Prosperity?"

"... The U.S. – **not to mention Western Europe** – is in the grip of a downward spiral that financial experts call deleveraging. Having accumulated debts beyond what's

sustainable, households and financial institutions are being forced to reduce them. The pressure to do so results from a decline in the price of the assets they bought with the money they borrowed. It's a vicious feedback loop. When families and banks tip into bankruptcy, more assets get dumped on the market, driving prices down further and necessitating more deleveraging. This process now has so much momentum that even \$700 billion in taxpayers' money may not suffice to stop it. ...



Flickr photo - Rafael Matsunaga

“To date, U.S. banks have admitted to \$334 billion in losses and write-downs, and the final total will almost certainly be much higher. To compensate, they have managed to raise \$235 billion in new capital. The trouble is that the net loss of \$99 billion implies that they will need to shrink their balance sheets by 10 times that figure – almost a trillion dollars – to maintain a constant ratio between their assets and capital. That suggests a drastic reduction of credit, since a bank's assets are its loans. Fewer loans mean tighter business conditions on Main Street. Your local car dealer won't be able to get the credit he needs to maintain his inventory of automobiles. To survive, he'll have to lay off some of his employees. Expect higher unemployment nationwide. ...

“Anyone who doubts that the U.S. is heading for recession is living in denial. On an annualized basis, real retail sales and industrial production are both declining. Unemployment is already at its highest level in five years. The question is whether we're headed for a short, relatively mild recession like that of 2001 – or a latter-day version of what the world went through in the 1930s: Depression 2.0. ...

“Given the immensity of the crisis, a Congress-approved bailout may be just a short-term fix. But a short-term fix is better than no fix. If nothing else, it would signal to the world that – unlike in 1930 – the U.S. is doing what it can to avoid financial calamity and sidestep Depression 2.0.”

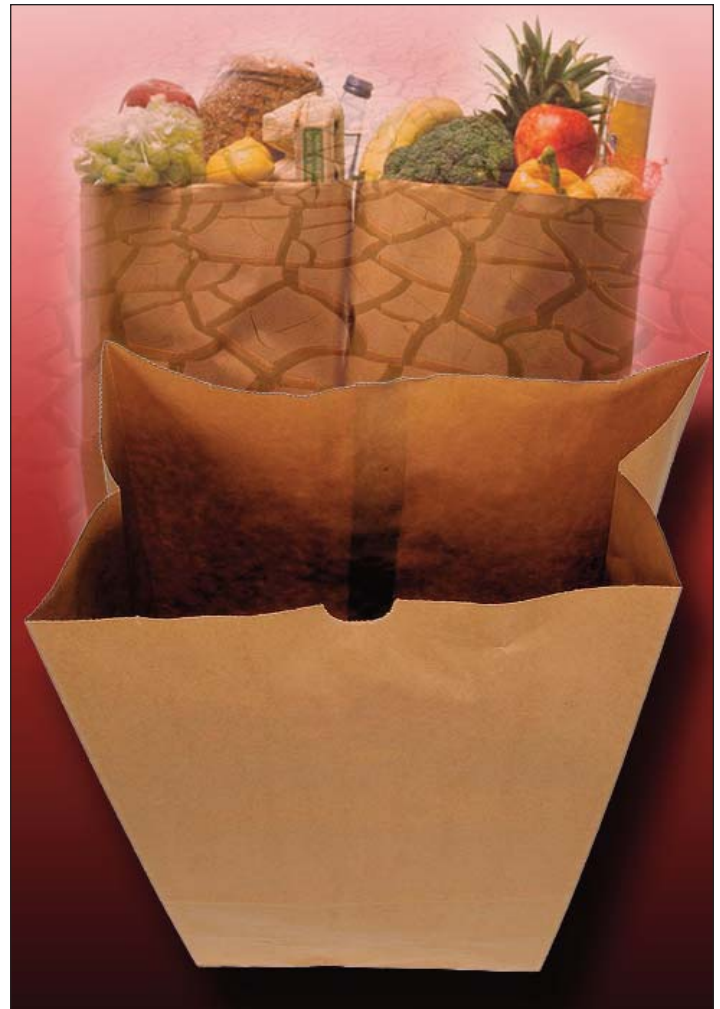
How the Dollar Crisis is Forging a United Europe, the Plain Truth, October/November 1978, Gene Hogberg

A quote from the New York Times from that article by Mr. Hogberg: “A disciplined European Monetary bloc ... would provide the basis for a single European currency that could eventually take over much of the dollar's role as an international medium of exchange.”

Our economic problems are making this possible, and we will soon see it finally in place.

COMING – THE COMPLETE COLLAPSE

This I know – the economy is going to completely collapse but not until **the final Ezekiel warnings** are completed by this Work to the Church and to Israel by Jesus Christ through the recorded works of His late apostle and the Elijah to come on our 14 web sites! When will that be? Probably no later than January 7, 2010 – *but* it could be sooner!



CRITICAL FOOD SHORTAGE

The problems of this nation are not limited to the faltering economy! The news media have reported the *shortage of food supplies* in this country and worldwide has reached a critical level! There are several reasons for this shortage: Corn and wheat are being grown to convert into ethanol due to the high cost of oil that is refined into gasoline and diesel fuel.

The global shortage of food has become so desperate that **“... the U.N. chief is asking the international community to take urgent and concerted action in order to avoid the larger political and security implications of this growing crisis”** – Associated Press article, April 15, 2008.

Do we grasp what this man is saying? **“... to avoid the larger political and security implications ...”** This is saying that the driving need to satisfy gnawing hunger pangs could lead to conflict between the nations and anarchy within some of them before much longer unless those needs are met!

In this country, farmers are unable to grow enough of the needed food supplies to fill the storage bins due to the *turbulent weather conditions* that have brought too much rain in many places and a lack of it in others. In actual fact, it has been reported that both the United States and England's *cupboards are virtually bare*! Both countries are on the very edge of the prophesied *famine* by Joel!

These and other major surging problems are pointing to a national and an international crisis that are even now are evidence that *the end of this age* is virtually in sight! And just as the Jewish people in Jerusalem had their **WARNING SIGNS** before its fall in 70 A.D., these are the **WARNING SIGNS** in our time making known *the soon-coming terrible and crashing fall* of this once great country and Britain, along with the other nations of Israel!

In view of these **WARNING SIGNS** facing us before the extremely *hard realities* come to pass when hundreds of millions of people here and around the world will begin dying, the headline needs to be repeated:

“Are you prepared for what is coming next? Some will survive, some will not. Guess who.”

Who will survive? Though many members will survive the *famine and disease epidemics* that will follow in the wake of the above problems, it appears most will *perish* in the **Great Tribulation**! (Matthew 25:1-13; Revelation 3:14-22, 6:9-11.) It will only be the **ELECT** who will be counted worthy to survive and then go to the place God will have provided for His true and faithful people because of their faithfulness to the true teachings that have been taught by Jesus Christ through His late apostle, Mr. Herbert W. Arm-



NAZIS DIRECT PRISONERS TO AUSCHWITZ GAS CHAMBERS OR SLAVE LABOR

strong (Luke 21:36; Revelation 3:8, 10, 12:14-16). Though it is wise to begin making *physical preparation* in regard to emergency supplies, they will not be enough to take care of prolonged needs!

Over and above what any of us can do in this area, the real need is to try hard to draw nigh to our wonderful caring God and His beloved Son Jesus Christ (James 4:8).

We must begin reaching out *now* for *the warm loving hand* of God as never before while there is yet a little time. This kind of relationship will make possible all of our needs to be provided, both physical and spiritual, unto the coming of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

With these things in mind – please do not choose to ignore these warning signs in view of what Christ reveals through His end-time prophecies. We also should remember a painful lesson from history of the ignored warning signs of the millions of Jewish people just before World War II.

A little later they paid the price by being loaded on trains and were taken to the death camps where they were savagely murdered and cremated.



The time is almost here when thousands of Church members who will have *ignored the warning signs* and failing to make the right choices will be voicing the same *anguished heartfelt cry* as did the millions of Jewish people before they *perished* in the ovens: “*God, where art Thou?*”

Jesus Christ made known the way of escape from those horrors when He said to His disciples: “**I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE**” (John 14:6). What He said was intended to be **WORDS** on which to base our very lives and live them. Sorrowfully, they are just words to thousands of members.

Scripture makes well known there is coming *a martyrdom* of saints, when many thousands of members who believe they are in *His WAY OF LIFE*, and believe they are embracing fully **THE TRUTH**, and expecting to receive eternal **LIFE**, will face *heart-rending disappointment* upon finding they will have to make their bridal clothing white by experiencing *horrible deaths* in the *Great Tribulation* due to their *sleeping* and *complacency* (Revelation 3:14-22, 6:9-11).

Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong was an apostle of God. Apostle has the meaning of **one who is sent**, sent by God and Jesus Christ to *fulfill* a mission. *If* this is really believed, then one must also believe that Christ used him to **RESTORE** all of the doctrinal teachings within His Church with the *obligation* to believe and stand up for all of those unedited teachings.

THE MYSTERY OF THE AGES

To be sure you are in the right Church of God and also to know what those true teachings really are, there is the need of *seriously studying* the last *unedited* book Jesus Christ led that man to write that *embodies* all of those true teachings: *The Mystery of the Ages*.

THE THREE ELIJAHS

Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong also was the promised Elijah to come at the end time. This is a proven Biblical fact to the *unbiased* mind. To read of those *proofs*, please read online in serial writings from this unpublished book. There are 12 chapters posted on our web site.

Jesus Christ sent him to prepare the way for His coming as well as to preach the gospel and sound the Ezekiel warning message in this end-time – lest He, Christ, should come and *strike* the earth with *utter destruction* (Malachi 4:4-6, Matthew 17:10-11). No one else has come since, *nor* will one come in the future. He was the man; and he still is *via* his *Recorded Works* that can be found on our web sites giving *a final witness* to the Church and to the nations of Israel.

THE PHILADELPHIA REMNANT

There also is the need to keep abreast of these changing times by continuing to read the bimonthly *Philadelphia Remnant* magazine, either online (www.cog-ff.com), or request a published copy of it by writing to the address or calling the phone number listed inside the cover of this magazine. The writings will enable the reader to know the approximate time line of the complete fall of this world’s system as made known by the end-time prophecies of the Bible.

SURVIVING THIS WORLD’S DEADLY CRASH

To survive – we must *know*, *love* and *live* the true teachings of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior (Matthew 4:4, 23:37). **Failing** this, we will *perish* (II Thessalonians 1:7-8).

At the same time, we must remain *vigilant* to the happenings in this world in view of Bible prophecy while praying always that we might be counted worthy to escape the coming horrors of the *Great Tribulation* and to be able to stand before our glorified Jesus Christ as He returns to this earth and establishes His government and rule over all nations (Luke 21:36).



Prophecy Unfolds – on Our Watch!



‘Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets. A lion has roared! Who will not fear? The Lord GOD has spoken! Who can but prophesy?’ (Amos 3:7-8)

By Tom Cooper

Whether we realize it, we are **watching** prophetic events *unfold* before our very eyes! The **Great Tribulation** is at hand, and the close of this age follows shortly thereafter! All of us should know in these perilous times that all human life is at stake, including our own as members of the Church of God.

It is with this in mind that we are admonished by Jesus Christ to **watch** major events of this world unfolding in light of Bible prophecy (Luke 21:36)! It is God's Word that reveals WHAT and HOW to **watch** and what we must be doing to understand what we see. Yes, the end of this age, and Satan's rule, is occurring on our **watch**!

We find in several New Testament scriptures where Christ admonishes Christians to “**watch**”! His instruction in

Matthew 24:42 and Matthew 25:13 is accompanied by other prophecies that give readers the needed information about the end of this age.

This information has riveted the attention of multiple millions throughout the centuries ever since Christ spoke these words and especially so in our time. Why watch? What do you watch for?

Christ tells us: “**Watch** therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have **watched** and not allowed his house to be broken into (Matthew 24:42-43).”

Matthew 25:1-12 gives the parable of the 10 virgins. Verse 13 says, “**Watch** therefore, for you know neither the day

nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.” God emphasizes the point.

To know what to look for, there is the need to be among the group of Christians that Jesus Christ is using in doing a specific end-time work. Consider what Daniel had to say in the latter part of Daniel 12:10: “... **but the wise shall understand.**”

Are we among the wise? Can we know for sure? We must remember the scriptures show us, “**The fear (reverent awe) of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding** (Proverbs 9:10).”

Also, Psalm 111:10,
“**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever.**”

Having an honest, reverential awe for our Creator and Savior, and keeping His commandments, grants us wisdom and a good understanding (including what we see when we **watch** world events).

THE ROAD AHEAD

The end-time will include several events which help us to see a clearer *picture* of the road that lies ahead prophetically. Again, the wise WILL understand (Daniel 12:10)!

For example: consider Revelation 9:16: “**Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million, and I heard the number of them.**” This scripture literally describes a 200 million man army likely consisting of Russians, Chinese, Indians and Asians!

Knowing they will come against the military forces of the “**beast power**” means they will need to develop an awesome industrial complex.

This can be understood by considering what it will take to clothe, arm and feed such an army. Realizing the closeness of the end of the age, these nations identified within God’s Word must be developing such capacity with advance preparation while planning for world rule. There is a need

to be **watching** China and India! When we view the House of Israel, we also must look at the end-time prophecy found in Jeremiah 31:11. Here we find God shows us the Israelites will be ransomed from a power stronger than them.

How powerful, militarily, are these descendants of Jacob? The most powerful nation, the United States of America, must use National Guard units to bolster regular troops to maintain order in the small nation of Iraq. For a “super power,” that shows a weakened military!

The United States was in a similar condition prior to World War II. **WATCH** the weakening U.S. military for more in-depth understanding of prophesied world events.



Another area to consider is the coming **famine** to fall on Jacob and the world. As God’s blessings on Jacob are removed, food prices will spiral up much greater than they now are due to a coming critical shortage.

Revelation 6:5-6 describes,
“**When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, ‘Come and see.’ And I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, ‘A quart of wheat for a denarius; and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine.’**”

A “denarius” represents a day’s wage and a “measure,” enough food for one day, picturing **a severe famine**! The summer of 2008 saw an increase of about 50 percent in the price of wheat and corn in the United States.

A major portion of our diets is affected by these basic staples. As prices go up, people will cut back further and further due to finances and lack of grain.

This sets whole populations up for weakened immune systems and resulting diseases (verses 7-8). **WATCH** as food prices continue to escalate through 2009!

The remnant members of the Philadelphia era will, by definition, be alive at the end of the age to fulfill Revelation

3:10: “Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from **the hour of trial** which shall come upon the whole world, to **test** those who dwell on the earth.” Therefore, a time element is involved for the Church.

This scripture proves that even with the Church shattered and scattered (Daniel 12:7), there is a group that God says are a remnant of the Philadelphia era, which will go to the place of safety and protection (Revelation 12:6, 13-17).

To those Philadelphians, falls the prophetic responsibility (the principle found in Ezekiel 33:7-9) to **warn** Jacob and God’s Church of the coming punishments for rebelling against Him.

For that to occur, God has brought together sufficient numbers of that era to accomplish His will (Habakkuk 1:5).

After the demise of the nations of Israel, there will come on the scene two men who will witness with the God-given power of real miracles of plagues to be brought upon the nations in Europe and the world.

With the devastation caused by those plagues, the world will come to know these men and their message, but they will refuse to repent.

Revelation 11:9-10 reveals how the world will react at the end of their 3½ years of prophesying *after* having been granted power by God to completely devastate Europe and much of the world with plagues.

Notice they are called witnesses by God when He grants them power. **WATCH for these events to unfold as a witness to Jacob and God’s church!**

PROPHECY – FOR A PURPOSE

Prophecy from God is given for a purpose! Proverbs 29:18 states, “Where there is no **vision** (prophetic vision or revelation) **the people perish** (cast off restraint): **but he that keepeth the law, happy is he** (KJV).”

This is something everyone in God’s Church has heard many times. It is a lesson as to how important prophecy and

watching God’s plan unfold are to individual members everywhere! **ARE WE WATCHING?**

It would appear that the various corporate Church of God groups have lost whatever vision they had due to their continual doctrinal changes in teachings! They are floundering, departing from the truth and God. This is prophecy being fulfilled (I Timothy 4:1-2, II Peter 2, Jude).

Prophecy also is being fulfilled with those of the Laodicean Church era. Though they are true members of God’s Church and keep the commandments of God, they have become self-righteous and are sleeping and slumbering (Matthew 25:1-5, Revelation 3:14-22, 12:17).

Remember, those verses apply to the Laodicean era and not to those who have been loyal and are a remnant of the Philadelphian era.

In view of these conditions and ongoing national and international problems, can Jacob’s time of trouble be far off (Jeremiah 30:7)?

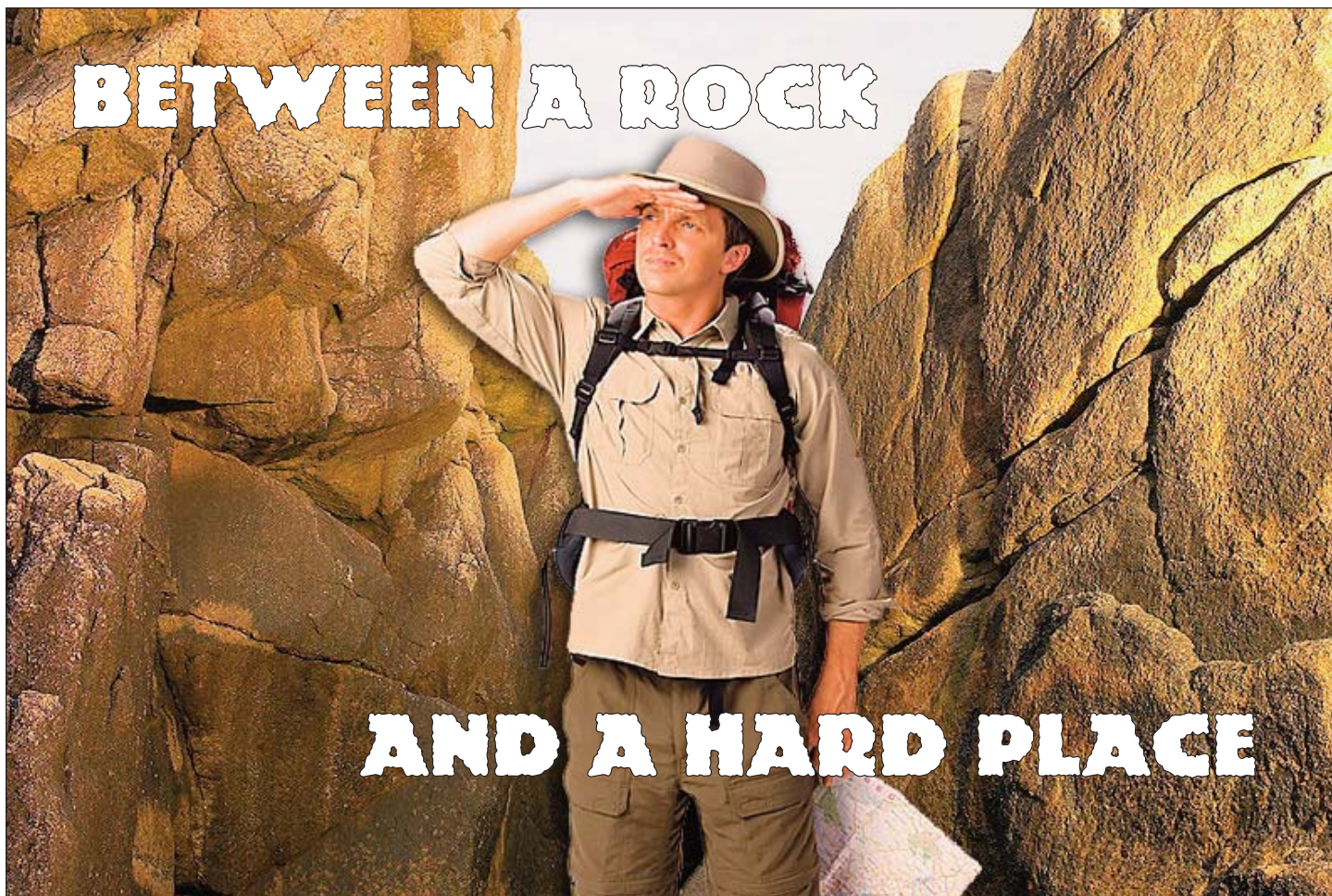
Aren’t the nations who came from Jacob’s loins, who haven’t been called yet, important enough to warn? It should be realized that what we say and do is important to God and should be to us as well (Ezekiel 33:1-11)!

God speaks very favorably of His people who are the wise, enduring ones involved in His end-time work, and also have a close loving relationship with Him and one another.

In Malachi 3:16-17, we read, “**Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD listened and heard them; so a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who meditate on His name.** ‘They shall be Mine,’ says the Lord of hosts, ‘on the day that I make them My jewels (special treasure). And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him.’”

PROPHECY IS UNFOLDING: on our watch!





'MANY ARE THE AFFLICTIONS OF THE RIGHTEOUS, BUT THE LORD DELIVERS HIM OUT OF THEM ALL'

(PSALM 34:19)

By Ron Wilcoxson

When Christians suffer tests and trials, they may well imagine themselves pressed between two insurmountable obstacles from which we can see no escape. Most of us have heard the proverbial saying, *"between a rock and a hard place,"* which usually indicates a person has problems that go beyond human ability to solve.

The pressure of trials can become so intense they can suppress our spiritual growth. The stress can become so great that our focus may become clouded by the severity of our overwhelming problems. We can become temporarily numbed and incapacitated because of the frustrations and the setbacks in our lives.

Let's consider how God looks at this paradox in our lives. **As God's people, it is imperative we understand that we have an Advocate, an awesome power Who stands between us and any trial we may go through** (Psalm 34:19, II Timothy 3:11).

WHO IS THE ROCK?

There are two Hebrew words in the Old Testament that most commonly are translated "rock." One is Strong's No. 6667 – *"tsuwr, tsur or tsoor,"* translated "rock, strength, God, beauty, stones, mighty one, strong." The other Hebrew word translated "rock" is Strong's No. 5553 – *"cela"* meaning "to be lofty," as in Isaiah 57:15 – "The High and lofty one who inhabits eternity." This word also means "rock, stronghold, fortress, crag or cliff, as a stronghold of Jehovah, of security."

The Greek word translated "rock" used throughout the New Testament is Strong's No. 4073 *"petra"* – meaning "rock, cliff or ledge, a projecting rock, a large stone."

These words translated **ROCK** are referring to **YHVH**, the Eternal, the Word, the Spokesman of the Old Testament, the One by whom all things were created (Ephesians 3:9, Colossians 1:16, Revelation 10:6). This "One" also emptied Himself of His glory and became Jesus Christ our Savior, our Deliverer, High Priest and Mediator (John 1:1-5, 14; Philippians 2:7-11, Hebrews 4:14-16, Hebrews 8:1-6).

When Christians apply the proverb “*between a rock and a hard place*” to their lives, in reality it becomes evident our lives are hard pressed between the Rock (Christ) and a hard place (the society in which we must live). It is Satan's world, his evil system in which there is very little justice, mercy or peace.

KING DAVID AND THE ROCK

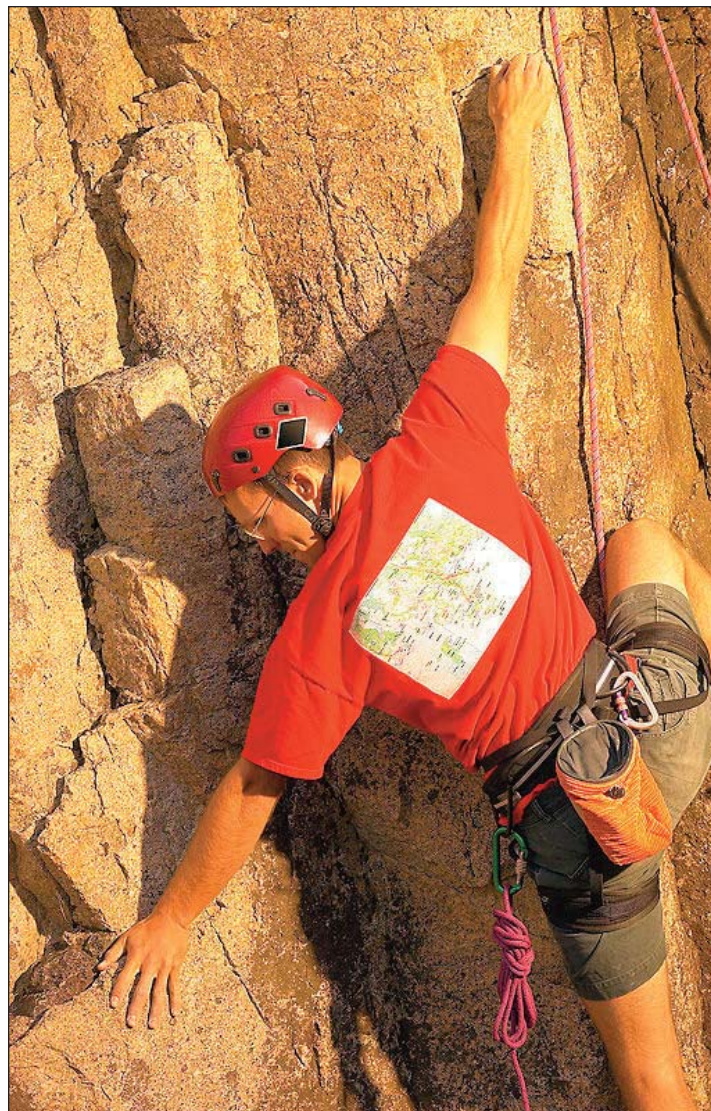
Notice King David's perspective of the Rock: He did not consider the Rock to be an obstacle but rather he thought of the Rock as a fortress, a shield, a strength, a stronghold, a habitation and a refuge.

"Then David spoke to the LORD the words of this song, on the day when the LORD had delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. And he said: 'The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; the God of my strength, in Him I will trust, my shield and the horn [strength] of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge; my Savior, You save me from violence. I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised; so shall I be saved from my enemies. When the waves of death encompassed [surrounded] me, the floods of ungodliness made me afraid; the sorrows of Sheol surrounded me, the snares of death confronted me. In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried out to my God. He heard my voice from His temple, and my cry entered His ears (II Samuel 22:1-7).'"

Through Zacharias' prophecy we can see that God's spiritual children would be saved from all their enemies. **"As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, who have been since the world began, *that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us*, to perform the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant, the oath which He swore to our father Abraham: To grant us that we, *being delivered from the hand of our enemies*, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life (Luke 1:70-75)."**

All these promises were made to Abraham's seed; and we are of the children of promise (Galatians 3:16).

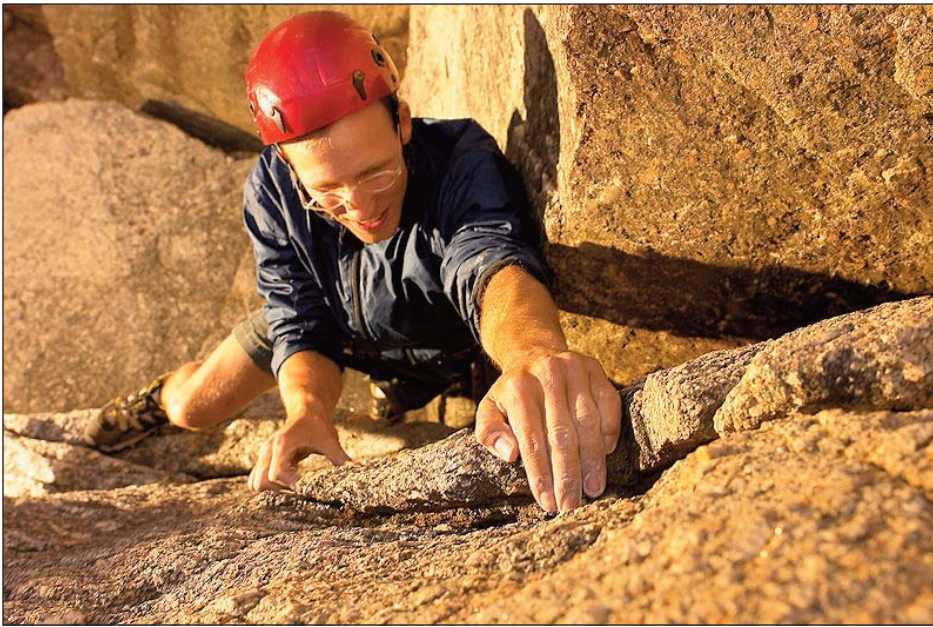
David, a man after God's own heart, knew how important it was to know the Rock and why he could always count on Him. **"The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands He has recompensed me. For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God. For all His judgments were before me; and as for His statutes, I did not depart from them. I was also blameless before Him, and I kept myself from my iniquity.**



Therefore the LORD has recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to my cleanness in His eyes. With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful; with a blameless man You will show Yourself blameless; With the pure You will show Yourself pure; and with the devious You will show Yourself shrewd. You will save the humble (afflicted) people; but Your eyes are on the haughty, that You may bring them down (II Samuel 22:21-28)."

Scripture shows we don't really know God (our Rock) unless we keep His commandments (I John 2:3-4).

David knew the Rock was God; a perfect, proven, protection and deliverance to all who would trust Him (II Samuel 22:31-33, 47-51). In the book of Psalms, David talks about God as his Rock repeatedly as being his only real help in time of need. Sometimes our trials can be so severe that we feel like a hopeless outcast, and no one can feel our pain. But in reality we've not gone through anything to which our Rock (Christ) cannot relate (Hebrews 2:16-18).



The same words expressed in a song in II Samuel 22:1-7 are repeated in Psalm 18, but this time the depth of David's love and trust for God, his Rock, is expressed. **"I WILL LOVE YOU, O LORD, MY STRENGTH. The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold** (Psalm 18:1-2, 31-32, 46-48)."

If we truly love God, we will keep His commandments (John 14:15, 21, 23; John 15:10). David was delivered because of his unwavering, unconditional love and obedience to God, and the same can be true for us today because God is not a respecter of persons (Ephesians 6:9, Colossians 3:25).

"Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high, because he has known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him (Psalm 91:14)."

The Apostle John, the disciple whom Jesus Christ especially loved, understood that we are not to be tormented by fear, doubt and guilt. **"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love** (I John 4:18)."

King David knew The Rock would be his protection in his time of trouble. **"For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; in the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock** (Psalm 27:5). He knew that even if his own parents let him

down that God would be there for him. **"When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take care of me** (Psalm 27:10)."

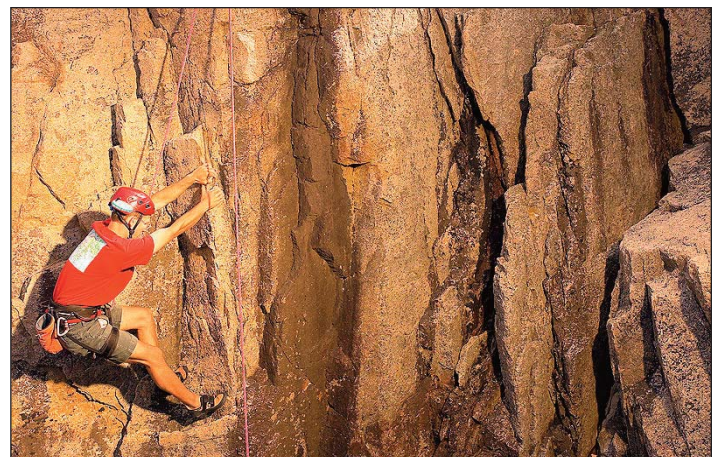
THE APOSTLE PAUL AND THE ROCK

The Apostle Paul was aware that Christ was The Rock and the God of the Old Testament (I Corinthians 10:4). He was a man who understood trials, tests and sufferings as well as anyone because he endured tremendous trials himself. He suffered in stripes above measure or without mercy, was beaten with rods, in prisons frequently, **near death often**, stoned, shipwrecked, traveling often and in perils of water, robbers, and his own countrymen, the Gentiles, the city, the wilderness, the sea and false brethren. He suffered in labors more abundantly, in weariness, in toil, in sleeplessness. He even knew hunger, thirst, cold and nakedness (II Corinthians 11:23-33).

Paul was inspired by God to encourage all Christians who would go through trials in this life (I Corinthians 10:13).

One very important key to Paul's success in getting through his trials was not trying to evade them by placing blame on God, someone else or circumstances. He realized he needed to go through trials and not try to get around them. He knew God had a purpose for allowing the trials and the sufferings.

"And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet (beat) me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart





"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed (II Corinthians 4:7-9)."

Paul went on to explain that Christ (our Rock) died so His life could be made evident in our own lives. **"Always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh (II Corinthians 4:10-11)."**

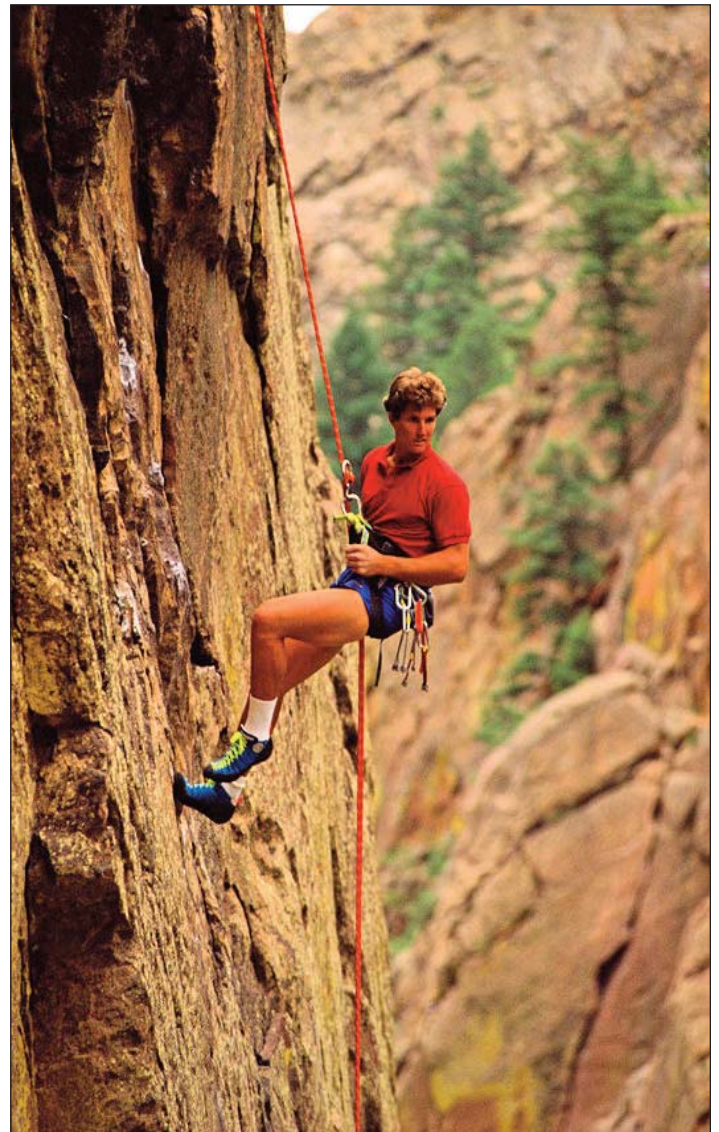
Christ set an example of suffering for all of us to follow (I Peter 2:21). Paul also reminds us that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us (Philippians 4:13). Christ will never leave us, especially when we need Him the most (Deuteronomy 31:6-8, Joshua 1:5, Hebrews 13:5).

from me. And He said to me, *'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.'* Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong (II Corinthians 12:7-10)."

We must learn to totally trust God and be willing to accept the things we cannot change, realizing God always has our best interests at heart (Romans 8:28, 31).

THE CHURCH IS BUILT ON THE ROCK

Paul really understood what it was like for converted Christians to live their lives in Satan's world. He understood the overwhelming, constant distress of affliction that may become very severe and long lasting. It may eventually so overpower us that we struggle just to pray. We may feel God is not listening, and we are perplexed. We feel powerless against the all encompassing odds against us. But this should be only a temporary setback, even when our strength is gone and we feel very disheartened.



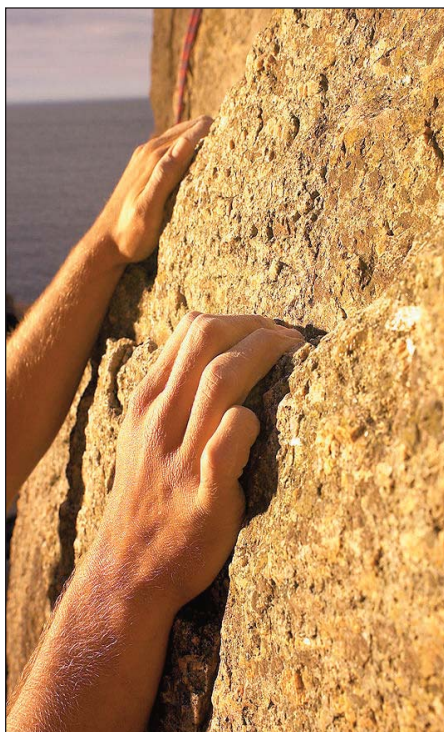


"Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed (Hebrews 12:12)."

floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock (Matthew 7:24-27)."

The Apostle Peter well understood that he and the entire Church were built on The Rock (Matthew 16:18). Scripture shows that Christ (The Rock) is the Head and Chief Cornerstone of God's true church (Colossians 1:18, Ephesians 2:20). Christ our Living Stone was rejected by men, but chosen by the Father; and we as living stones are being built up a spiritual house and are a holy priesthood (I Peter 2:4-10).

Jesus Christ Himself tells us if we are to overcome all the obstacles of trials and land mines in this life, we must build our house on The Rock. **"Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock and the rain descended, the**



Because there is no other name under heaven by which mankind can be saved, it is evident that trials and sufferings are to be an intricate and very important part of growing in the grace and knowledge of Christ for refinement and Godly character development (Acts 4:12, II Timothy 3:10-12, I Peter 4:12-14, II Peter 3:18).

If we are to become children after God's own heart, we must trust and rely on our Rock just as King David, the Apostle Paul and so many others have done. When we find ourselves between a rock and a hard place, we must make sure we are securely anchored to and built upon Jesus Christ, who is our Fortress, our Strength, and our Shield – the **ROCK OF OUR SALVATION.**



A Feast of Tabernacles Environment for 3½ Years



**'But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent'
(Revelation 12:14)**

By Ed Tidwell

The Feast of Tabernacles has often been described as a “foretaste” of the wonderful world tomorrow, a one thousand year period of time of peace, abundance and true genuine happiness. It will all be made possible by the loving, righteous KING of Kings and LORD of Lords who will be teaching and administering His law of love that will bring about a Utopian World.

This festival is a yearly preparation time for the people of God who become excited and make preparations with eager anticipation to observe those few days together as brothers and sisters in Christ. Thus we all look forward to the near future when the feast becomes reality.

During this wonderful festival, we practice the giving and serving way of life while living in close proximity with each other. We come to know and learn to deal with our individual personalities by obeying the laws of God that have been written in our minds and hearts.

However, due to the limited time of only being together for eight days, we come to know each other in part, seeing the best of each other – at least the side we have the desire to portray. And that is right and good, for we come to love and appreciate each other and we share the same desires and goals Christ has set before us.

THE PLACE OF SAFETY

There is another place that Jesus Christ will have chosen for His few thousand faithful people to go very soon. Only this time it will not be just for eight days, but for 3½ years. Here we will see, live and interact with one another on a daily basis during that time. As a result, the other side of ourselves that we do not want anyone to see cannot be hidden for that length of time while living in a place of close proximity to each other.

There have been those who have referred to the place of safety as the place of final training. What can that mean? In order to be there, one will have already been chosen and accounted worthy (Luke 21:36). So there is much to be said about becoming worthy now before that time.

It has to do with the desire and intent of the heart along with obedience to God. One has to love our Father and Jesus Christ with all of our hearts and loving our brothers and sisters as ourselves while clinging to the true teachings of Jesus Christ (Matthew 22:37-40; 4:4).

WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

Now picture the elect people of God, possibly numbering around 7,000, or so, as the Bible indicates (Romans 11:2-7), as already being together in that place of protection.

Scripture makes known it is a place prepared by God (Revelation 12:6). Since it has been prepared ahead of time all the physical necessities must also have been prepared as well or will be (Isaiah 33:14-16).

Along with provisions, shelter and ... the rest is up to us.

Now the training from the many years of loyalty and obedience of keeping the Feast of Tabernacles as commanded by God will be put to the test in this place of final preparation and training.

THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD

Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, an apostle sent by Jesus Christ to be the human head of His Church, in his final work "The Mystery of the Ages," tells us EXACTLY how to prepare the bride. He was used to RESTORE government into Christ's Church. He outlined and explained plainly the organization and the administering of that government with the sub-title: **ONE CHURCH WITH ONE GOVERNMENT** (*Mystery of the Ages*, page 243).

This will prove to be a real test during that length of time. The Church of God, of necessity, conducts its operation through various offices and departments, much like any government or business corporation. There MUST be, as Mr. Armstrong emphasized many times, ONE who has to

be in charge of all others, just like any business with a president or Chief Operations Officer.

Under that position are the various operations that are to operate an organization (I Corinthians 12:28-30). Mr. Armstrong (who had the authority) established those offices within the Church of God as made known in Holy Scripture (Ephesians 4:11-16).

Why? God's late apostle makes the answer very clear:

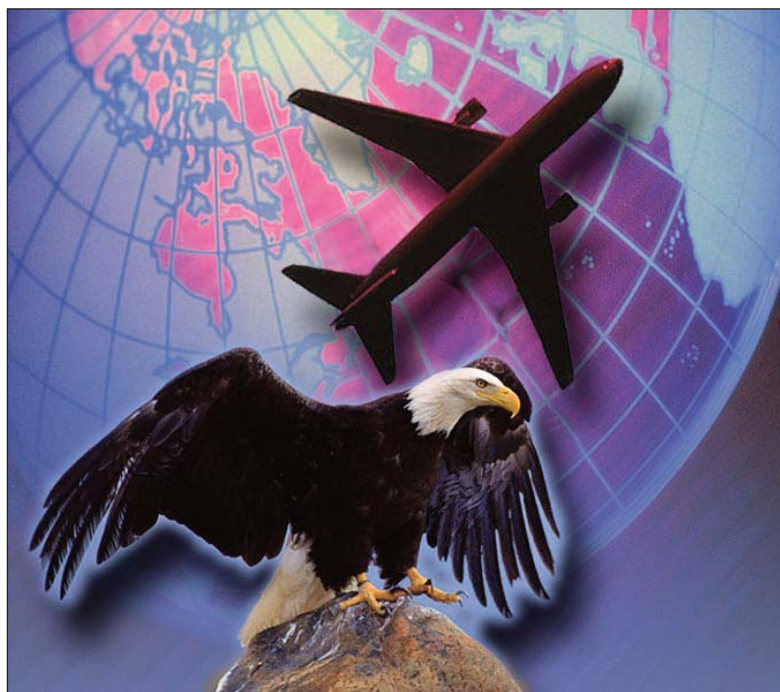
Mystery of the Ages, pages 245-246, Mr. Armstrong, "Notice the Church is a **FAMILY**, even as God is a divine **FAMILY** – 'the household of God.' Continue: 'And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building' – the

Church is a building 'fitly framed together' (WELL ORGANIZED – all parts joined and functioning together in harmony and teamwork) – 'groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit' (Ephesians 2:19-22).'"

As the basis for any decent thriving society, there must be within it the law of theocratic government which results in order. This is what Mr. Armstrong RESTORED some years before his death. Christ revealed that fundamental truth through him because that is what we would need in the end time with no chief shepherd to guide us.

A FEAST OF TABERNACLES ATMOSPHERE

Though we do not yet fully know for sure where the "**Place of Safety**" will be, we can know that it will be in a Feast of Tabernacles atmosphere. During this time of togetherness, God's people will continue to live each day with organized



daily routines, including various assigned responsibilities. Our training up to this time has involved a voluntary willingness and submission to the authority of the leadership established by Christ THROUGH Mr. Herbert Armstrong. This will be put to the test during this time.

Realizing the fact that the people of God will yet be human, and while living in that close proximity with each other, obedience to leadership will be very necessary to settle any differences and enable everyone to remain in unity and harmony in that close proximity. It should be remembered that the ELECT people of God will yet have human nature with which to struggle and suppress on an individual basis.

And realizing the fact that this human nature has been suppressed over the years since being the people of God, and the fact that each one that will be there will be counted worthy strongly indicates that lengthy period of time will be overall a very happy, peaceful, and harmonious time together.

This will be made possible through the help of Jesus Christ in forgiving others as well as crying out to our High Priest and Savior for their own forgiveness.

And more important – at the end of that 3½ years – having been found faithful to be able to stand before Jesus Christ when He will appear from heaven, He then will change His people from human to **Glorified Spirit Beings** (Matthew 13:43).

Mr. Armstrong taught the analogy of “staying close to the trunk of the tree.” This will prove important when that time comes to “flee.” How will one know? How will the word get to each one? From WHERE will that alarm sound come? These are important questions to consider for those who profess to be remaining faithful to the teaching of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, who taught ONE Church, One Government and only ONE WAY!

It should be fully realized that Jesus Christ will make the

answers known through His tried and faithful leadership when that time does come (Matthew 24:15-21).

PASSING THE FINAL EXAM

The “**Place of Safety**” and the **Feast of Tabernacles** have a significant DUAL purpose:

1) The Feast of Tabernacles is preparing us not only for the coming of Jesus Christ and the new age in which He will govern, but also for the 3½ years when God will hide His people from the **Great Tribulation**. For eight days a year, we go to “**a place**” God has placed His name to learn to fear the Great Eternal our Awesome and wonderful God and focus on our part in that millennial period of time.

This is a test each year on those who are able to attend this wonderful and most meaningful Festival, to see if they will “... **learn to fear the LORD [Eternal] your God always**”, and obey Him (Deuteronomy 14:23).

2) The “**Place of Safety**” will be the final period of time of preparation for God’s true, faithful and enduring people for what the Feast of Tabernacles pictures.



THE WONDERFUL WORLD TOMORROW

After a few decades inside that millennial period, it will come to be a thousand years of peace, harmony, prosperity and great abundance! And this will be made possible by the ever-loving King of all righteousness, Jesus Christ while being aided by His enlarged Family – the ELECT who will then have been counted worthy to stand before Jesus Christ in all of His magnificent glory!

Jesus Christ will have embraced those of His people who have passed their final exams and been found WORTHY and qualified for the governmental positions they will be given in which to serve forever (Revelation 20:4-6, Daniel 7:22, 27). This will have been made possible for their abiding faithfulness, loyalty, obedience, endurance and love for our Father and His beloved Son Jesus Christ, and each other during that **final test** while in **THE PLACE OF SAFETY!**





Our Thanksgiving Legacy

Both the United States and Canada observe national Thanksgiving Day holidays to acknowledge the outstanding peace, prosperity and productivity they have shared on the North American continent. Yet, an attitude of *ingratitude* prevails in those countries despite their very abundant blessings.

By Mark Mendiola

On Sept. 7, 1774, early in the American Revolution, members of the First Continental Congress dropped to their knees inside Carpenters Hall at Philadelphia to collectively pray for God's blessing on their attempt to establish independence from Great Britain and shed the shackles of oppressive taxation. Their prayer of praise and thanksgiving followed the reading of Psalm 35 in the Holy Bible.

That psalm about God avenging His people in part reads: "Let them shout for joy and be glad, who favor my righteous cause; and let them say continually, '*Let the LORD be magnified, Who has pleasure in the prosperity of His servant.*' And my tongue shall speak of Your righteousness and of Your praise all the day long (Psalm 35:27-28)."

John Adams, who became the second U.S. president, recounted that emotional first prayer of Congress: "I never saw a greater effect upon an audience. It seemed as if

heaven had ordained that psalm to be read that morning." Samuel Adams said the "prayer was an unparalleled success. Even Quakers shed tears."

After they arose from prayer, the colonial leaders were imbued with greater conviction to proceed with their bold attempt to establish a new nation in defiance of the powerful British Empire. No one could have imagined that a tax dispute between that empire and her 13 American colonies would escalate into a full-scale Revolutionary War. Who could have dreamed that a vastly outnumbered, outgunned confederation of disorganized colonists would defeat the most powerful empire on earth and ultimately create the mightiest, most prosperous nation in history?

The Library of Congress reports: "The Continental-Confederation Congress, a legislative body that governed the United States from 1774 to 1789, contained *an extraordinary number of deeply religious men. The amount of energy that Congress invested in encouraging the practice of religion in the new nation exceeded that expended by any sub-*



sequent American national government. Although the Articles of Confederation did not officially authorize Congress to concern itself with religion, the citizenry did not object to such activities. This lack of objection suggests that both the legislators and the public considered it appropriate for the national government to promote a nondenominational, nonpolemical Christianity.”

That first prayer of praise and thanksgiving by the First Continental Congress was answered in a most miraculous, dramatic way! George Washington, the first U.S. president, acknowledged the seemingly insurmountable obstacles confronted by the colonists. “It was known the resources of Great Britain were, in a manner, inexhaustible, that her fleets covered the ocean and that her troops had harvested laurels in every quarter of the globe. Not then organized as a nation, or known as a people upon earth, we had no preparation. Money, the nerve of war, was wanting. The sword was to be forged on the anvil of necessity (*Liberty! The American Revolution*, page 133).”

On July 4, 1776, 56 courageous men signed the Declaration of Independence as 30,000 British troops were landing at New York to crush what England considered a rebellion. *By signing it, they were signing their own death warrants and declaring their dependence on Almighty God.* The Declaration of Independence begins: “We hold these truths to be self-

evident, that all men are *created* equal. That they are endowed by *their Creator* with certain unalienable rights.” Its closing words solemnly state: “*With a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence*, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and *our sacred honor*.”

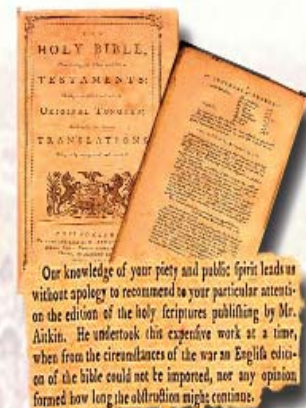
National days of thanksgiving and of “humiliation, fasting, and prayer” were proclaimed by Congress at least twice a year throughout the war, the Library of Congress says. “Congress was guided by ‘covenant theology,’ a Reformation doctrine especially dear to New England Puritans, which held that God bound Himself in an agreement with a nation and its people. This agreement stipulated that they should be prosperous or afflicted, according as their gen-





A THANKSGIVING FOUNDATION

Giving thanks and praise to Almighty God for His many blessings stems even beyond the Continental Congress to 1620 when pilgrims fleeing religious persecution in Europe risked their lives to sail across the Atlantic Ocean to an unknown, inhospitable continent and endured almost incomprehensible hardship to establish a toehold in North America. It's no coincidence that they claimed the inheritance promised to Abraham, who himself was a pilgrim and sojourner (Hebrews 11:8-10).



eral Obedience or Disobedience thereto appears.' Wars and revolutions were, accordingly, considered afflictions, as divine punishments for sin, from which a nation could rescue itself by repentance and reformation."

On Sept. 11, 1777, Congress instructed its commerce committee to import 20,000 Bibles from "Scotland, Holland or elsewhere" because the War of Independence cut off the supply of Bibles to the United States. In 1782, Congress approved Philadelphia printer Robert Aitken's petition to officially sanction publication of the Old and New Testaments and recommended it for U.S. citizens. It was the first English language Bible published in North America.

"The first national government of the United States was convinced that the 'public prosperity' of a society depended on the vitality of its religion. Nothing less than a 'spirit of universal reformation among all ranks and degrees of our citizens,' Congress declared to the American people, would 'make us a holy, that so we may be a happy people,'" the Library of Congress reports.

In December 1777, the Continental Congress made the First National Proclamation of Thanksgiving by declaring: "For as much as it is the indispensable duty of all men to adore the *superintending Providence of Almighty God*; to acknowledge with gratitude *their obligation to Him for benefits received* ..."



"The pilgrims hoped they could establish a culture in the wilderness that would be free from the corruption of the Old World. The Bible was 'the perfect rule of faith,' the daily source of moral guidance and spiritual support. They felt they were combating the forces of Satan as Israel did in the Old Testament. England was their oppressor, like Egypt. King James was their pharaoh, and the Atlantic Ocean was their Red Sea. New England was to be their Canaan, they hoped and prayed" (*Faith of the Pilgrims*, page 53).



Before departing from England on the Mayflower, they gathered on a dock for a “day of solemn humiliation.” Their pastor, John Robinson, read from Ezra 8:21, where Ezra proclaimed a fast for the Jews to humble themselves before God for the good of themselves and their children. The rest of the time was spent in fervent prayers and tears. Quoting Hebrews 11:13, he said they knew they were pilgrims.

“Now as the people of God in old time were called out of Babylon civil, the place of the bodily bondage, and were to come to Jerusalem, and there to build the Lord’s temple, or tabernacle ... so are the people of God now to go out of Babylon spiritual to Jerusalem ... and to build themselves as lively stones into a spiritual house, or temple for the Lord to dwell in ... *for we are the sons and daughters of Abraham by faith,*” Robinson wrote (*The Light and the Glory*, page 110).

Their governor, William Bradford, said those pilgrims almost immediately gave God thanks upon

landing at Cape Cod, Massachusetts. “Being thus arrived in good harbor, and brought safe to land, *they fell upon their knees and blessed the God of heaven*, who had brought them over the vast and furious ocean, and delivered them from all the perils and miseries thereof, again to set their feet on the firm and stable earth, their proper element” (*History of Plymouth Colony*, page 85).

On Nov. 11, 1620, the day the Mayflower landed, 41 men aboard ship signed the Mayflower Compact, “America’s birth certificate,” which stated the pilgrims’ purpose in establishing the American colony was “for the glory of God and advancement of the Christian faith.”

“At the heart of the compact lay an undisputed conviction that God must be the center of all law and order, and that law without a moral base is really no law at all (*The Rebirth of America*, page 27).”

During the summer of 1623, a drought shriveled the crops of the pilgrims at their Plymouth colony. “Upon which *they set apart a solemn day of humiliation to seek the Lord by humble and fervent prayer in this great distress.* ... And afterward the Lord sent them such seasonable showers, with interchange of fair warm weather as, through His blessing, caused a fruitful and liberal harvest, to their no small comfort and rejoicing. For





BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Oct. 3, 1863.

A PROCLAMATION.

TWO year that is drawing toward its close has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly giving and praise enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others are added, which are of so extraordinary a nature that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever-watchful providence of Almighty God.

In October 1789, Washington proclaimed and created the first Thanksgiving Day designated by the U.S. government. He declared “it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge *the providence of Almighty God*, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor.”

He said it was “to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts *the many signal favors of Almighty God*.” He referred to God as “*that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be.*”

In March 1863, U.S. President Abraham Lincoln declared: “We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; We have been

pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; *a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing*; a land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper. *When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you. Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God* by not keeping His commandments, His judgments and His statutes which I command you today, lest – *when you have eaten and are full*, and have beautiful houses and dwell in them; and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and gold are multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied; *when your heart is lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God* who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage ...

“Then you say in your heart, ‘*My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth.*’ And you shall remember the LORD your God, *for it is He who gives you power to get wealth*, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day (Deuteronomy 8:7-14, 17-18).”

A THANKLESS, UNGRATEFUL AGE

Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong often said one of the worst sins is *the sin of ingratitude*. The Apostle Paul warned: “But know this, that *in the last days perilous times will come*: for men will be *lovers of themselves, lovers of money*, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful ... *lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God*” (II Timothy 3:1-2, 4).

preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; We have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown. *But we have forgotten our God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us* and *we have vainly imagined in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient ... too proud to pray to the God that made us.*”

Never in the history of mankind have so many had so much! Yet, during this materialistic age, the predominant spirit is an attitude that “*I am rich, have become wealthy and have need of nothing.*” People with such a smug attitude of ingratitude, however, are “*wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked*” in God’s sight (Revelation 3:17).

Thankless Americans and Canadians would be well advised to heed the examples set by their forefathers and not forget where their many blessings originate! With spacious skies, amber waves of grain and majestic mountains, God indeed has shed His grace upon them from sea to shining sea!

Many in the U.S. and Canada, however, are embarrassed to acknowledge God as the One who provides the bounty of a continent blessed beyond comprehension. They have forgotten their God and their historic legacy of thanksgiving!



Apostasy

Continued from Page 4

Woe to the inhabitants of the earth or of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath."

He is very angry right now *because he knoweth he hath but a short time*. Now how does he know that? He knows that because he knows what this Church is doing. He knows what I am doing and what this Church is backing us in doing, getting the Gospel of the Kingdom, which he has kept from the world, but now getting that announced all over the world and it is coming. It's time is very near.

"And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child."

In other words, that was Israel, but the Israel of now in the New Testament time is the Church of God. A spiritual Israel, so to speak. *"And to the woman,"* now meaning the Church, *"were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, times and half a time."*

Now this time that will be a mere 3½ years, not a day for a year as it was through the Middle Ages when the Church at that time did flee for 1260 years *"from the face of the serpent."*

So, this Church, and you will read of this in the third chapter of Revelation where it speaks of this era of the Church specifically, if we endure to the end, if we are faithful, if we are back of this job that God wants done we are going to be taken, and it says here fly.



CHRISTIAN MARTYRS



Now, in the Middle Ages, speaking of the Church going to a place of safety, they fled. That implies they went afoot.

Now, whether it means anything or not it does say fly this time. And there is the promise that if we are faithful in getting this message to the world as a witness for all nations, that we will not have to go through this terrible Great Tribulation.



Now, I want you to remember always that after Adam had rejected the Kingdom of God, when he was first created God told him about His own Government, God's Government. He told him about the Kingdom of God. He explained to him he could be born of God, that the Kingdom of God is a family, that God is a family. God is that family, not just one person. The Father in heaven, whom Jesus prayed to and told us to pray to is the Father of that family. He called Christ His beloved son. Christ called Him His Father. We are to pray to Him and call Him our Father, but we pray in the name and by the authority of Jesus Christ.

Now, when Adam rejected the Kingdom of God, which he had a chance to rule, because right there was also the Tree of Life. That tree was a symbol of the Spirit of God, and if he had obeyed God, and he didn't have to repent at that

time because he had not done anything wrong yet. This was while God was still speaking to him and before Satan encountered him. He could have received the Spirit of the Living God which would have impregnated him with immortal life and as a son of the Living God, but he didn't.

Now, if we are going to rule in the place of Satan. ...we have to reject his way of life ... and he is getting to us, and he is getting to us every day.

God made man with a physical brain, but in order that we could have a mind like God, although inferior, of course, at this time He put within each of us a spirit, that spirit essence, not a spirit person or being at all, but that spirit in man does impart to the physical brain the power of intellect that no animal has. Animals have brains precisely like the



him. He convinced them to rebel against the government of God. Now the government of God is based on the law of God. All government is based on law. ...

Now, God had put the angels here for a very great purpose, but they had to do something to this earth first and qualify, then they would have been used in developing other planets all over the endless universe, but they did not even develop this planet. They wrecked it and ruined it. They perverted everything they could get to.

Angels are spirit beings. The earth is made of matter, and God put those spirit beings on a round earth of matter.

human brain. The elephant, the dolphin and the whale, their brains in quality are right on a par with man. If a man's brain is 100 percent, theirs are up in probably the late 90s, but the superiority of the human brain is thousands of times not just 1 percent or 2 percent out of 100. The only way you can possibly account for it, even scientifically, is to accept the truth that there is in the human brain, a nonphysical component that is not present in the animal brain.

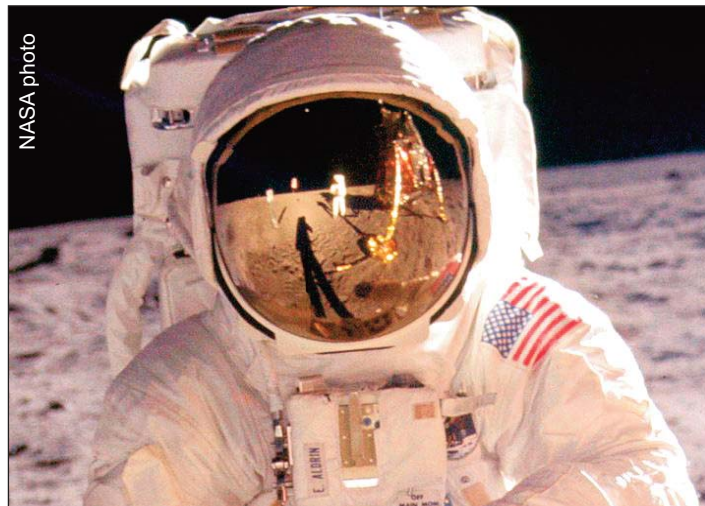
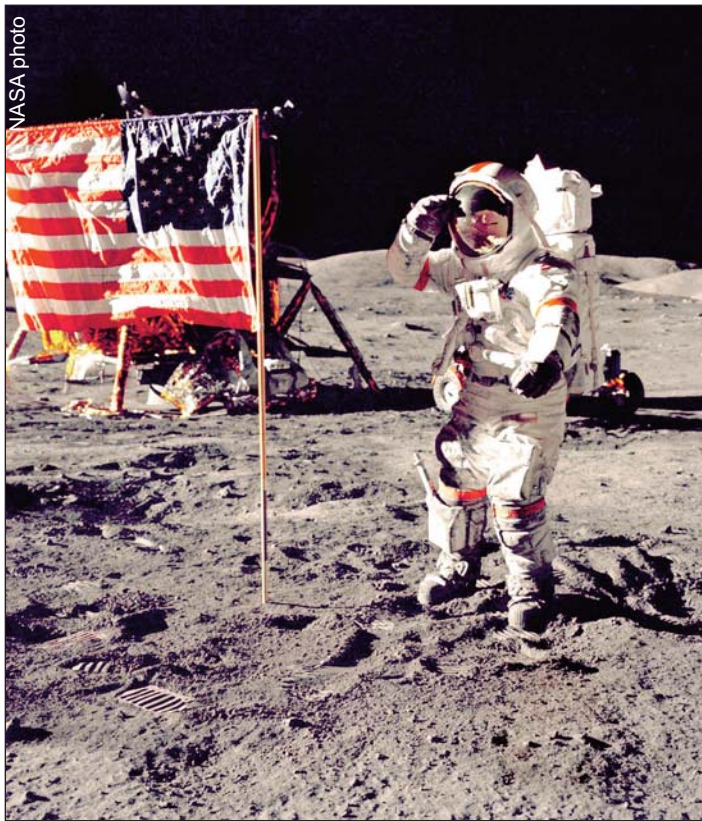
Now, let's remember that Adam had to meet Satan. Because this earth had been originally populated by angels, God had put here a super archangel, a cherub whose name was Lucifer. He was the absolute maximum of a type of being that God could create. It is impossible to create anything higher.

However, just by creation and giving him a mind, giving him the power to think, to reason, equipping him with very great knowledge and let him use that knowledge in thinking and reasoning and in drawing his own conclusions in making his own decisions, in making his own choices. Now, God had also created two other super archangels and apparently they have never misused their thinking processes, but this Lucifer did, and he took all of his angels with

they shouted with joy when God first created it. It was so beautiful. It was so perfect. It was such a wonderful opportunity, but they wanted to do what God was going to let them do.

They wanted that all right, but they did not want to do it God's way. They did not want to do it in a way of love and obedience to God. A lawful way of peace, and as long as God's government ruled over them, with Lucifer on the throne of this earth, there was peace on earth. Wonderful





NEIL ARMSTRONG REFLECTED IN BUZZ ALDRIN'S VISOR

peace. There was joy and happiness. Shouting for joy as you read in Job. But they turned and tried to get it the other way instead. They perverted this earth.

You'll find that described in the the first chapter of Genesis and the second verse. The earth was in a state of confusion, and it was waste and empty and covered with darkness, with a watery, fluid surface. Now, in the 104th Psalm, you will read how God sends forth His Spirit and then he renews the face of the earth. ...

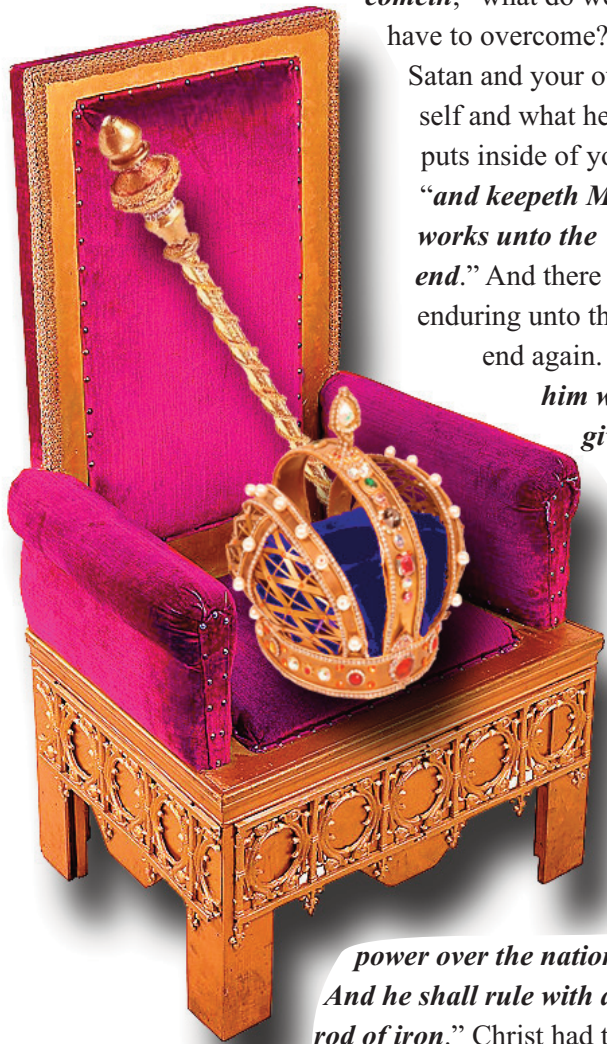
So, in the second verse of the first chapter of Genesis, it shows the state of the earth. Darkness was over the deep or the watery ocean surface.

I understand that at night it was so cold on the moon that

it would freeze you instantly. In the day time, it is so hot it would burn you to a crisp. They had to wear space suits that kept all of those temperatures off. They had their own oxygen inside to breathe. They had to take what it takes to sustain human life. They had to take it from this earth. You might wonder why would they want to go up there? You know, I receive many letters of congratulations for making the first step on the moon because the man who did had my name, but he was a different Armstrong. His name was Neil.



Now, that Satan had been disqualified to carry out the government of God, which he had rejected, the government of God had been taken from the earth. Anyone who was going to succeed him had to ... reject his way and accept God's way and God's government. Now Adam had that chance. He was the first Adam. He didn't do it. The second Adam, who was Christ, did. Now, I want to go just way ahead of myself for a moment. Go back here to the second chapter of Genesis. I'm jumping way ahead now, and beginning with verse 26 and verse 27 where Jesus himself said (Revelation 2:26-27) "**he that over-**



cometh,” what do we have to overcome? Satan and your own self and what he puts inside of you *“and keepeth My works unto the end.”* And there it is, enduring unto the end again. *“To him will I give*

power over the nations: And he shall rule with a rod of iron.” Christ had to qualify to become the King in

the place of king Lucifer. If we are going to sit with Him on *His throne*, we too have to qualify.

Do you ever wonder why it is God is only calling a very few now? I’VE TOLD YOU THAT AGAIN AND AGAIN AND AGAIN. It is a very few, and it is only those that God calls. If you have been called and converted, that is a miracle and Jesus Christ said *none could come to Him except the Father has drawn them.*

Other scriptures will show you that if He has, you have been predestinated since before the foundation of the world. God knew that you would be born and had you selected and picked out, but He called us TO GET A JOB DONE. Anyway, let’s see, Revelation 3:21 *“To him that overcometh,”* and again it is overcoming Satan and his way and accepting the way of God and the law of God and the

government of God, *“will I grant to sit with me on my throne.”*

Jesus had to qualify. He had to reject the way of Satan. He had to prove He would keep the way of God, and if He was going to rule with that law and re-establish the government of God on this earth.

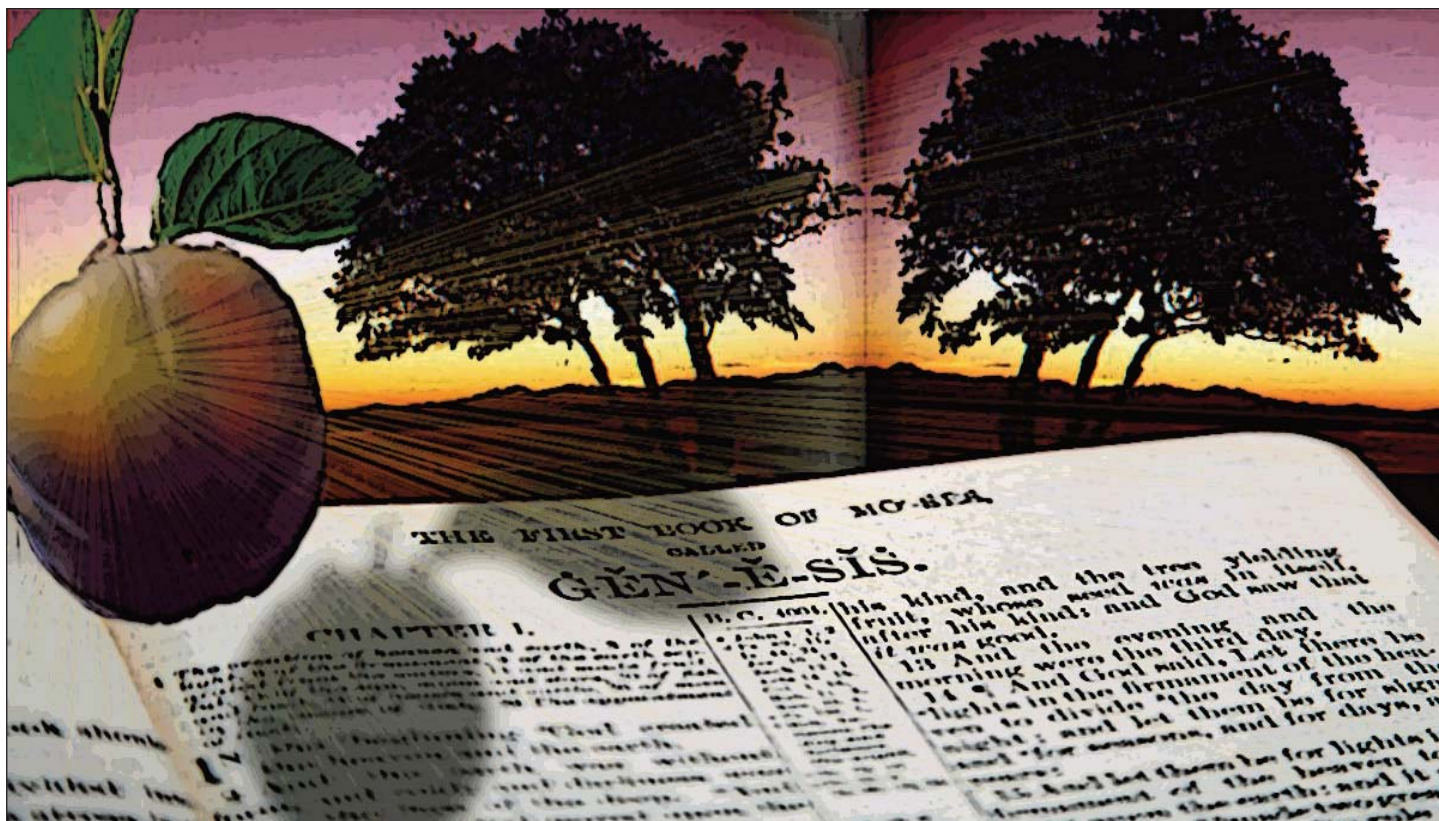
When God talked to Adam and Eve, they DID NOT BELIEVE WHAT GOD SAID. Now you not only have to BELIEVE on Christ and BELIEVE that Jesus was the promised Messiah. That is not enough. You have to BELIEVE WHAT HE SAID!

He is the Word of God. It is His word that is important. *You know we need to get these things straight because it is very, very important and your eternity is hanging on it.* We are called for a job and to get a job done.

Now, Christ did qualify, but when Adam and Eve rejected God and God’s law and went Satan’s way, and chose that way, they cut themselves off from God. So God says, all right, you have cut yourself off from Me.

I am going to just simply let you go the way you have chosen, and it is the way Satan is leading, and *you will see in human life that going this way of vanity, lust, greed, jeal-*





ousy, envy, competition, strife, resentment, bitterness, hatred, murder and violence, that you are only going to bring suffering on humanity. You will never have peace because of the way you live, everyone thinking the other guy is doing it the wrong way.

I guess that is human nature, too. Maybe that came from Satan. Anyhow, Satan is the prince of the power of the air, and he is broadcasting through that spirit that is in every one of us; and he broadcasts not in words, not in sounds, but only in attitudes, impulses, feelings.

You just suddenly feel a certain way, and you have a certain attitude and you begin to resent what someone did to you.

They have heard this, even ministers, and yet they let bitterness and resentment come in and hook them on it, and they'll never get unhooked because they don't want to. They won't repent. God would let them. God would easily grant them repentance, but they don't want it.

You'll read that in Hebrews. Once you have tasted of the truth of God and of the Holy Spirit of God and you have had these wonderful things, and it is a miracle if you have had the Holy Spirit, and once that miracle has happened and that great gift has been given to you and you turn away

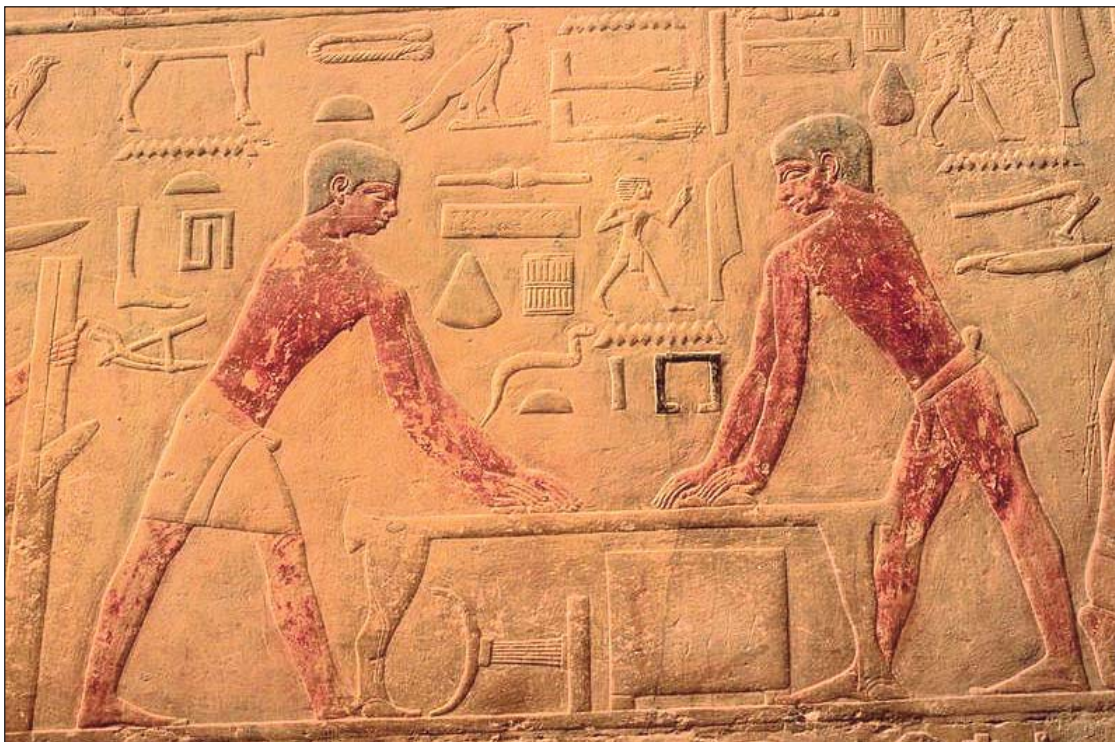
from it and you turn to another belief, it is impossible to ever get you to repent and change your mind because you won't and God isn't going to make you if you refuse.

That has happened to even some ministers in this Church.

God has a purpose he is performing on this earth. The reason He put human beings here was because when angels went wrong, He could not create any other angels greater and He cannot create instantaneously by fiat this thing of character.

That is something that has to be developed. God had it. The angels under Lucifer did not, and they went their own way. The only way that God could provide enough beings to do what He wants done in the whole universe was to reproduce Himself. It had to be done out of matter, which can be subject to change because spirit will not change.

We have to develop that character while we are composed of matter, and once we do die, we'd be resurrected spirit beings, and it is all through the spirit that is within us. Not many understand any of the things I am telling you. No other church on the face of the earth understands it. It is the word of this book, the Bible. They don't understand the



EGYPTIAN SLAVES

Bible. They don't believe it. It's what God says, and they don't believe what God says. You better hang onto it. It is very precious, believe me. What God has in store for us is beyond the greatest imagination of your mind, and He wants to give it to us, but we have our part. You don't earn it. You never could.

Anyway, God adopted a 7,000 year plan. The first 6,000 years He is keeping hands off of the world primarily, and He is letting men go their own way, accepting the way of Satan to show the results by human experience of 6,000 years. The experience has been going on. The lesson has been written, but nobody believes it, and nobody seems to understand it. That is, virtually nobody.

About the first 2,000 years from Adam, God was not calling humanity for salvation. We find that Abel was called righteous Abel so he must have had God's Spirit. Enoch walked with God, and we do not know any of the details or circumstances of it. Noah was the only one found righteous on earth, but because of Noah his family was saved with him – a total of eight people, and God wasn't calling anybody else. Then, we don't find anybody being called by

God for eternal life until we come to Abraham and then Isaac and Jacob and Joseph 430 years after Abraham's descendants were slaves in Egypt. God called them and offered them the opportunity to have His government as a nation. The only promises He gave and what it would get them were national and material promises, great wealth, peace, the greatest nation. They would be the head and not the tail of all the nations on earth. But there was no salva-

tion, spiritual salvation. Eternal life was not offered.

Only the prophets, and they were given God's Holy Spirit to get a job done not so just that they could have it and sit back and say, "Well, I'm saved." They were not saved. They aren't yet. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will be, but they are not yet. Not until the time of the resurrection. You read that in the 11th chapter of Hebrews, but we come down to the time of Christ and look at the millions and billions of people who have lived. God was not calling anyone to try to get them saved. God isn't trying to get humanity saved now and hasn't been and





REMEMBER TO KEEP THE SABBATH HOLY

never has as yet, but he has got a program going. He has a purpose. We are here for a purpose that we be made the children of God and that we develop the character of God because then there is a job for us to do.

We are called to get a job done. Right now what we are called for is to get this message of the coming Kingdom of God out to the world, not to convert them, not to get them to believe it, which they won't, but that they will know they have heard it and when it happens they will know they've been told, even though they didn't believe it. That is why you have been called, brethren. I hope I can get you to really see that and completely understand it.

Now, from Abraham to Christ only the prophets, as I said, Christ and from that time on, Christ came with a message, a gospel. He wanted the message to get out. The early apostles did get it out but notice here in Galatians, where Paul wrote to the Church of Galatia.

He said, *"I marvel that you are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another*

gospel: Which is not another, but there be some that trouble you, or would pervert the gospel of Christ."

There were enemies trying to have what they called this new teaching even then, trying to get them away. *Satan is active. He has his ministers.* You read of it in II Corinthians 11. It is no great thing if even his ministers appear as the ministers of righteousness and claim to be the ministers of Jesus Christ, but he pronounces **a double curse** on man or angel that would preach any other gospel but the one he had preached which was the gospel, or good news of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is the family of God into which we may be born. The Kingdom of God is the government of God, and it is the family who is doing the governing of God's government and God's government is based on God's law. **THE ONLY REASON HUMANITY IS HERE IS TO ONCE AGAIN GET THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD AND THE LAW OF GOD ESTABLISHED ON THIS EARTH. AND YET EVEN MINISTERS WILL GO OUT OF THIS CHURCH WHO HAVE BEEN TAUGHT IT AND SAY THE LAW IS NOT**



CHRIST WILL RETURN AS A REFINER'S FIRE

IN EFFECT FOR US AT ALL ANYMORE and you can work on the Sabbath all you please and go right into God's Kingdom.

Oh no, you can't! I wouldn't give you a plugged nickle for your chances because I speak the word of God and I speak it WITH AUTHORITY and you know I do.

I don't say maybe. I don't say this is my opinion. I have been called by the living God to get a job done, and I'm getting it done, and I need you to back me and to help me. I am very thankful that you do so I can keep going.

Now, let's go back to Malachi and get this prophecy once again. "***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," that is Christ, the messenger of the covenant, but another human messenger was to prepare the way before him, "***whom ye delight in: behold, He shall come,***" that is Christ, "***says the LORD of Hosts.***"

But, now I want you to pay attention to the next verse. What kind of a coming of Christ is this really speaking about?

"But who may abide the day of His coming, and who shall stand when He appeareth for *He is like a refiner's fire* and like fuller's soap, and He shall sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver and shall purify the sons of Levi and purge them as gold and silver that they may offer unto the Eternal an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah



GOD DEFENDS THE WIDOWS AND FATHERLESS

and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Eternal as in the days of old.”

Did that happen at Christ’s First Coming? Any of that? No. None at all. Notice.

“And I will come near to you to judgement and I will sit as a swift witness against the sorcerers and against the adulterers and against false swearers and against those that oppress the hireling in the wages and the widow and the fatherless and that turn aside the stranger from his right and fear not me, said the Lord of Hosts. For I the Lord change not.”

This shows a Second Coming of Christ and a messenger to prepare the way. Now, in Mark the first chapter we find the beginning of the gospel of Christ and how Elijah prepared the way before Him.

That was His First Coming, but this is talking primarily of the Second Coming. Is anyone preparing the way? Now, we

know it is imminent or this gospel of the Kingdom would not be going around to all of the world. The way is being prepared.

Brethren, God called you for your part in getting that done. You say we are behind you 100 percent, Mr. Armstrong. I want you to realize what it means to be back of me 100 percent. If you are only back of me in your prayers, if there is no money to help financially, you have no conception of how much your prayers can do, but you have got to be in earnest about it, and you have to believe and then it will be done.

What I read you in Galatians, about 68 A.D. The Church was founded in 31 A.D. The false church was started in 33 A.D. Now I’m going to show you more about that, and the way is now being prepared for the Second Coming. One way it is being prepared is to announce about it, the coming of Christ and the government of God being restored to the earth and the Kingdom of God. As the gospel went out in the first century by the apostles, there was a great apostasy

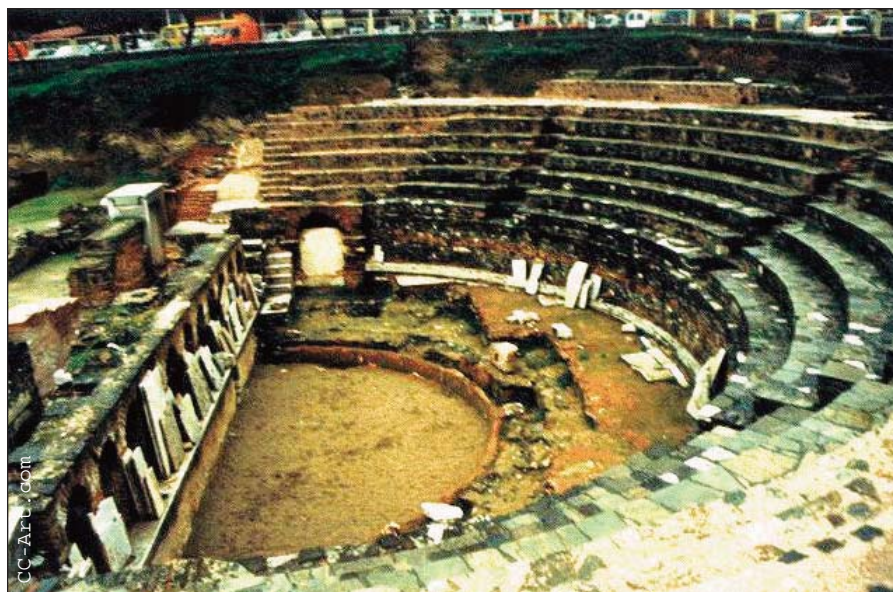


AERIAL VIEW OF EASTERN THESSALONICA

then. As it is going out now there has to be another one now. Now I want to go into those scriptures.

I want you to notice now in II Thessalonians, second chapter and beginning with verse 1 the second chapter.

“Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him, that you be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us.”



ROMAN MARKET IN THESSALONICA

Now this is the second letter that Paul wrote to them; this was written about 52 or 53 A.D. ... *“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first.”* Now this falling away comes from the Greek word “apostasia.” In other

words, an apostasy and apostatizing! In other words, turning away from the truth to error and false teaching. It is a dereliction of essential truth or a corruption of truth and correct doctrine and that it says here had to come first.

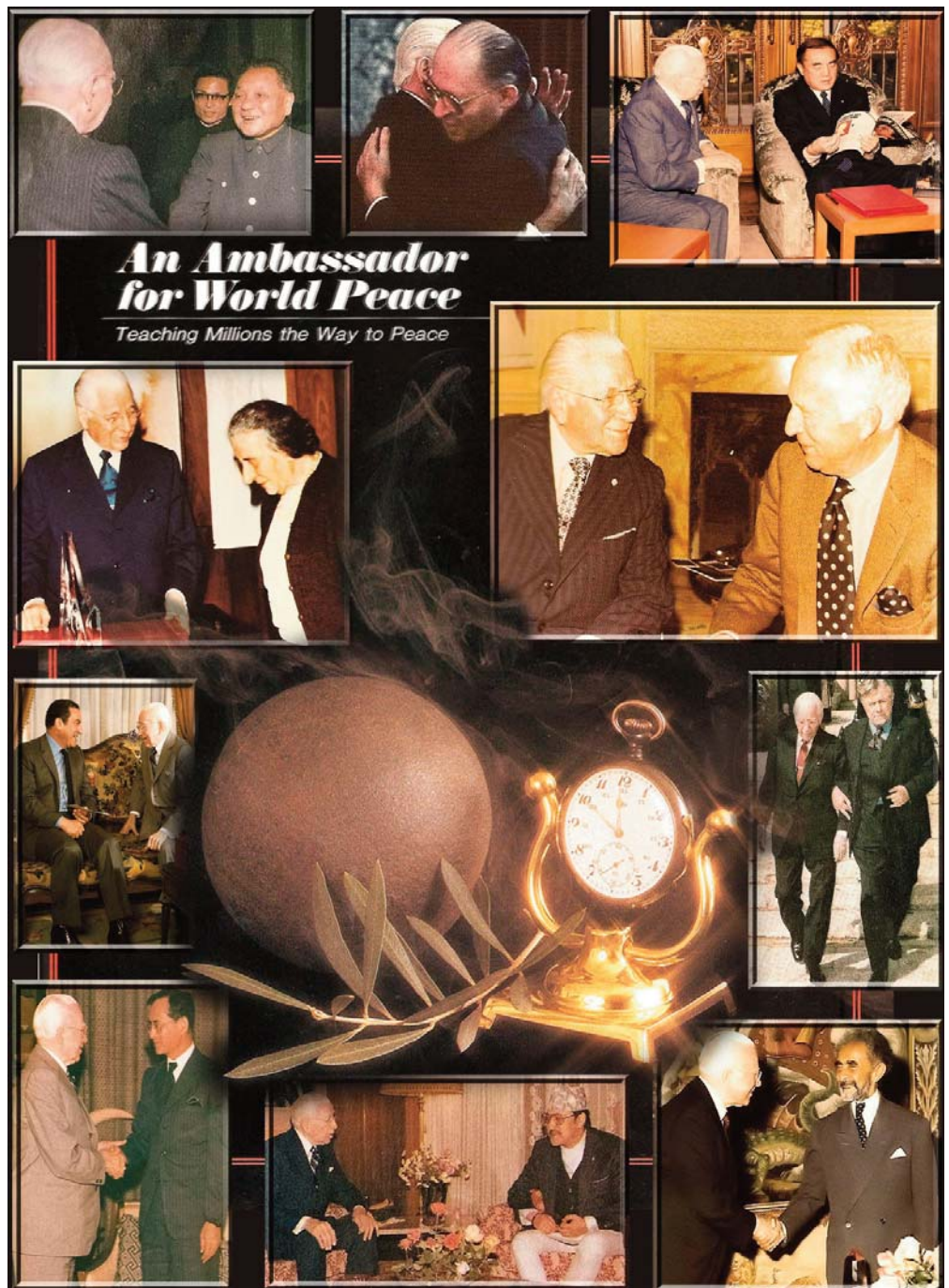
Well, Paul had written a letter to them and a second letter to the Thessalonians written later within that same year. Apparently, a messenger had come from Thessalonica and had told them that these brethren thought that others were spreading the gospel. They had what they called this new teaching that had come to the Church now, and they purported that it had come from the Apostle Paul so the people would believe it immediately if it came from Paul and that the day of Christ was at hand. It was just going to come right away.

So he said, ***"We beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him, that you be not soon shaken in mind, or troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, that the day of Christ is at hand."***

We have been in the day of man or you can call it the day of Satan, and that is for this first 6,000 years, then there is going to be 1,000 years when God is going to take over through Christ.

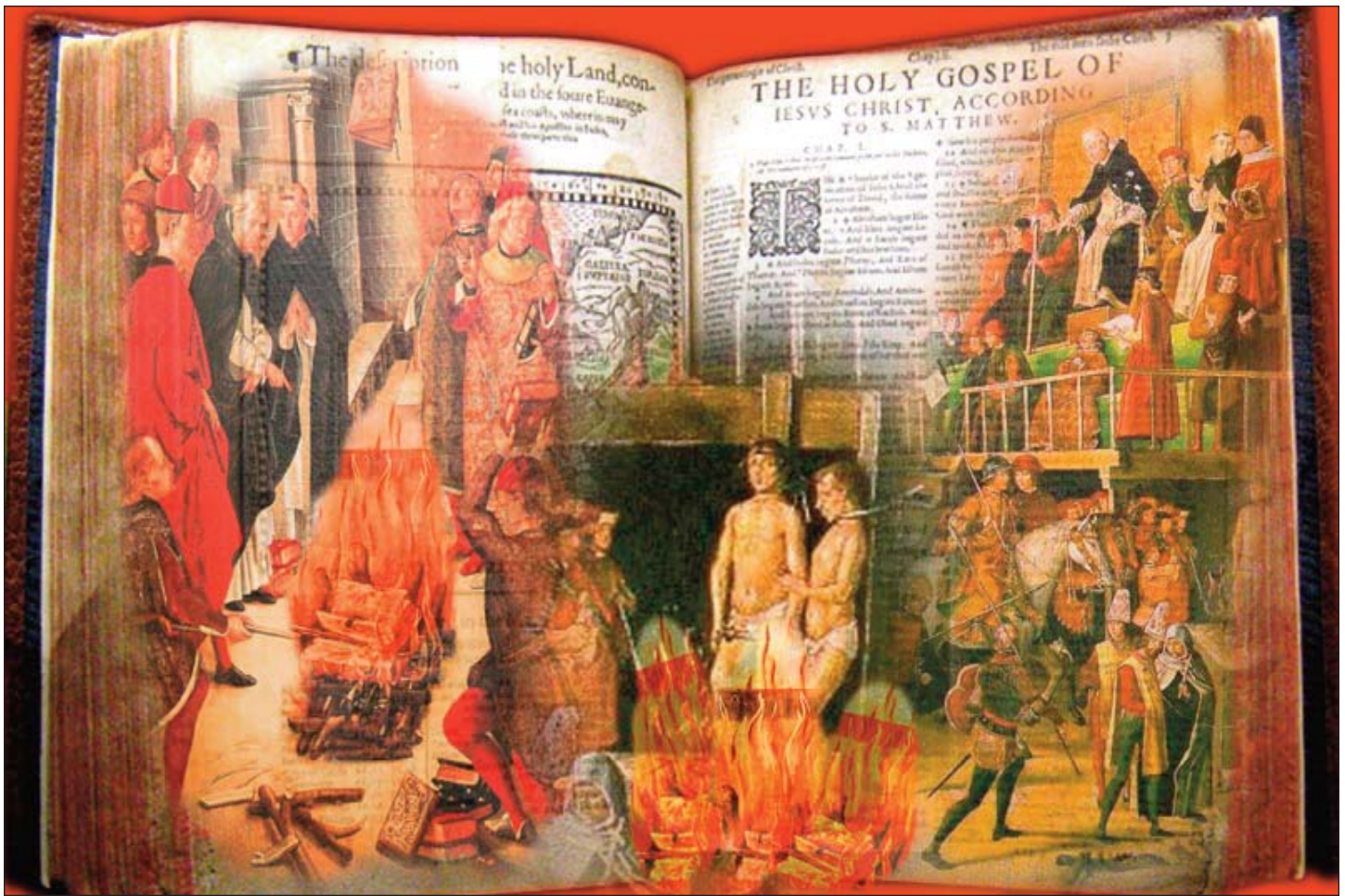
Christ is coming again as King of Kings and Lord of Lords over all nations on the face of the earth. That is when we are going to have peace.

No, I am an ambassador without portfolio for world peace, and I am sort of recognized as such in the capitals of the world. God has to have someone getting this message out. Peace is coming when Christ comes and when Satan is put away and when he can't pump this kind of attitude into the minds of people through the spirit that is in them, and it won't come any sooner. Now I'm not trying to bring about peace. I am only announcing what God is going to do.



I go as an ambassador, really ambassador for Christ with His message and I've had to wait until I could learn to put it in the kind of language that people would understand and not in Bible language, and I simply say what I am bringing you is something that no religion has ever revealed, something science has never been able to find out, something that is not taught in the colleges and universities.

It is the most important knowledge. That makes it sound more respectable. They've had enough of missionaries and that type of thing. If I go as a church man, they think I'm a missionary or coming with a religion and what they know



BIBLES AND THOSE WHO TRIED TO PRESERVE THEM WERE BURNED DURING THE MIDDLE AGES

as religion they don't want any more of. They've got their own religion anyway.

Let's go on to this second chapter of Thessalonians. Someone apparently had told them that they were from Paul.

They were believing that; he said, "***except there be a falling away***" or an apostasy from the truth, "***and that man of sin be revealed***," he was already there, and really the man of sin started out as this man in the eighth chapter of the book of Acts, Simon the Sorcerer, and he founded the great false church and that church is still in the world today and it is a great church.

It has ruled over governments of Europe. You don't have to guess very far to guess what church that is.

"And that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

"Most Holy Father" they call him. There can only be one who is the Most Holy Father and that is God Himself.

"Remember you not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?" Paul is reminding them but they were forgetting it. ***"And now you know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work."***

Even in Paul's time; this was probably about 52 or 53 A.D. They were already with a false gospel; he said just a little later when he wrote to the Galatians that was going out then and it has filled the world ever since.

"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming." At the coming of Christ. ***"Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan and with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall***

send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.” You come to believe a lie, and you depart from one truth of God and pretty soon you depart from another and another and another. I said when some of these apostated and went out of God’s Church, and did it with a manner of duplicity pretending they were with us.

One got a leave of absence with full pay for a year and used that money to try to destroy this Church and this work, and is getting out this so-called new teaching nullifying every important thing in the teaching of Jesus Christ. Now if you want to follow that, there’s the door back there. I won’t try to keep you from it, but I’ll tell you where

you’re going. It will be a lot worse than following the oxen to the slaughter, a lot worse and you’ll leave all of the truth. ***“God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren,” and I say that with Paul to you, “beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereas he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, STAND FAST, AND HOLD THE TRADITIONS THAT YOU HAVE BEEN TAUGHT, whether by***



AN OPEN DOOR TO THE GOSPEL



THE GUTENBERG BIBLE

word, or our epistle. Now the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and stablish you in every good work.”

Now we go next a little farther here to 1 Timothy 4, beginning again with verse 1. *“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith.”*

Here comes this apostasy again, going to false teaching, and drawing some away after them. This is another evidence, brethren, we are right down into the last time.

The Day of God and God’s interference in world affairs cannot come until this has happened. Now here some shall depart from the faith and, in this case, this was written about 64 or 65 A.D, and depart from the truth. The Greek word again is another form of the word “apostatize” or “apostasy,” bringing in doctrines that render the truth of the gospel null and void.

One that church has always taught, and I think many Protestants take it up, is that the Kingdom of God has been here all these years anyway and it is the church. The Kingdom of God is the message that Christ brought that is the message of the gospel. *“Giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies and hypocrisy.”*

Let me just say that these things and these letters that Paul wrote to the churches and this to Timothy, were a message to them at that time all right, but also it applies to us today.

Now, most of the Bible, I feel, was written and has been kept primarily for us of this time now. Most people in past ages never had a copy of the Bible. Printing wasn’t established until just about, what, was it 300 or 400 years ago, and there could not have been any distribution.

The Word of God had to be copied, and through the Middle Ages people would be burned at the stake if they had a copy or if they tried to make a copy. They did everything they could to try to stamp the Bible out and that was done

by the religion, this false religion, but God didn't ever let it get stamped out. Now, "*speaking lies and hypocrisy*," that did happen back then, but it is happening again now and to a more or less extent it has been happening all through this era. "*Speaking lies and hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry.*"

I don't know that the people going out today are forbidding to marry, but certainly they did then. They forbid their ministers to marry. They forbid their nuns to marry. "*And commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving.*" Well, they have their meatless days and you can't have any meat but fish on Friday, and they have certain days when you can't have meat and things of that sort.

"For every creature of God is good and nothing to be refused, for it is received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified," which means set apart, "*by the Word of God in prayer.*"

Now the Word of God sets apart the animals that are for meat and the vegetables and so on that we shall have for food, Leviticus 11. It is already set apart by the Word of God.

"If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of a good doctrine. But refuse profane and old wives' fables," and being blown about by every wind of doctrine that comes along. And that is exactly what some are using to try to apostatize. Oh yes, prophecy is being fulfilled.

Now, in Revelation 3 it speaks of this Church and of the work we are doing and of the door open to get the gospel out. In the 11th and 12th verses it speaks of how when the **Great Tribulation** comes, which will end our work, we are not going to have to go through it if we are faithful.

If you know how terrible that is, you will want to escape. I said a while ago the Bible is written primarily for us of this time because they didn't understand it before.

Now, the apostatizing began while Jesus Himself was on earth. I want to read that to you: John 6 beginning with verse 66. "*From that time many of Jesus' disciples went back,*" not the ones who became apostles but others, "*and walked no more with Him. And then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe.*"

They believed what he said. Many others didn't. "*And are sure that thou art the Christ the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?*"

He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray Jesus being one of the twelve."

Even Jesus had a traitor of those He himself had called.

Now I just want to read one final scripture in II Thessalonians again in the first chapter beginning with verse 2. I want to say this with Paul to you brethren here. "*Grace*

unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren." Now this is the way I feel toward you, just as Paul did toward those at Thessalonica.

"As it is meet," or fit or proper, "*because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity,*" or love, "*of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth; so that we ourselves glory in you in the Churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure: which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God for which you also suffer."*



Editor's Note: Large portions of this sermon were edited out due to the length of it while trying to fit it in the magazine. However the continuity of the subject has not been affected. Those who would like to receive the complete sermon are encouraged to write and request it from us. **Alton 'Don' Billingsley**



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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

Watchman for the House of Israel
www.ezekielwatchman.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

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

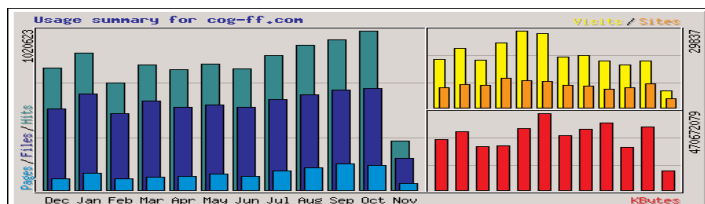
Which Day is the Christian Sabbath?
www.sabbathcentral.com

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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