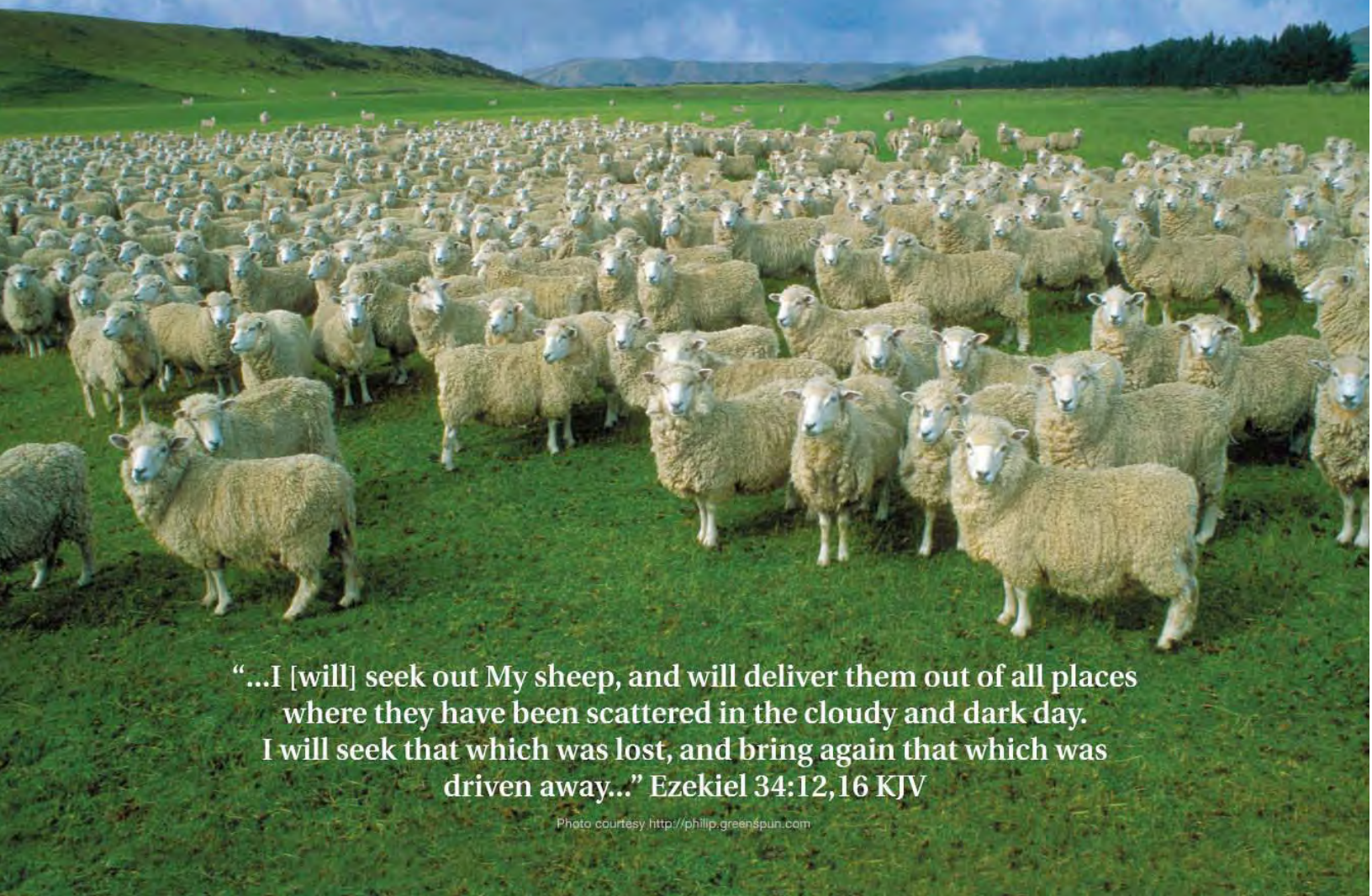


The _____ Philadelphia Remnant

March/April 2009



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

MARCH/APRIL 2009

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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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Coming Out of Sin

By Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong
First Day of Unleavened Bread, 1983

Before I begin speaking, I want to thank all of you for the generosity and nice offering we had this morning, breaking the record once again. We take up offerings just when God commands it and only when God commands it.

Money is only a medium of exchange, but it takes work to do the work of God. And so it does take money. But that only means we are all working together. Actually, we are all one great, vast team. And we have a worldwide work, and I'm glad I can say the job is getting done. It's getting done gloriously.

Now, night before last we had a very solemn ceremony. We had to be reminded once again of how Jesus was beaten, whipped, bruised as no man ever had been. And in Isaiah 53 you will read that He was beaten as no man ever had been – or is that the latter part of Isaiah 52? It's right in that passage.

And then He was nailed to the cross and died the most shameful, agonizing death possible because you and I have sinned. That was a time of solemnity, very solemn,



MR. HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG

very serious – today is a more joyful time because today marks the time of our coming out of sin. And, in a sense, we are only starting out of sin all over again, as we do every year. And I wonder if we really do realize fully and comprehend the real meaning of this festival? I first learned back very early in the year 1927 that we should keep the Passover and that we should keep seven special Sabbath days, annual Sabbaths or Holy Days.

At that time, I didn't know why. And you know I had to think of Abraham when God called him out of Babylon, and you know God was calling me out of this world. And He has called you out of this world.

When God called Abram, God called him out to leave the gaiety and bright lights of the civilization where he was. And he didn't quibble. It just says two words "Abram went." That's all. He didn't question. And I think that came to my





gene, Oregon, and I think it was one of the commentaries, I saw something, someone could see that in some way these Annual Festivals of God pictured the Spiritual Creation of man.

Now God has started a creation in the human family. The first was a physical creation. That started with the first man, Adam. The spiritual creation was started with the second Adam. Jesus Christ is

mind when I saw that we should keep these Annual Days. I saw, however, that they were ordained forever. I saw that Jesus Christ had kept these days and set us an example that we should do the same thing. I saw that the disciples kept these days and when they became apostles they taught the Church and the early Church kept God's Festivals. I saw that they were ordained forever. They were kept in the New Testament as well as the Old. I didn't know why. I didn't say "Well, why? Well, Lord, unless you show me why ..." I just said "God says do it. I will do it," and my wife, of course, with me. And for seven years, we kept these days alone.

And then when the first Church was raised up that became the parent Church of this Philadelphia era in Eugene, Oregon, or just west of Eugene in the country schoolhouse. That was in the autumn of 1933. I began to teach these days, and that autumn we kept the fall annual Sabbaths, and the next spring, we kept not only the Passover with foot washing, but also the annual Holy Days. But we didn't know why, and that was in 1933.

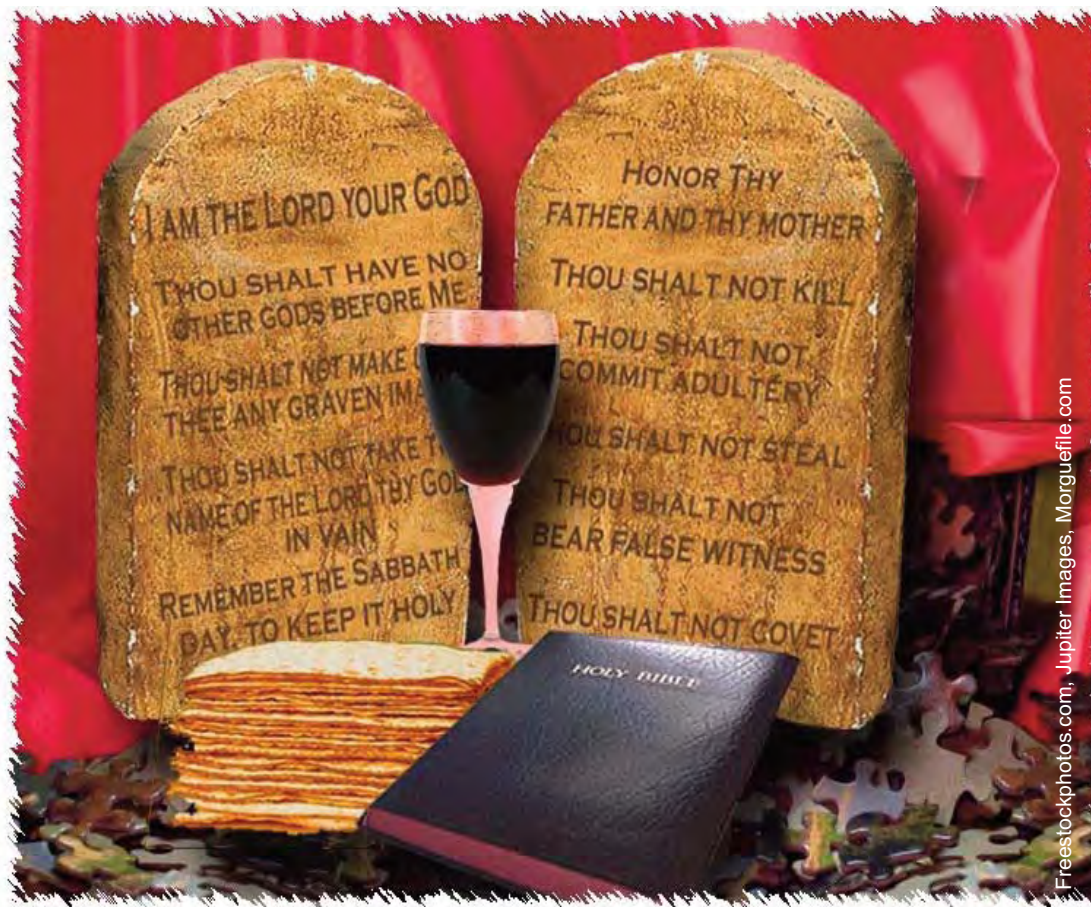
Then on through the years up to 1945, as the Church was growing, the Philadelphia era of the Church began to keep all of these days. I think you've never heard the history of why we keep the Feast of Tabernacles and why we keep all these days and what they mean. In the public library in Eu-

called the second Adam. He called people out of the world that had been built by the first Adam, influenced entirely by Satan.

And I want to go into a little of that in just a few moments. But, I want to continue this history just a moment. This article, as I remember, didn't give the whole thing. It just mentioned that the spiritual creation began with Christ and that the Passover was the first event to happen in the spiritual creation. And then I could see the Days of Unleavened Bread represented putting sin out of our lives, and it just naturally unfolded.

And God opened up the meaning to me, that the next Festival, happening some 50 days later, that we call the Day of Pentecost, and actually in the Bible originally it was called the Feast of Firstfruits. And we are the Firstfruits. And I didn't understand that at that time, but I saw that meant the coming of the Holy Spirit after Christ was crucified. He was crucified for our sins. Well, naturally, the next thing we must do in the spiritual creation of man is to put sin out of our lives.

What was wrong with humanity? Sin had come into the life of Adam. Sin had come into the life of his children Cain and Abel, and even of Seth, and then of the others as they



And then came the Feast of Tabernacles representing for seven days the seventh thousand year reign with Christ on earth. And that is only finishing the first 7,000 years. Now, the Holy Spirit was closed, I'll come to that a little later, but it was closed until Satan is put away, until the fulfillment of the Day of Atonement, until the Second Coming of Christ. And of course, Satan will be put away after the Second Coming of Christ to rule, and He will sit on the throne that Satan is now sitting on. But gradually, then, I came to see

came along. And all have sinned, even righteous Abel as Jesus called Abel, the son of Adam, "Righteous Abel." But he sinned, because the Bible also says "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." We read how Enoch walked with God. Nevertheless, Enoch sinned.

Noah was perfect in his generations, meaning his birth, physical birth, but he also walked with God. And he alone was found righteous. So God saved him and just his family – his wife, their three sons and the wives of their sons. And the whole world has come from them. And all have sinned. All have sinned.

Well, then I began to see that the seventh month, the Feast of Trumpets, I saw in the Bible that at the last trumpet, Jesus Christ will come again. And it became very plain that the Feast of Trumpets signified the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Then I studied the Day of Atonement that came next, the fast day, and I could see how it showed the putting away of Satan and the Azazel goat that was driven out into the wilderness.

the meaning of these days and how wonderful it is that it pictures. No church on earth but this one keeps these days.

Today, what does it mean? It means the coming out of sin. And we have to renew it every year because, brethren, you have not fully come out of sin, not one of you, neither have I. You read in I John, in the first chapter – not the gospel of John, but I John, near the end of your New Testament, "If we, in the Church, say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." We do sin, even after we have been converted, even after we have repented, have received Jesus Christ as our personal Savior, have received the Holy Spirit of God to lead us.

But not one of us has been filled with the Holy Spirit completely. To be filled completely with the Holy Spirit, every other wrong, contending spirit has had to go completely out of you, and I don't think that has happened to a one of us yet. It is, what the world does not realize, it is a gradual process. We have to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as Peter tells us in one of his two books in the Bible. Then we have to grow out of sin. You have to gradually put sin out.



little crumb of it anywhere around in His life.

But I can't say that, and not one of us can say it. But by His grace, He paid the penalty for the past sins, but there is so much more than just that. If we repent of sin, that means we start to go the other way. We grow out of sin, and we have to GROW out of sin. As you grow out of sin, you also at the same time you put sin out of your lives, you put more of God's truth and God's love in.

Last Wednesday, there was quite a commotion going on over in my home. And Rona Martin had gotten a number of people over there, and they were helping, and they were scouring every nook and cranny of the house for even some bread crumbs. They had heard a sermon over the weekend before and how they can even get into the carpets and so carpets were being vacuumed clean and everything was. Everything was left spic and span when they got through, but there was quite a crew over there working, trying to get all leaven out of the house.

Now, I'm quite sure the leaven was really cleaned out. But have we really completely cleaned the leaven out of our lives? The sin? Whenever you get to the place where you have, you will be just like Jesus Christ was. He never sinned. And not one of you has ever approached that place yet, where you can be as pure as He was, as free from sin as He was. I'm not, and you're not. You know there is one thing that the world doesn't understand.

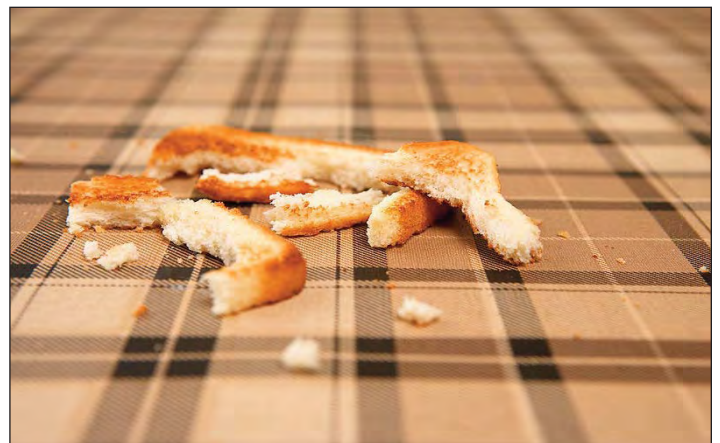
Anyway, we have not come all the way out of sin. It's a gradual process and will go on as long as we live. Unless we could attain to this lifetime to the same holy, righteous, perfect perfection that is that of God the Father and that of Jesus Christ.

Only one man ever lived without any taint of sin whatsoever. And if leaven represents sin, there was not even a tiny

Now, what is sin? **Sin is the transgression of the law**, but I think we don't understand fully what sin is. Now, you think you do. You say, "Oh, I understand sin, Mr. Armstrong. Why, sin is the transgression of the law." Yes, I know. I've taught you that, and perhaps you knew that before I taught you, too. And the law is the Commandments of God. It's holy and just and good. They are always perfect, but we're not. But I think we don't fully understand.

You can sum up the Word in one word – **LOVE**. And without love, and love in your heart and a lot more than we have acquired or developed, or received from God and the love of God you have to receive from Him, you don't work it up or develop it yourself in your own life at all.

Continued on Page 30



Personal from the Editor

By Alton B. 'Don' Billingsley

Passover 2009! – *How many more will there be before the last one can be observed where you and I now live?*

Time is of the essence! Prophecy makes known there is not much of it left before the house of Joseph and the other tribes of Israel will cease to exist as nations.

Will the elect of the true and faithful Church of God still be here for the Passover in 2010? Passover 2011 is *really iffy!* Passover 2012 appears to be out of the question altogether!

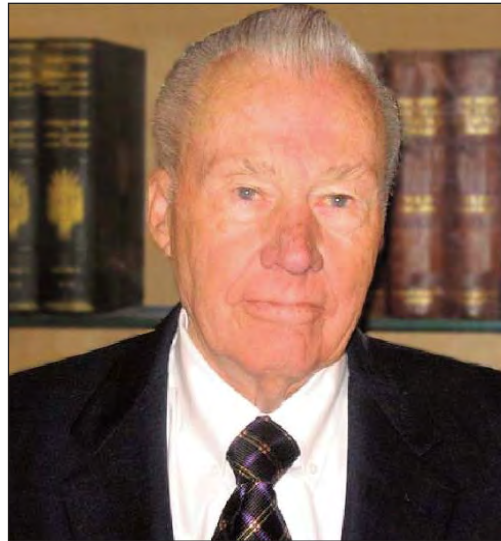
SIGNS OF THE END TIME

How close are we to the end of this age? This was the same question that was asked of Jesus Christ by His disciples after hearing Him say the days would come when the Temple of God would be completely demolished:

“Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the SIGN of Your coming, and of the end of the age? (Matthew 24:3)”



After speaking to them of the major disastrous problems that would in its generation begin bringing this age to its destined end, Jesus Christ then made known the answer as to how His people can know when it will end:



Alton B. 'Don' Billingsley

Jesus Christ then made known how His disciples could discern through a parable *when* that SIGN would have its fulfillment:

“And He spoke to them a parable: ‘Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. When they are already *budding*, you see and know for yourselves that *summer* is now near. So you, likewise, when you see these things happening, know that the Kingdom of God is near’ (Luke 21:29-31).”

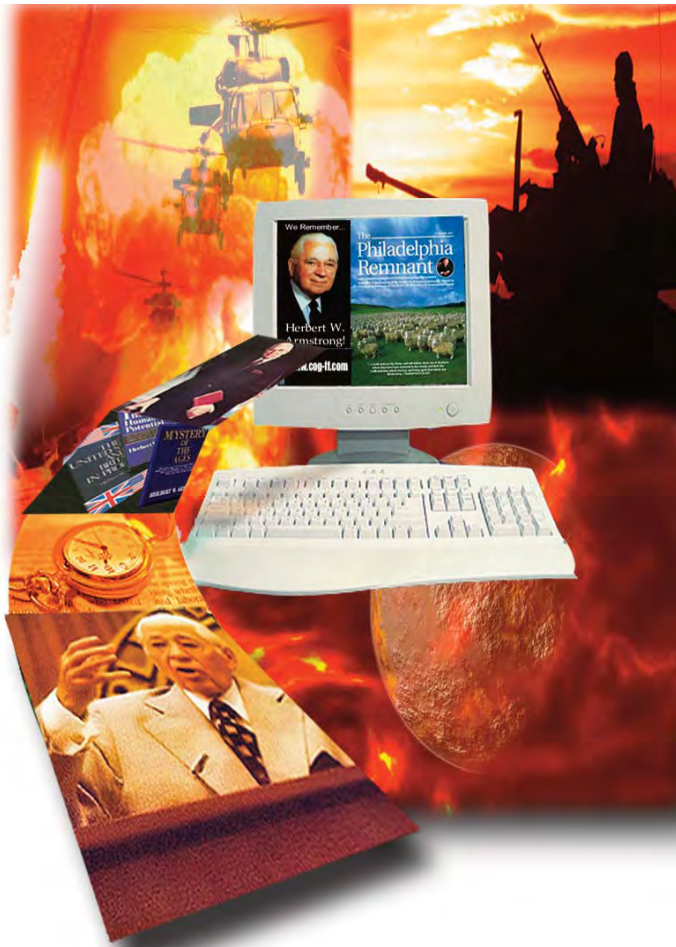
THE SIGN REACHING ITS FULFILLMENT

How close are we to the SIGN having reached its fulfillment? It is closer than realized! As all members should know, the Gospel went forth into all of the nations of this world, primarily through its leadership, during the lifetime of God’s late apostle and His promised Elijah to come, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, from January 7, 1934 to January 16, 1986 (Malachi 4:4-6, Matthew 17:10-11).

END-TIME WORK OF THE PHILADELPHIA ERA

In ways that were fully recognizable to this small flock, Christ’s intervention began with this little flock during and about the Passover season of 2006, to make possible the Gospel of the Kingdom and the Ezekiel *WARNING* message to begin going forth once more as *a last ditch warning* to His Church and the nations of Israel.

“And this Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world *ASA WITNESS* to all the nations, AND THEN THE END WILL COME (Matthew 24:14).”



comes into existence while using the Chaldeans as a type of it (Habakkuk 1:6):

“Look among the nations and watch – be utterly astounded! For I will work a work in your days which you would not believe, though it were told you (Habakkuk 1:5).”

Jesus Christ is using this small flock *as a conduit or an instrument* to do His Work before the beginning of the **Great Tribulation**. Through the use of the 13 web sites Christ gave to this part of God’s Church in miraculous ways, voluntarily given, and without cost of any kind, and added to ours, making a total of 14, He has made possible the **Recorded Works** of His late apostle to go forth once again, and conceivably for the last time.

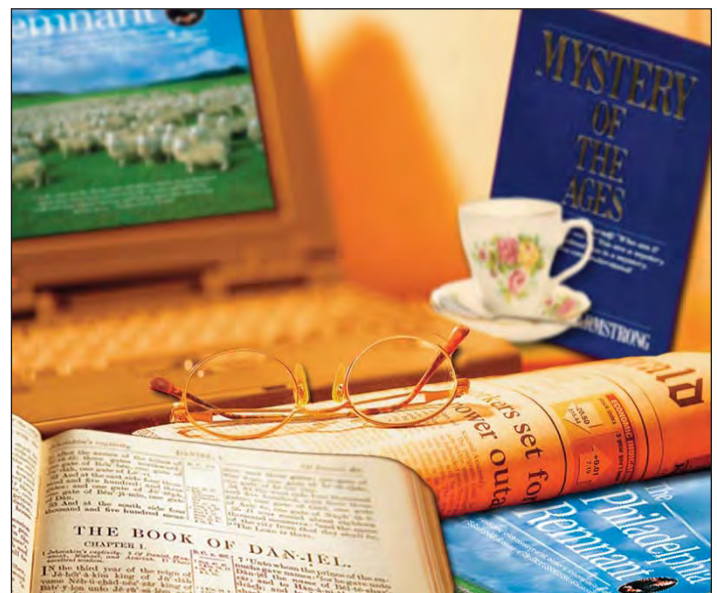
The Gospel and the Ezekiel warning message now have the potential of reaching both the leadership and their peoples of all nations through the use of these web sites much more thoroughly than during Mr. Armstrong’s life time ministry. And he is the one that Jesus Christ is using once again to accomplish this task through his Recorded Works.

By basing this period of time on similar prophetic Scriptures that have to do with 3½ conclusive years, such as Daniel 12:7, James 5:17, Revelation 11:3, 12:14, this could indicate a final 3½ year period of time for this Work to be completed.

And, if this is accurate, it would reach its conclusion by the Feast of Tabernacles 2009 or at its latest by January 7, 2010. Christ would then close the door to His Work (Revelation 3:7-8).

By use of the 19-year time cycles that figure prominently with the Gospel going to the world beginning with the time of Christ and each cycle thereafter, a very significant event takes place in conjunction with it. The next one will take place on January 7, 2010 (See March/April 2008 publication of the *Philadelphia Remnant* magazine).

This Work was prophesied to take place at this time by God and is made known in one of the smallest Books of the Bible and would be going out to the Church of God and Israel shortly before the Revival of the Holy Roman Empire



THE TWO WITNESSES

After the demise of the nations of Israel, the two witnesses will then begin their mission and will completely finalize the fulfillment of the **SIGN** during their 3½ year mission to the Gentile nations (Revelation 11:3-19). At its conclusion, the end of this age will have been reached (Matthew 24:14).



HANDWRITING ON THE WALL

Jesus Christ will then descend to this earth and take over the leadership and rule of this world (Revelation 19:11-16).

ARE WE PREPARED FOR THE INEVITABLE?

It must be realized that only **the elect of God's true and faithful Church** will be counted worthy to escape **the horrors of the Great Tribulation** that is now extremely close to us.

How can a person know whether he or she is numbered among **the elect**? The answer can be found in the letter addressed to **the Philadelphia Era of the Church of God by Jesus Christ**.

"... I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, **HAVE KEPT MY WORD, AND HAVE NOT DENIED MY NAME ... 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. Behold, I come quickly! **HOLD FAST** what you have, that **NO ONE**

may take your crown ... (Revelation 3:7-13)."

HAVE KEPT MY WORD

Each year we have been admonished to do a self test before the Passover to EXAMINE ourselves whether we are really in the faith or not (II Corinthians 13:5). Though each year is important, this one is more important than ever for we are on the final countdown.

Not only should we be observing the Passover with the correct understanding of what the bread symbolizes, *the*

broken body of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of physical sin (Isaiah 53:4-5, Psalm 103:1-5, Matthew 8:16-17), and the wine that symbolizes *His life blood shed for the forgiveness of our spiritual sins* (Isaiah 53:12, I John 1:7, I Corinthians 11:23-31), but we also are to be living by every word of God (Matthew 4:4).

It is vitally urgent that we ask ourselves whether we are truly keeping God's word as fully restored and made known by Christ through His late apostle.

One can know by soberly and seriously studying the last book he wrote in the final year of his life – the original unedited **MYSTERY OF THE AGES**. Do you know where we are right now, IN PROPHECY? We are in the very time of Daniel's prophecy: At **"the time of the end, many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand (Daniel 12:9-10)."**

God's people are in the time of final trying and testing – like taking **final exams** to determine whether we graduate. By observing the news, it becomes easy to see *the days of America and Britain are numbered and the end is in sight!*



The handwriting is on the wall just as it was with ancient Babylon (Daniel 5:5-6, 26-27). Major problems are confronting both once great nations, and there is no way the leadership of either will be able to resolve them for God has a **curse** on both for their horrendous sinful ways (Leviticus 26:14-39).

There will be no letup – the **curse** is ongoing; and it will become so great that it will so demoralize the people to the point they will feel abandoned; and very probably, this will lead them into anarchy before the prophesied fall of both takes place!

And that time is a lot closer than most realize.

SURVIVING THE DEADLY CRASH OF THIS WORLD

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 *breaking news* 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).

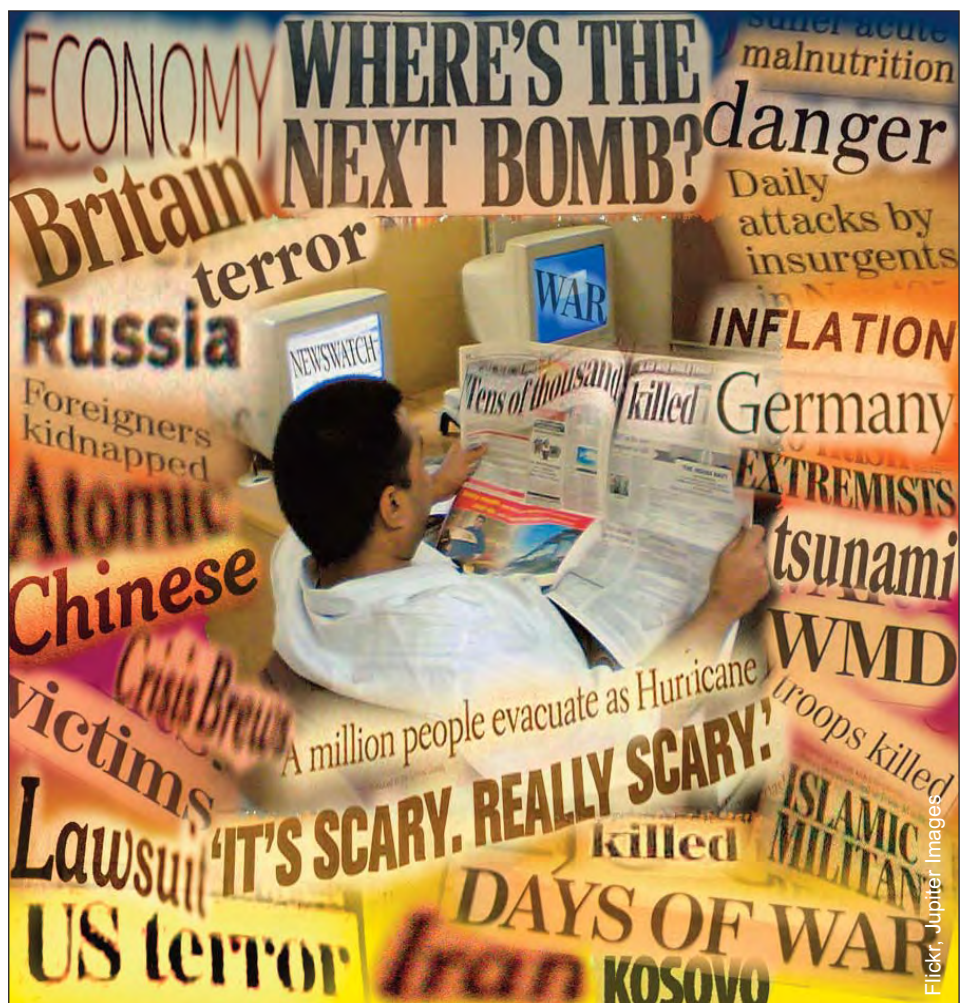
You and I want to be counted worthy to ascend into the earth's atmosphere to meet Jesus Christ as He returns to this earth.

And we can – *IF* we develop a close and abiding relationship with our Father and Jesus Christ and try as hard as we can to live fully Their way of life. Please know, They love and want each of us to be there with Them; and They will help us to that

end through the aid of Their Holy Spirit having been stirred up within us (II Timothy 1:6-7).



The quotes and pictures above are intended for educational purposes only.



Blood of the Grapes

By Mark Mendiola

One of the oldest prophecies recorded in the Old Testament is an amazing one in which the patriarch “*Jacob called his sons and said, ‘Gather together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days: Gather together and hear, you sons of *Jacob*, and listen to *Israel* your father’* (Genesis 49:1-2).”

Jacob – whose name God changed to Israel, meaning “*Prince with God*,” after he tenaciously struggled all night with Jesus Christ and prevailed (Genesis 32:24-30) – sired a dozen sons whose descendants grew into the 12 tribes of Israel. Before he died, Jacob remarkably prophesied what would happen to each of the 12 tribes who would develop into nations at the time of the end – before Christ would return to establish the Kingdom of God on earth.

One of Jacob’s most inspiring predictions was the fact Jesus the Christ would be Jewish, originating from the tribe of Judah, one of the 12 tribes. Here is one of the first of many Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah, who would come to shed His blood as a sacrifice and pay the penalty for mankind’s sins. Jesus Christ fulfilled those prophecies perfectly in explicit detail!

“The scepter (a symbol of royal authority or

kingship) shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people. Binding His donkey to the vine, and His donkey’s colt to the choice vine, He washed His garments in wine, and His clothes in the blood of the grapes (Genesis 49:10-11).”

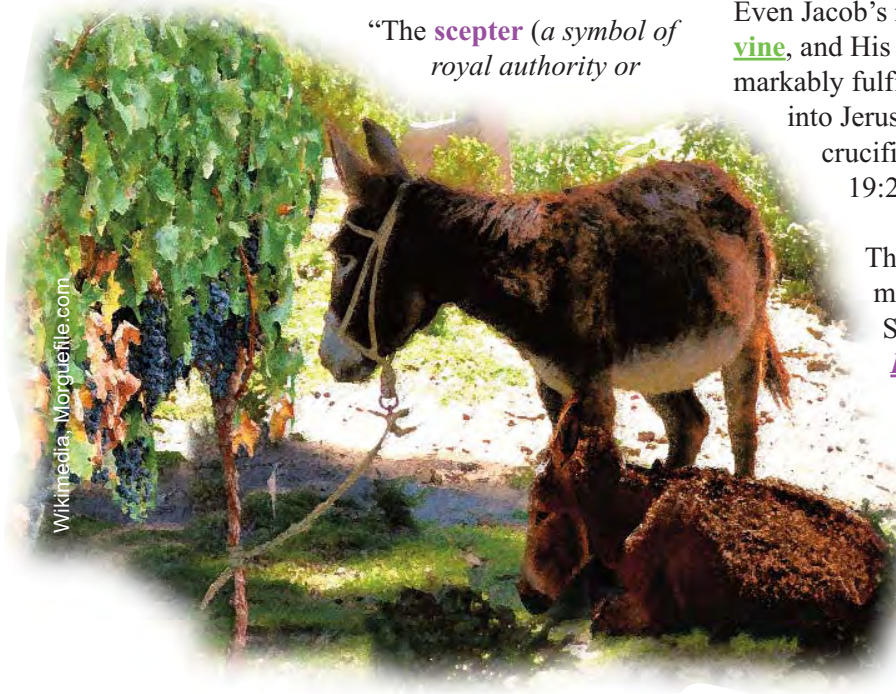
Throughout the Holy Bible, wine is equated with blood and associated with Christ, our Passover lamb. The New Testament shows “*it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah*, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood (Hebrews 7:14, Matthew 1:1-2).” The prophet Micah also showed the Messiah, “*the One to be ruler in Israel*,”

would be born in Bethlehem, one of the tiniest towns of Judah (Micah 5:2). In other words, Jesus Christ our Messiah was Jewish! Christ Himself said, “*Salvation is of the Jews* (John 4:22).”

The Passover reminds us each year that Christ perfectly fulfilled Jacob’s prophecy about Shiloh washing “His garments in wine, and His clothes in the blood of the grapes.” Even Jacob’s reference to Him “binding His donkey to the vine, and His donkey’s colt to the choice vine,” was remarkably fulfilled by Jesus Christ’s triumphant entrance into Jerusalem at Passover in 31 A.D. before He was crucified (Matthew 21:1-9, Mark 11:1-10, Luke 19:28-38).

The prophet Zechariah also foresaw this fulfillment. “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation [a dual fulfillment – a triumphant parade of Christ and the saints to Jerusalem], lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey (Zechariah 9:9).”

Here we see a *humble Jewish Messiah and soon-to-come King* riding into Jerusalem on *the lowliest of beasts* as we read in Genesis about the scepter not de



Wikimedia, Morguefile.com



Sanjay Archarya, Alison E. Dunn, Wikimedia

PASSOVER WINE, BLOOD

Christ plainly compared His **blood** to **wine** in the context of Passover. “Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom (Matthew 26:27-29).” Christ emphasized the **Passover** will be observed in the Kingdom of God. He said the **wine** we drink at **Passover** symbolizes **His blood**. It is a memorial and an everlasting ordinance that will be observed off into eternity because of its paramount importance!

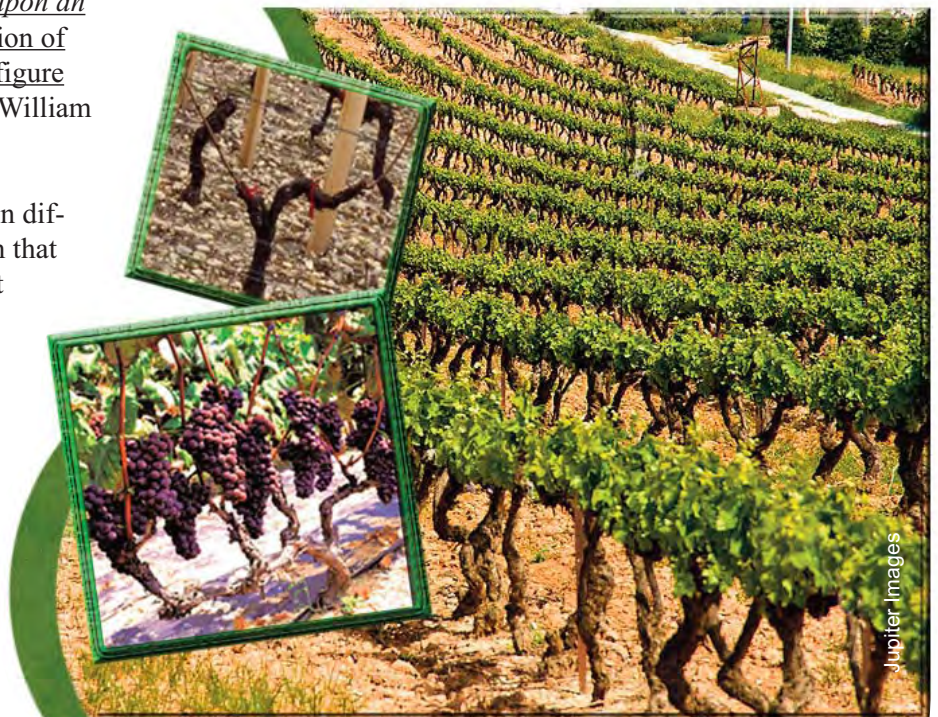
parting from **Judah** until the coming of **Shiloh – the Messiah** who binds *His donkey and its colt* to **a grape vine**. Once Christ dismounted, there was no turning back from *the most excruciating torture imaginable*. His **blood** subsequently was shed during *a terrible scourging and extremely painful crucifixion*. His **blood** was symbolized by **wine**, which also is referred to as **“the blood of the grapes”** in the Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32:14).

“The point is that a king came riding upon a horse when he was bent on war; he came riding upon an ass when he was coming in peace. This action of Jesus is a sign that He was not the warrior figure men dreamed of, but the Prince of Peace,” William Barclay writes in *Commentary on John*.

The most productive **vineyards** are found in difficult climates and soils, so poor and barren that little else can take root in them. **Vines** must be **radically pruned** and **grapes crushed** to bring forth the best **wine**.

A proverb among vintners is: “To give of its best, **a vine** must be made to suffer.” Christ confirmed this, as well, when He said, “I am **the true vine**, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He **prunes**, that it may bear more fruit (John 15:1-2).”

In his first epistle to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul stressed the need to keep the **Passover** and the *Days of Unleavened Bread*, “Do you not know that *a little leaven leavens the whole lump*? Therefore purge out *the old leaven ... since you truly are unleavened*. For indeed **Christ our Passover**, was *sacrificed* for us. Therefore *let us keep the feast ...* (I Corinthians 5:6-8).” Continuing in I Corinthians 11:25, Paul wrote: “In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the **new covenant in My blood**. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”



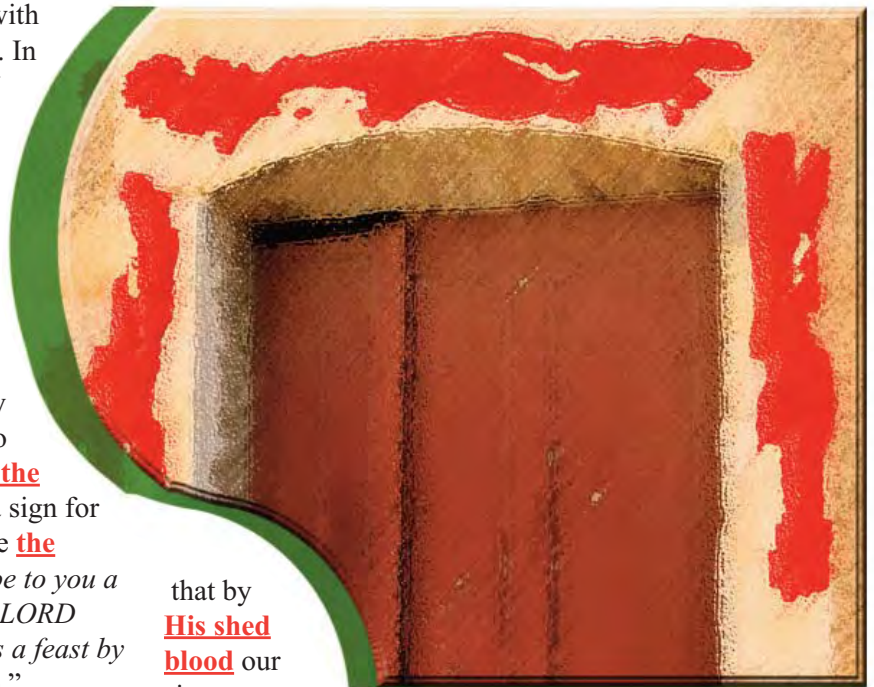
Jupiter Images

Both the Old and New Covenants were ratified with **blood** (Exodus 24:6-8, Hebrews 9:12-15, 18-22). In Exodus 12, we read the first recorded account of the **Passover lamb** that was killed *at twilight on the 14th day of the first month* on the Hebrew calendar, *the same day Jesus Christ was sacrificed as our Passover lamb hundreds of years later.*

“Now you shall keep it *until the fourteenth day of the same month*. Then *the whole assembly of the congregation shall kill it at twilight*. And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses ... **It is the LORD’s Passover**. ... Now **the blood** shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see **the blood**, I will **pass over** you ... *So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance* (Exodus 12:6-7, 11-14).”

The blood of the Passover lamb smeared on the doorposts saved the Israelites from absolute destruction. There is tremendous symbolism in that historic, momentous event. Just as **the blood of the Old Testament Passover lamb** protected the Israelites, **the shed blood of Christ, the New Testament Passover lamb**, protects us from eternal death.

The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23), and Christ paid the penalty for it with **His own special, precious blood**. The New Testament plainly shows **Christ is our Passover** and



that by **His shed blood** our sins are

washed away. The Apostles Peter and John agree on this: “Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things ... but with **the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and spot**” (I Peter 1:18-19). “... and **the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin** (I John 1:7).”

GOD’S VINEYARD

Jesus Christ spoke many parables regarding **vineyards** and the workers who gleaned **grapes** to make **wine**. **Wine** production was a major industry at that time in Palestine. Many of the parables pertain directly to us. There’s tremendous symbolism in them.

In the *Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard* (Matthew 20:1-16), Christ discusses laborers hired to work a landowner’s **vineyard** each paid a denarius, regardless of the time of day they were hired. In the *Parable of the Two Sons* (Matthew 21:28-31), He addresses two sons hired to work their father’s **vineyard**. One said he wouldn’t do it, but did. The other said he would do it, but didn’t.

In the *Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers* (Matthew 21:33-46), Christ relates the account of a **vineyard** owner’s anger after he leased his **vineyard**, a **winepress** and a tower to vinedressers, expecting them to glean **grapes** and produce **wine** for him while he was away. When he sent his servants to get the fruits of the harvest, the vinedressers beat and stoned them, killing one of them and even the owner’s son! Just as the owner of the **vineyard** was **angry** with the wicked vinedressers, God Almighty will be **furious** with what has been allowed to happen to **His vineyard – the House of Israel**! Notice how closely the Prophet Isaiah’s



DOD, Wikimedia, Flickr



bring forth wild grapes? And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; and break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. I will lay it waste; It shall not be pruned or dug, but there shall come up briars and thorns. I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain on it. For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are His pleasant plant (Isaiah 5:1-7, Jeremiah 12:10, 17).”

GRAPES OF WRATH

Grapes must be crushed to produce wine, which symbolizes God’s wrath in the Bible (Lamentations 1:15, Psalm 75:8, Jeremiah 25:15-16). *The sins of this world are so widespread and egregious that* tremendous volumes of blood must be shed to atone for it! When Christ returns to earth, He will not be silent as a lamb led to the slaughter as before, but will roar like the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Revelation 5:5-6). He will descend from heaven “with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God (I Thessalonians 4:16).”



description of this vineyard parallels Christ’s parable. “My Well-beloved has a vineyard on a very fruitful hill. He dug it up and cleared out its stones, and planted it with the choicest vine. He built a tower in its midst, and also made a winepress in it; So He expected it to bring forth good grapes, but it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, please, between Me and My vineyard. What more could have been done to My vineyard that I have not done in it? Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes, did it



for one thousand six hundred furlongs (or about 185 miles) (Revelation 14:18-20)."

Instead of coming as a humble Jewish carpenter riding a donkey, Jesus Christ will return as a conquering KING of Kings and LORD of Lords riding valiantly on a white horse to rescue people from absolute destruction! Once again, Christ's clothing will be **dipped in blood**. His garments will be washed in **wine** and **the blood of the grapes!**

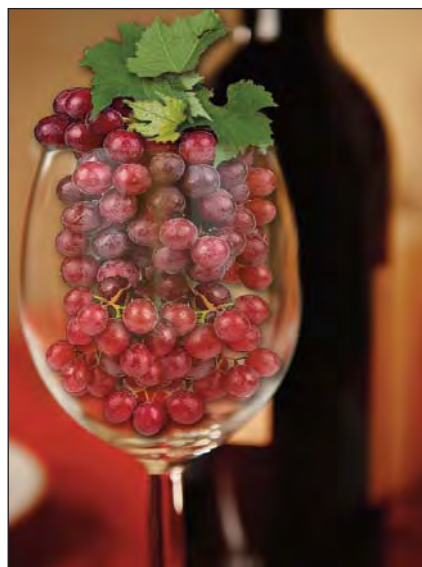
"Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ... **He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood**, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. **He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God**. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS (Revelation 19:11-16)."

The time of **Jesus Christ's Second Coming** will be a calamitous time of **bloody, worldwide warfare** with tens of millions of people slaughtered. The carnage will be incomprehensible! God compares it to the **crushing of grapes** to produce **red wine**.

"Proclaim this among the nations: **Prepare for war!** Wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. *Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruninghooks into spears;* Let the weak say, 'I am strong.' ... Let the nations be awakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; For there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. **Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down; For the winepress is full, the vats overflow – for their wickedness is great.** ... **The LORD also will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem;** The heavens and earth will shake (Joel 3:9-10, 12-13, 16)."

The book of Revelation shows when Christ returns, an angel with a sharp sickle will be urged to "**Thrust in Your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.**" So the angel **thrust his sickle** into the earth and gathered **the vine of the earth**, and threw it into **the great winepress of the wrath of God**. And **the winepress** was **trampled** outside the city, and **blood came out of the winepress**, up to the horses' bridles,

There is tremendous, *sobering* symbolism in **wine, grapes** and **vineyards** during this **Passover** season. All of it centers around **Jesus Christ**, who first came as the lowly Jewish Messiah and coming king on a donkey and its colt, and **who washed His garments in wine and His clothes in the blood of the grapes** as Jacob so accurately prophesied. His apparel is **red**, and His garments like one who treads in the **winepress**. **Blood** will be *sprinkled* on His garments, and His robe will be *stained* as if **dipped in blood**.



Christ's First and Second Comings will make the *salvation* of all mankind possible. He first came as a meek **Passover lamb**, but will return as a **roaring lion** of the tribe of Judah. Both of His comings to earth directly involve **wine, the fruit of the vine** and **the blood of the grapes!**



Approach the Passover with Thanksgiving, Fear

‘In mercy and truth Atonement is
provided for iniquity; and by the fear
of the LORD one departs from evil’
(Proverbs 16:6)



By Ron Wilcoxson

Of all humanity living on the face of this earth, the Church of God is most blessed to receive God's precious calling and understanding of His unrelenting purpose for all mankind. As we know, God's Holy Days picture His master plan for everyone, but sometimes as Christians, we lose our focus and tend to forget the importance of our calling as firstfruits. Upon regaining our bearings, we then realize how very thankful we should be for our glorious calling, our eternal profession and inexorable purpose as Christians in God's Church.

In essence, our reverence toward God is put to the test all year long by keeping the weekly Sabbaths and all the annual Sabbaths (all seven Holy Day festivals), but most importantly we should be approaching the Passover season with thanksgiving and Godly fear. We must remember that Passover is just our beginning. It is only the starting point of our Christian journey toward the Kingdom of God and eternal life.

All of God's people need to be exceedingly thankful for our higher calling and develop a greater fervor and awesome respect for God's Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread.

DEEP GRATITUDE FOR CHRIST'S SACRIFICE

There is simply no way we can repay God for all He has done and continues to do for us as His people, but God gives us guidelines to direct our steps in the right direction if we are willing to follow His instructions (Isaiah 28:10, 13, Jeremiah 10:23, II Timothy 3:14-17).

As humans, we can't begin to understand the greatness of God the Father and Jesus Christ as the Word or their sacrifice and purpose in designing and carrying out such an intricate, detailed plan from the foundation of this world.

"Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?" the prophet Jeremiah quotes God as saying (Jeremiah 32:27).



Christ reveals to us in the book of Revelation how long His plan has been in process. ***“And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*** (Revelation 13:8).”

God tells us through Scripture that He has existed eternally with no beginning and never an end (Revelation 1:8, 22:13). He also tells us He actually inhabits eternity (Isaiah 57:15), and He can declare the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46:9-10).

Melchizedek, King of Salem (King of Peace), **Priest of the Most High God** (the one who became Jesus Christ) **was without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually** (Hebrews 7:1, 3).

Can we begin to get some idea of how great a sacrifice this was for God and the Word? They had been together for eternity and loved each other beyond any depth of understanding that any human could ever have. We must come to see that if God and the Word were willing to complete this **awesome sacrifice** to redeem man from their kidnapper, Satan the devil, how great our thankfulness, fear and respect should be toward our loving Father and *now His Very Son*, Jesus Christ, who is “the door” to our very salvation.

“I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it

more abundantly (John 10:9-10).” Jesus Christ is the **ONLY** name under heaven by which any of us can be saved (Acts 4:12).

It is obvious that we can’t save ourselves, and unless God intervenes for us, we would die in our sins. Brethren, the only real way for us to show thankfulness to God is through obedience to His commandments, statutes and laws, much in the same way that Abraham, the Father of the Faithful did (Genesis 26:5).

“And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit (that) God has given to those who obey Him (Acts 5:32).”

We can be very thankful for God’s demonstration of His love!

Perhaps there is no better Scripture that demonstrates the meaning of the Passover to help imperfect humans to understand God’s love for us than the following: ***“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us*** (Romans 5:8).”

WHAT IS GODLY FEAR?

You could say Godly fear is an unwavering healthy belief, through a living faith, that God and His entire Word are infallible, true and backed up or maintained by God Himself. Consequently, out of our love, respect and proper fear we





LOVERS OF PLEASURE

come under His mighty, loving, merciful hands with deep thanksgiving.

The Apostle Paul warns us that the whole human race, including those in God's Church, have fallen short for lack of Godly fear.

“What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin. As it is written: ‘There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. They have all gone out of the way; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one.’ ‘Their throat is an open tomb; With their tongues they have practiced deceit;’ ‘The poison of asps is under their lips;’ ‘Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.’ ‘Their feet are swift to shed blood; Destruction and misery are in their ways; And the way of peace they have not known.’ ‘There is no fear of God before their eyes’ (Romans 3:9-18).”

The Apostle Peter also was inspired to write about the reality of our own hope of salvation. *“If the righteous one is scarcely saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?” (I Peter 4:18)”*

NO GODLY FEAR AT THE END OF THIS AGE

“But know this, that in the last days perilous (stressful) times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! (II Timothy 3:1-5)”

These verses so aptly fit the society we live in today. It is sad to say, but some of these ungodly attributes have rubbed off on the Church of God.

We as Christians cannot take Christ's sacrifice lightly or in an attitude of smug self-righteousness. It is imperative that we sincerely examine our hearts and our daily lives to see if we have Godly fear. The Bible gives us very

much instruction on this extremely important subject.

PASSOVER SEASON: OUR BEGINNING TOWARD SALVATION



In actuality, the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread are closely intertwined with a new beginning for those who humble themselves to keep these days in Godly fear.

“Surely He scorns the scornful, but gives grace to the humble (Proverbs 3:34).”



(II Corinthians 6:1-5, 10, 14-18, Hebrews 11:13, Revelation 18:4).

We can see how Godly fear ties directly to the Days of Unleavened Bread. The more we develop Godly fear in our personal lives, the more clean-swept our physical lives will become as well. More importantly, the purer our spiritual lives can be to honor our God for all He does for us. We can now truly offer ourselves as living sacrifices to God (Romans 12:1).

“Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48).”

THE WISDOM OF PROVERBS

The Proverbs, a book of God’s wisdom written by King Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived until Jesus Christ came to this earth, has many things to say about Godly fear.

“God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble (I Peter 5:5).”

Getting spiritual knowledge and wisdom to continue our trek to our future homeland will take all the instruction on Godly fear we can acquire from God’s Word. *“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction (Proverbs 1:7).”* Proverbs 9:10 and Psalms 111:10 similarly give the same instruction: *“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.”*

We should be able to see from these Scriptures that Godly fear starts us in the right direction and builds understanding; then Godly character can be rightly developed. When we actually understand Godly fear, we will gladly abandon sin and this world’s ways and be willing to suffer as those who have gone before us

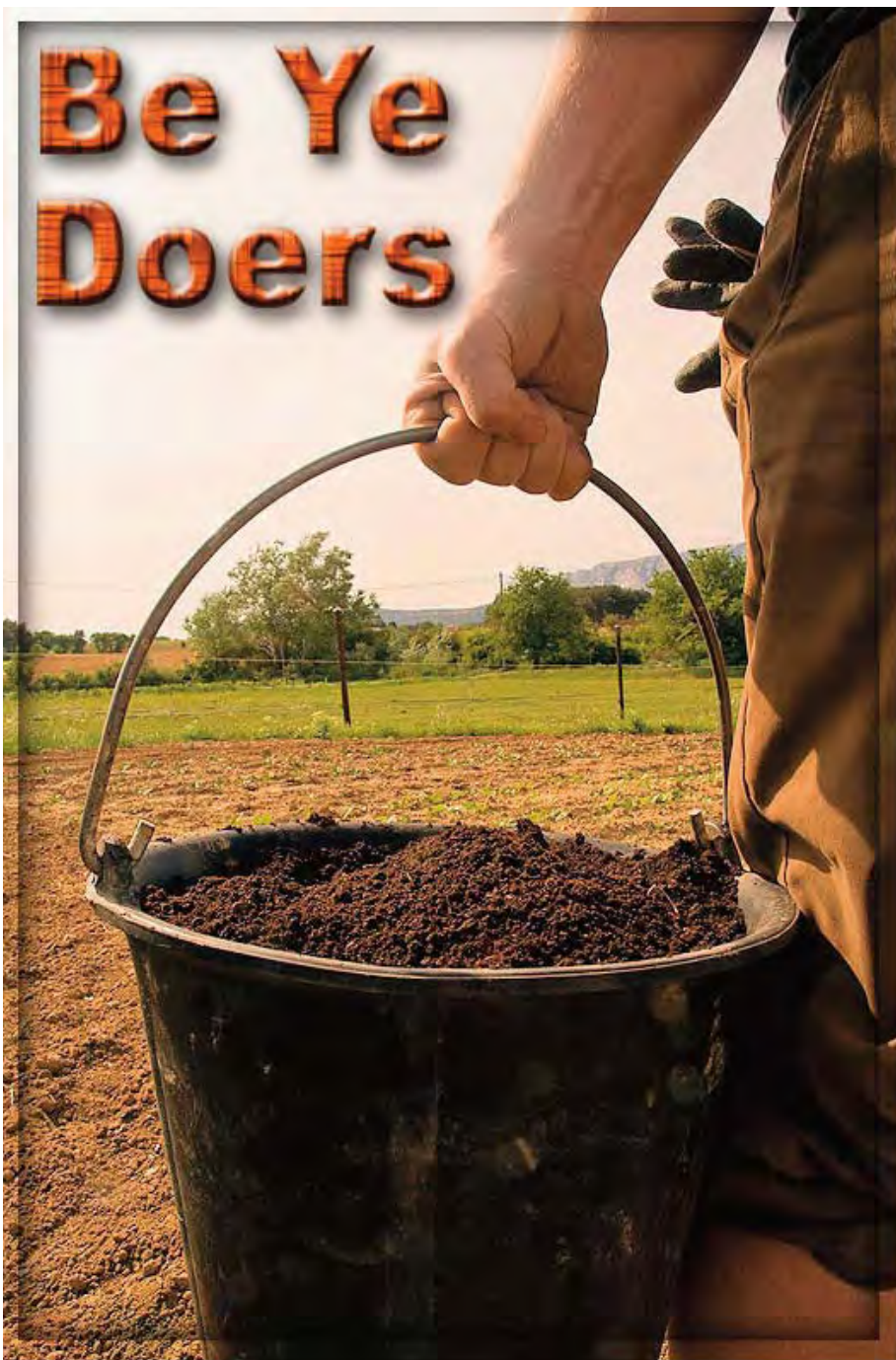
A good Bible study would be to search out all the places where “the fear of God” is cited. For example: *“He who walks in his uprightness fears the LORD, but he who is perverse in his ways despises Him. ... In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, and His children will have a place of refuge. The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to avoid the snares of death (Proverbs 14:2, 26-27).”*



As the Passover season draws near, each one of us needs to examine our lives with sincere thankfulness and a proper fear, love and respect for our Creator God. Solomon sums it up: *“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing,*

whether it is good or whether it is evil (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).”





By Ron Wheeler

There is a deception at the end of this age which is *totally pervasive!* No one wants this deception, but the sad part is that **IT IS** a deception and thus no one easily sees it.

This deception is quite simple. If a baptized Christian can hear and understand what God is saying in the Bible, they deceive themselves into believing that they also are doing it.

Here are KEY scriptures:

James 1:22 – “But be ye **doers** of the word, and not hearers only, **deceiving your own selves.**”

Romans 2:13 – “For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the **doers** of the law shall be justified.”

But FAR more is going on. *The Parable of the Ten Virgins* shows that at the very end time five are foolish – exactly half. As Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong used to say, “**Brethren, I don’t think you get it!**”

They have lamps burning, lighting their path, but they take NO oil in their flasks or vessels that replenish the lamps. Thus, their lamps are being extinguished, quenched and are going out (The old KJV says “gone out” because that is the end result). Because they are NOT using God’s Spirit to obey, Christ shuts the door on them and does not let them into His Wedding Supper.

Now we always have understood this oil to be God’s Holy Spirit. And when the five foolish turn to the five wise to borrow some oil, the wise simply tell them they won’t have enough for themselves and to go buy more of their own. Add to this the Parable of the Tares, then the warnings against false brethren that even Paul experienced, the warnings about spots in our feasts of charity, warnings that people would be creeping in unawares, and we get the picture there will be LARGE numbers of unconverted people in our midst particularly in the end time.

The five foolish virgins had NO OIL **IN** THEIR VESSELS. They thus couldn’t really DO what God said – *only hear it*, but they undoubtedly deceived themselves into thinking they were doing it.

Remember Christ said that without Him we could DO nothing. Christ, by way of God’s Spirit, has to be **IN us** before we can DO *anything* righteous.

John 15:5 – “**I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.**”



Freestockphotos.com

This deception makes these people dangerous. They think they are true Christians, but they are not. Because they are called, they have God's Spirit WITH THEM (John 14:17), but just not IN THEM. Something in their repentance was not complete.

They didn't surrender completely. Therefore, when they were baptized, all they did was get **wet**.

When hands were laid on them nothing happened!! God gives His Spirit ONLY to those who obey Him (Acts 5:32). But herein lies the problem.

When God calls people, He opens their minds by providing His Spirit to be WITH THEM. They become literate in the Bible.

They then have the tools with which to see God's law and to repent. And once God calls, He doesn't withdraw His calling, so they continue to have His Spirit with them. But repentance must be total.

Here is where they are deceiving themselves. What some are doing is keeping a reserve to themselves – a "just in case." Just in case what?? Just in case I need my tithe money. Just in case God doesn't exist after all. Just in case my spouse hates this way so much he or she threatens to leave me. Just in case this church doesn't have all the truth, and I need to do something else. Just in case I lose my job.

Just in case ... Well, you fill in the blanks. Somehow, the total dedication and surrender God requires is held back and a personal reserve is maintained. And the sad part is they don't see that reserve and thus deceive themselves. They resist becoming children.

Luke 18:17 – "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein."

Luke 14:33 – "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

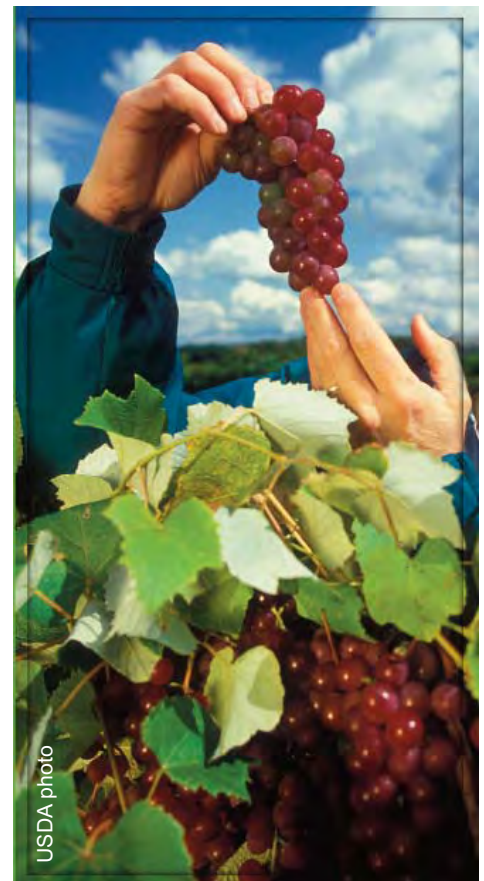
Then what happens? These people attend services along with the truly converted. Some of these people even become ministers and know what to say and can say it. But they cannot do it!!

And eventually, it becomes painfully apparent. But because others like them are in positions of leadership, they don't see it either and thus take no action to solve the problems with the unconverted ministers.

These are the ones the Bible has called "**crept in unawares.**"

No one sees these deceived people clearly except God and those with God's Spirit IN them. Here is what God says about them:

Ezekiel 33:30-33 – "Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to



USDA photo



They, in their deception, suspend whole sections of the Bible they don't want to deal with. This way of "selective deletion" I have been totally amazed at over the years. But without the total repentance we discussed above, these people really cannot obey. They know they should but don't and cannot. God gives them a stern warning here, as He does the five foolish virgins. They are going to KNOW a true minister of God (a prophet) has been among them. Deep down, they really do know better!!

But because these people do not have God's Spirit IN them, and because they think they are spiritual Jews and are not, they are more susceptible to Satan's sway than is a true Christian. In fact, since they do not have God's Spirit IN them, it is *impossible* for them to put on the whole armor of God. They thus become the people God talks about in the Book of Revelation:



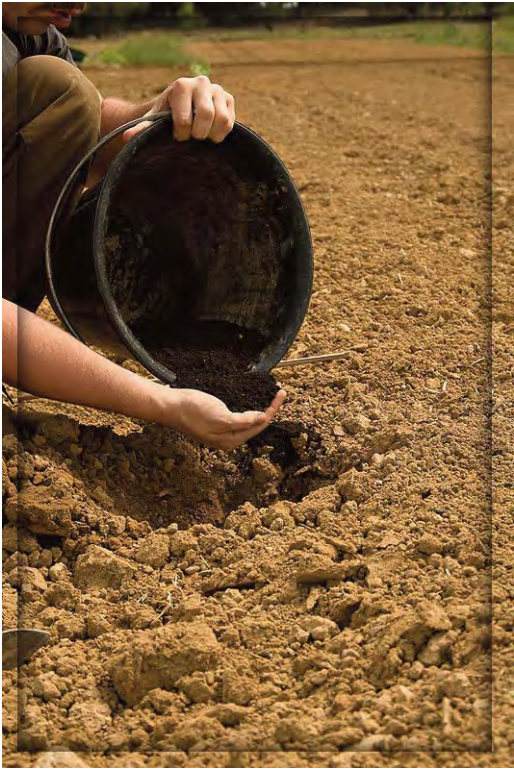
Revelation 3:9 – “Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.”

his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the LORD. And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not. And when this cometh to pass, (lo, it will come,) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them.”

Now this is VERY enlightening. Note that these people without God's Spirit IN them come to services just like "my people." They appear to belong to God, but He says they do not. Their reaction to sermons is just fine. Many exclaim, "Wow, that was a great sermon!" They like to hear the voices of the true ministers. These people mostly want to KNOW the truth, *they just don't want to DO it!*



Often, we have no way of repairing the damage caused by those who only have God's Spirit "with" them. The tares really do look like the wheat!! But God says let them alone until He comes back. They WILL get separated out – but only then.

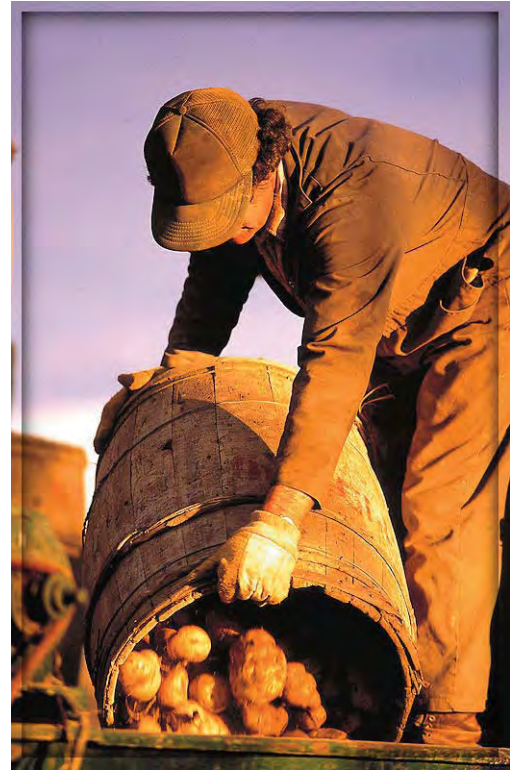


So what do we as true Christians do? We DO what we are supposed to DO!! We obey God from the heart. We use God's Spirit for everything we think, say and do. We let Christ live His life IN us!!

Matthew 24:45-46 – “Who then is a faithful

trine which was delivered you.”

Then and ONLY THEN will we NOT deceive ourselves into thinking we are true Christians but are not. Let us pray for these folks that they will truly see their own deception and finally repent to the toe nails – and get re-baptized as necessary. It



has happened!! Here is God's instruction to them:

and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.”

Galatians 6:8-9 – “For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”



Joel 2:12-13 – “Therefore also now, saith the LORD, Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.”

So **DOING** is the key to everything. We must be obeying with all of our hearts.



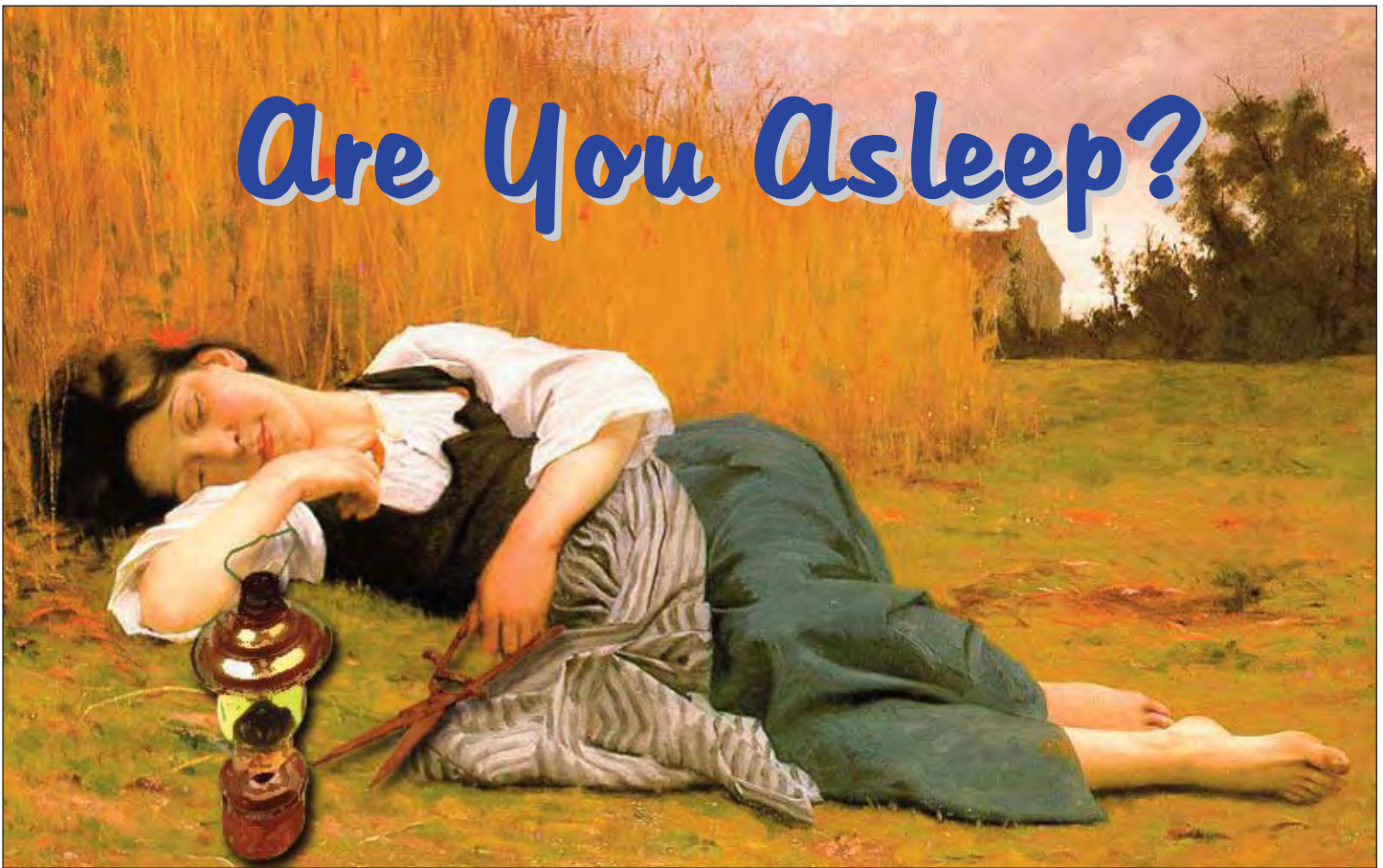
Romans 6:17 – “ But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doc-



But it takes powerful humility to admit a mistake of this magnitude. And the five foolish virgins are about to know who they really are – ***AND VERY SOON!!!***



Are You Asleep?



'But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.' (Matthew 25:5)

By Tom Cooper

In the course of time, all human beings seem to reach a point in their lives when they relax into a routine. Constantly staying on the alert does not seem possible.

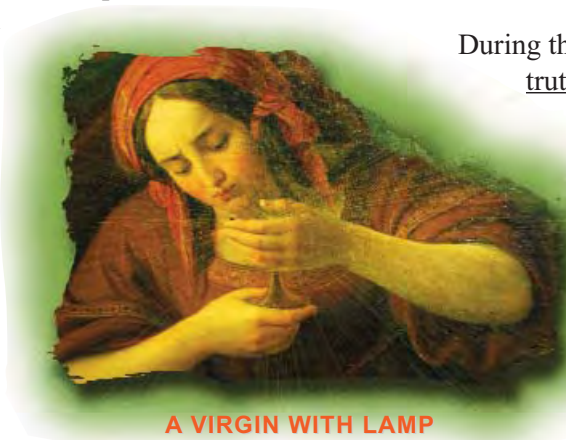
Spiritually, this also is true, but Satan does not rest in his desire to lull us into a false sense of security.

Matthew 25 relates the parable of the ten virgins. Five wise and five foolish, yet they all **"slumbered and slept"** (verse 5). Would any sane person sleep if he or she knew a lion was out and about stalking them?

I Peter 5:8 states, **"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour!"**

Yet the parable in Matthew 25 tells us that the Church of God as a whole will be sleeping just before Christ's return!

Do you think you are? It is evident that Jacob's time of trouble is very near and many of God's Church will be left to endure the tribulation. Why? What is the difference between the two groups of virgins?



A VIRGIN WITH LAMP

During this past century, God restored many truths to His Church. During that era, the Philadelphia era, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong near the end of his physical life gave us a list of restored truths. If you are a member of God's church, then you will acknowledge each and every one of those truths.

It is evident that God is the One who restored them to us.

These restored truths are not "maybes" but "absolutes." On the list of restored truths is the truth concerning God's annual Holy Days. During the upcoming spring Feast, God's Church searches for physical leaven to clean out of our homes, picturing the spiritual sin we are to



these nations (so precious to God) of their impending disastrous demise?

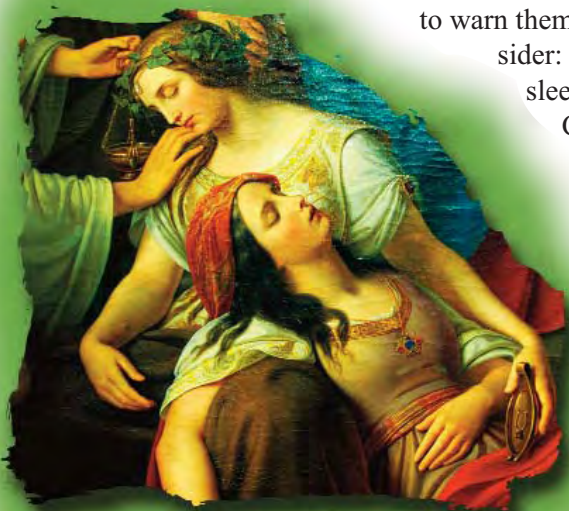
The principle God shows us in Ezekiel 3:17-21, indicates if we don't do a **WARNING WORK**, the **blood** of the "wicked" will be on our heads. Verse 18 states, "**When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.**"

This "Work" must be accomplished by those who believe and are part of God's Church, keeping a most vitally important truth restored during the Philadelphia era. Without this truth in place, Christ will not be leading the Church.

This restored truth is: "**The government of God.**" Mr. Armstrong's recorded words were, "*... The government of God has been restored to the Church, and the government of God has been placed in the Church. You read that in Ephesians 4 and I Corinthians 12. Christ is the head of the Church and under Christ in the administration of the government are an apostle or apostles, then evangelists, then pastors, then all are called elders, all ministers all the way clear down to the lowest. So then there are teachers and elders both speaking elders and preaching elders, deacons and deaconesses. ... the Church is restored in that form of government.*"

remove from our lives. To that end, this article will point out a particular truth not listed among the restored truths that may help all of us gain a better perspective in order to fulfill our individual part during the **Days of Unleavened Bread**. "Restoring" that truth into your thinking, and acting on it, will allow you to keep sufficient oil in your lamp.

The nations descended from the patriarch Jacob are very close to entering their own time of punishment, and God's Church is admonished to warn them. Consider: Can a sleeping Church warn



SLEEPING VIRGINS

God shows us what the last era would be like in Jeremiah 23, speaking of our time now and a problem with a specific group of pastors. Several verses bring out an important point. Verses 31-32: "**Behold, I am against the prophets (inspired man, Strong's Concordance, No. 5030), saith the Lord, that use their tongues, and say, He saith. Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell**



LOW ON OIL

them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness (*recklessness*); yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord.”

Verse 30 also points out that these pastors “steal my words every one from his neighbor.” And verse 2 shows they “feed my people” and yet have scattered God’s flock! None of them speak for God! He says so! Who? It is those who are without God’s government. They don’t take direction from Christ. Therefore, they cannot be used by Christ to do a warning Work and instead bring a curse on themselves.

Ephesians 2:18-20, speaks of us, God’s Church, having one Spirit – built upon a foundation. Many if not all of the groups and their pastors claim to be built on that foundation. If a group rejects any of the truths God placed in His Church, Scripture indicates they are rejected (Hosea 4:6) until they repent. Mr. Armstrong relates in his autobiography of a man who lost his ability to call on God (for healing others) because he rejected a Biblical truth Mr. Armstrong showed him. Remember? Also, there is the clear, plain truth found in Psalm 111:10: “**a good understanding have all they that do His commandments!**”

So, during the time leading up to Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, consider not just putting out sin, but realize that God wants you to be eating “spiritually unleavened bread” by removing yourself from false or “off track ministers.”



A warning Work must be done for all Israelite nations, or the **blood** of “the wicked” will be on those who refuse to take part in that Work. Various individuals who have been in God’s Church will go into the tribulation because they don’t have the faith to stick with everything God taught us. Two major ways in which many have been rejected from an end-time Work: 1) “Voting” is Satan’s way of swaying whole groups, and 2) Allowing the use of “make-up”, which Satan has used to liberalize (water down) the truths of God.

So consider “this additional truth” as you enter this spring feast: **You cannot reject ANY of the precious truths God has revealed or He will reject you from serving and learning any more truth (spiritual unleavened bread).**

For God’s Church, there is a countdown this year to the end of another 19-year cycle. If you are making every effort to keep all that God taught, you too will eat spiritual unleavened bread this year! If you’re choosing for yourself, choose wisely. Holding fast to every truth shows God you will be able to be used in His Work and He will reveal future events to you when it is time. Are you ready?





KEEPING YOUR SPIRITUAL FOCUS

By Duane Miller

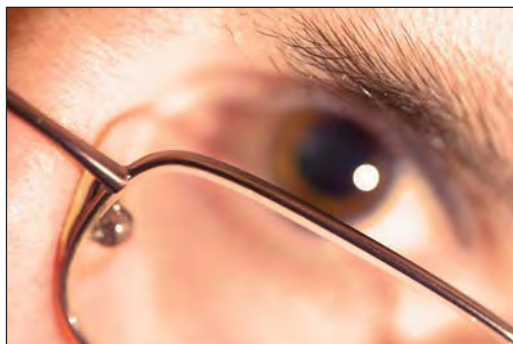
When I was about nine years of age living with my parents in a middle class home at Mt. Vernon, Wash., I used to love to play in our spacious front and back yards hours on end. I remember on occasion taking a small magnifying glass and using it to focus sunlight (on one of the few bright, sunny days there) on various experimental items – a piece of paper, a leaf or an ant – to see if it would catch fire! Children can be so cruel! As a child back then, I did not understand the laws of nature governing light as it travels through various solids such as glass. In my childish mischievousness, I just knew it worked.

It's interesting what happens to light as it goes through a magnifying glass. The light rays slow down through the glass, bending as they go into the glass, and bending again as they go out the glass. Because the beams of light are bent, they will converge at a point beyond the glass opposite to where it entered the glass, enabling a per-

son to focus the light on a single spot on a leaf, piece of paper or whatever. The light energy heats up the spot the light is focused on until the focused light is removed or the spot bursts into flame.

LEARN LESSONS FROM THE WORLD AROUND US

God has created the physical laws behind how all of this works, and there are spiritual lessons we can learn from the



magnifying glass and the light that travels through it to its target. God wants us to learn from the world around us. Notice this principle in Proverbs 25:2 (NKJV throughout): "It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to *search out* a matter." So, what can we learn from the lesson of the magnifying glass and the light? Where, then, must our *spiritual focus* be, and why? Why

the seeming urgency and purpose? And perhaps most importantly, what are the consequences spiritually, even physically, if we do not have this vital *focus* in our lives as members of God's Church in these very **dangerous end times**?



As we enter the Spring Holy Days season, with Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread ahead of us, we should be thinking about re-commitment to the covenant we made with God when we were baptized. Now, as we approach these end times, it is a good time to think about our commitment to God, His Work and each other, where our priorities are, where our focus needs to be, and how to maintain that focus. Jesus Christ, our perfect example, never once lost His focus as to why He came to earth, and the purpose of His mission. What about us? Unfortunately some have lost their focus with the tragic result that they are no longer with us.

KNOW AND DON'T BE SHAKEN

Where must our spiritual focus be, and why? Quite simply, our focus, individually as Christians, and collectively as God's Church, is to finish the Work God has for us to do, bound together in our love for each other as brothers and sisters in God's Church, *in like-mindedness in the truth and purpose of God!* What could be more important?

Now, back to the magnifying glass ...

Our minds are like that glass. God's Holy Spirit, like light from the sun, focuses our spiritual vision, or energy, on the target of God's Kingdom and finishing the Work. Like a leaf or a piece of paper under a magnifying glass, we need to start a fire in our lives. Like God, *who is a consuming fire*, we can begin to qualify for positions of rulership in God's Kingdom and develop holy righteous character, finishing

the Work of preaching the Good News of God's Kingdom through the restored works of God's Apostle, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong.

The history of the Work of God down through time, particularly during the Philadelphia era of the Work under Mr. Armstrong, and even more recently in God's Church under Mr. Don Billingsley, chronicles periods in which some have left God's Church and the Work God is doing.

This has happened and will continue to happen unless we are on guard. It **does not** have to happen. *We can prevent it!*

The danger is that as we get the magnifying glass of our minds focused on *being on fire* to do the Work God has called us to do, Satan has **shaken** the hold of some of us, knocking the magnifying glass of our minds **off the target of our goal** and keeping us from *being on fire* for God's Work.

With **distractions** in the form of "conspiracy" theories, disruptive relationships between some Church members or even prophecy issues, all are designed to get our focus off the target of our calling and commission, as well as our purpose and potential in God's soon-coming kingdom. Satan can cause us to fail to fulfill our calling.

The end result could possibly mean going through the Great Tribulation and losing out on our reward and not making it into God's Kingdom!



Notice what Mr. Armstrong said in his May 2, 1974 brethren letter on page 7: **“Too many of us have been getting our eyes OFF the main goal – of God’s PURPOSE for us in our time, NOW. In order to DESTROY God’s work – to get our eyes off it – false ‘ISSUES’ have been raised – QUESTIONS designed to cause DOUBTS in your minds, to destroy FAITH – have been raised. Subtle, clever, deceptive methods have been used to distract us from and cause us to neglect God’s REAL PURPOSE for us today! We must immediately get back to THAT PURPOSE! Let’s get our minds FOCUSED on the MAIN GOAL!”**

How much more true are those words today in regards to the scattered condition of our *little flock*?!



THREE KEYS TO KEEP OUR FOCUS
Satan’s tactics are the same now as when Mr. Armstrong was alive. Now that we are 23 years closer to the end of this age of Satan’s rule and the establishment of God’s Kingdom, it’s far more important than ever that we be vigilant and ***focused***!

Notice I Peter 5:8: **“Be sober, be VIGILANT; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”** *MAY* devour? It sure sounds like we have a choice as to whether we will be devoured, doesn’t it? *We don’t have to be distracted and lose out!!* Let’s notice three points below:

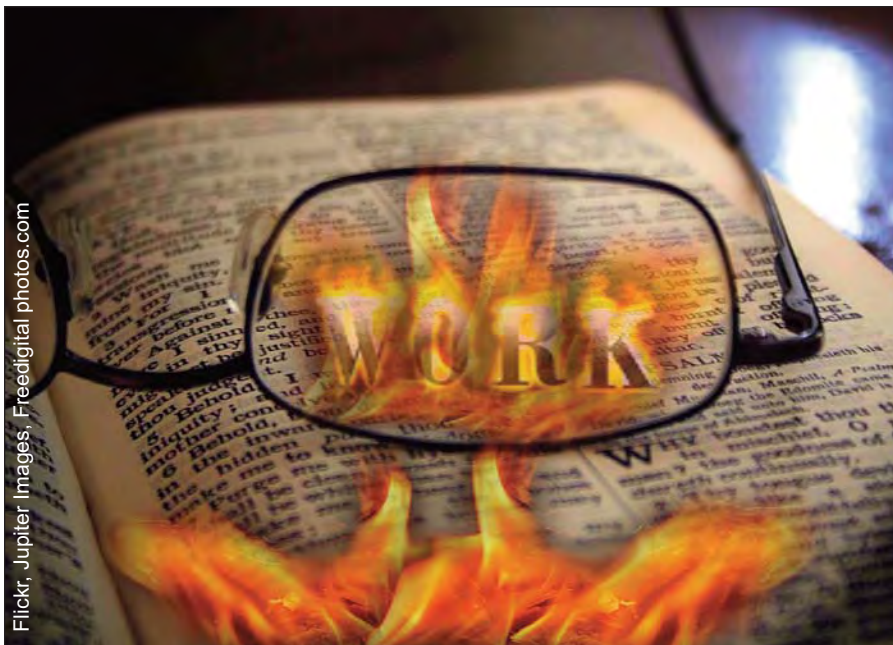
I. OUR FIRST LOVE

Being on fire for the work of God, not being distracted from the MAIN GOAL, as Mr. Armstrong so aptly put it, means maintaining the **“first love”** of our calling when we first came into God’s Church!

Read Christ’s correction and warning to the Church of God at Ephesus, representing the first Church era in Revelation 2:4: **“Nevertheless I have this against you, that you HAVE LEFT YOUR FIRST LOVE.”** This message to Ephesus applies to *all* Church eras, including the Laodicean era we are in now, and to us, if we are truly Philadelphia remnants. Remember Christ’s own words, **“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches (Revelation 2:29).”**



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but that you be *perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment* (I Corinthians 1:10).”

There are not many options given here. We can experience like-mindedness and unity *or* no commonality of thought – resulting in divisions doctrinally and/or contentions between brethren, opening the door for Satan to split the Church apart by removing some members of the Church.

3. SATAN: ULTIMATE SOURCE OF DISTRACTIONS

Satan, the master deceiver, intends to get us off balance, distracted with the cares of this world, doctrinal disputes, arguments and misunderstandings, all designed to *keep us off balance* so we can’t remain steadfastly *focused* with oneness of mind in unity to

the completion of the Work we have to do.

Notice again another statement by the Apostle Paul: “... **in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others** (Ephesians 2:2-3).”

2. FOCUS OFFSETS DISTRACTIONS, ENCOURAGES UNITY

As illustrated above, using the analogy of the magnifying glass can help us remain *focused* on our main purpose and goal, and can keep us from being distracted.

Notice what the Apostle Paul says in Ephesians 4:11-14, as he discusses the five basic ministries in governmental order in the Church: “**And He Himself gave some to be apostles ... for the equipping** (complete furnishing: Greek: *Katartismos*, or spiritual maturation, perfecting) **of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying** (as in architecture, a structure, building, from which we get the word *edifice*, i.e. *to build up*) **of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro** (shaken off our *focus*, distracted) **and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive.**”

So, we have a choice. We can choose to be involved in deceptive distractions and lose *focus* on our calling, leading toward ultimate destruction, *or* we can be determined and dedicate our *focus* on our calling with Church-wide sameness of mind and be strongly united!

Notice Paul’s instructions to the Corinthian church, “**Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you,**



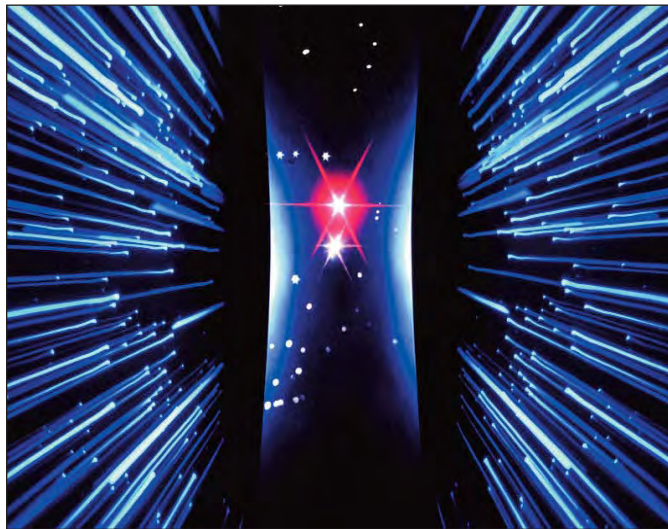


What is Paul saying here? He is saying that we all have been, while unconverted, without God's spirit to guide us, completely under the influence of the ways of this world – Satan's society. Satan has inspired the people of this world, broadcasting through the air like radio waves, as Mr. Armstrong used to say in analogy, working through those he could most influence tuned to his frequency, his attitudes, impulses, ideas, even thoughts in some instances. This is the origin of certain loose moral trends in entertainment, women's fashions, political motivations, religious concepts, weapons developments, disorder and confusion in this world. The list could go on forever!

And who is the author of all this confusion and chaos? I Corinthians 14:33 tells us that *God is NOT the author of confusion*, so that leaves only one who can be that powerfully contrary to God – **Satan**.

NEVER LOSE OUR FOCUS!

Just as our Savior never lost His focus as to His awesomely vital part of God's plan as our Passover sacrifice, we must never lose our focus and part in God's plan and continue to



Lord's (Obadiah 21).” Are we really that focused as **Christ our Passover** was – and still is? Given not only what has been written in this article, but more importantly, what God's Apostle and end-time Elijah and many faithful ministers during the Philadelphia era, and *now during this*

Laodicean age, have diligently warned us about, ***we must be EVER vigilant and focused on our main goal!*** There are no other options! We ***must not*** be distracted by the cares of this world, irrelevant “issues,” doctrinal and prophetic divisions and personal disputes between brethren, and ***move forward with VISION***, with a Passover attitude, to finish the Work we've been called to do. We must work toward qualifying for important positions of rulership in God's Kingdom and then to move on out into eternity, as we “**see through a glass, darkly** (I Corinthians 13:12, KJV)” – to an **awesome** future beyond this earth, out into our own solar system, out into galaxies full of hundreds of billions of stars and beyond! Can we even imagine that, brethren? Only if we **KEEP OUR FOCUS!**



overcome, *putting sin out of our lives as pictured by the **Days of Unleavened Bread***, finishing the Work we have to do so that we may become **saviors** (deliverers) and **judges** (rulers) under Christ to rule the nations in righteousness. **“Then saviors shall come to Mount Zion to judge (rule) the mountains (nations) of Esau, and the Kingdom shall be the**

Come Out of Sin

Continued from Page 4

You can't go above the human level. And that's the level of the human spirit within you. It takes the level of the Holy Spirit of God that must come into you. And none of us has ever come to the point that we are 100 percent holy and righteous and living according to God's law and not even a fraction of one percent that is in violation, even of the spirit of the law. Not one of us has ever come to that point. If we grow, as Peter said, in grace and knowledge, we also grow out of sin. You don't put it all out all at once. We all have some of it left in us.

In the last year or more, I've been especially concerned about the passage of Scripture that talks of hungering and thirsting for God's righteousness. I began to wonder did I really hunger and thirst for it? I knew I ought to want to have God's righteousness. And I had to really stop to think and began to pray about it before I began to really, and I thought I had, but I hadn't really hungered and thirsted for it. I want God's righteousness. Now, if you can understand, you will, too.

I think of God's righteousness, and I think of God and how holy and how righteous He is. God is so righteous He is absolutely perfect. He never suffers anything, except sorrow that you and I cause Him. But of Himself, He suffers nothing. He has no pain. He has no backaches. No hips out of joint. No headaches.

But He is full of vitality, and He just feels so good, and so active, so strong and so vigorous and just feels good over and over all the time, and He's never tired or weary. He is perfect, and everything is just perfect in His life. He has no fears and no worries of any kind because He is perfectly righteous. Perfectly. That's something to hunger and thirst for.

Now, I have some aches and pains. Sometimes they come, sometimes they go and then others come. So do you. So do we all. But if we hunger and thirst for God's righteousness, if we ever achieve it, we will have perfect contentment, perfect happiness, perfect joy, just brimful and running over enthusiastically, filled with love and with happiness beyond any description.



We'd better hunger and thirst for it. Well, now what is that? It's the absence of sin. And what is sin? In another way, you can say sin is the absence of righteousness. That's what it is – the absence of righteousness. We sin in many ways that we don't realize.

I was just thinking, one of the greatest sins is our tongue. Any of you ever free from sinning with the tongue? Things you say? Are you always courteous, always pleasant, always tending to make other people comfortable and happy, always just reflecting love and joy and peace?

We haven't attained to that quite yet, brethren. It's something we have to work for and strive for day by day by day. And how do you achieve it? On your own power and strength? You aren't that strong. You don't have the power and the strength.



very deeply on that before. It just seemed we never thought “what if he had taken of the tree of life?” and I began to think a lot more on that line from that minute on. If Adam had taken the tree of life; that’s what he should have done because Jesus Christ the second Adam came to do what the first Adam should have done and did not do.

Jesus did take of the tree of life. Now if Adam had taken of the tree of life, God’s life would have entered into him. How does God’s life enter into you? Through the Holy Spirit of God. All right, that’s the beginning, but that’s only part of it. It means so much more than just that. That has great meaning. If God’s spirit had entered into him, he had a spirit in him. God created man mortal, but with a human spirit. That is what the world does not understand.

So that’s where we have to get back to the beginning. Before Adam were those two symbolic trees, among perhaps hundreds of other trees in that beautiful Garden of Eden. But two were special, symbolic trees – the tree of life and also the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Now, we used to say very little about them at all.

Then we began to see that it meant a little something, that Adam sinned, that he rebelled against God, he disobeyed God and that’s where sin started in the world. But we never saw very much about the other tree, the tree of life. I hadn’t thought as much about it as much as I should and I didn’t realize that I didn’t think about it either, until down in South Africa.

I was in the home of Dr. McCarthy in Johannesburg. And it was after a Sabbath meeting, and we were all over there for a buffet dinner that evening, and I was sitting at a table. Some ate dinner on their laps at a buffet dinner, you know, but I was a little older than most of them so they let me sit at a table, and then others began to gather around me and then somebody came up, I was talking about the two trees, and they said, “Well, Mr. Armstrong, what would have happened if Adam had taken of the tree of life?”

And, you know, they almost stopped me right there. I had never thought

Now, we learn gradually. I hadn’t learned it all, at once, but gradually. Back here about four or five years ago, I began talking to you about the two trees, and I began seeing, and I’d seen prior to that time for some five or ten years, I’d been seeing about the spirit in man.

I finally have to come and see that God created the first man with a spirit in him, and the man is not wholly physical. His whole body, his brain, everything is physical, but



there is a spirit in man that does not exist in the other vertebrates. It doesn't exist in a cow, a horse, a dog, an elephant or a whale or a dolphin or a chimpanzee. They have a brain, and their brain is as good as ours. And they can't find very much difference in the consistency of the brain, a human brain from an animal brain. But the human brain has thousands of times greater output.

Now the human brain has with it a spirit, but it's the human spirit. It's the spirit of man. I Corinthians the second chapter: **"What man could know the things of man, save the spirit of man which is in him?"** The spirit of man, which is in him. Well, it is part of him. I thought, well, it was something that God added with the first breath. Now, the word for spirit in both the Greek and Hebrew language, the Hebrew in which the Old Testament was written and the New Testament written in Greek, is the same as the word for "air."

Let's see it is "pneuma" in the Greek and it is "ruwach" in the Hebrew. Now, it is spirit, or it also means breath and it means air. And Jesus, explaining to Nicodemus about being born again, He said "It's like the wind." You can't see it, but you can tell where it's going. Nicodemus couldn't understand about being born again and born of the spirit. **"That which is born of the Spirit is (and becomes) spirit."** We're not spirit. We're flesh, but with a human spirit within us.

Now the sole value of human life is that spirit because every bit of the rest of you is going to die, and everybody who ever lived has already died, except those that are alive today, and no one is as old as 150 years.



But that spirit is of every possible importance because that makes possible a connection with God. God's Spirit comes into us, and it joins with our human spirit. The two join together. God formed Adam of the dust of the ground, but he wasn't complete physically. God wanted him to reproduce, but the guy couldn't do it. And no other man can do it. He couldn't do it until God operated – and made a woman out of him and presented the woman. And they joined together, and they became one flesh. The two became one. They were joined together. And they could reproduce their kind. And they had children.

If Adam had taken of the spirit of the tree of life, he would have received the Holy Spirit of God. And the Holy Spirit of God could join with his spirit. God gave us a human spirit so we could be united with God. And when you die, you die, but the spirit returns to the God that gave it. And the body returns to the dust from whence it came.

Now, the spirit in you can't think. It can't reason. It can't know. The brain sees through the eye and hears through the ear. It's the brain that sees and hears through the eye or through the ear. It's the brain that thinks and reasons. But the brain alone couldn't think and reason and couldn't know without the spirit. The spirit empowers the brain to do that. Psychologists don't





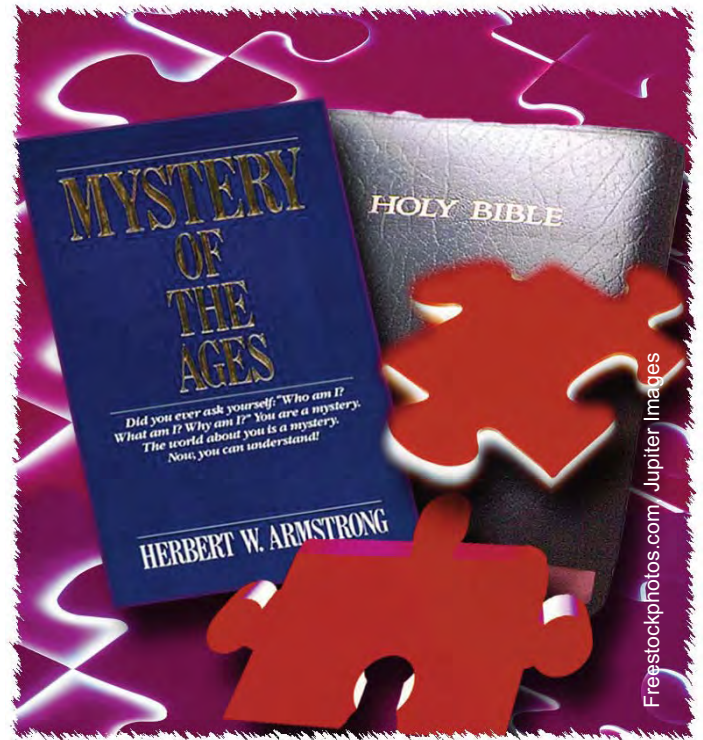
know that. They don't teach that in any university or any college because they don't know. They don't know what a man is.

I want to mention just a moment in passing about the new book that I am writing. It will fully explain all of these things. **The mystery of man.** What is man? Of course, first of all, we were created by a wonderful God. And nobody knows who and what God is, it seems. Unless you can understand as God reveals Himself in His word, and very few do. So the first great mystery of all is the mystery of God. Who and what is God, and what is He like? Why is God not real to people? One young woman comes to me and says, "Well, God just isn't real to me." Well, He isn't real to most people. Why?

The new book, *Mystery of the Ages*. **The first chapter is about the Mystery of God**, and I hope I can begin to make God a little more real to people in that chapter. It will be a year or more in coming out. We hope to have the book all ready well before the Feast of Tabernacles, and I hope there will be a copy for every member of the Church.

And I want to ask you now to read from the beginning and read every word, and you will come to a comprehension and an understanding better than ever before. There is not much that is new in this book. The Bible is like a jigsaw puzzle where all the many, many pieces, perhaps a few thousand pieces, here and there. And they have to be put to-

gether in exactly the proper way. And one relates to another and finally you have a beautiful picture and it all clears up. And this book is merely a synopsis of the Bible. Putting it together so it can be understood.



You begin reading the Bible in Genesis one verse one and you get, **"In the beginning God ..."** and right there you are stuck. Who and what is God? You don't know, and that doesn't explain it. You have to look to many other Scriptures in the Bible to know who and what God is. You find a lot about God in Isaiah. You find a lot about Him in the Psalms. You find a lot about him in Proverbs. You find a lot about God in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. You find a lot about God in Ephesians. You have to go to many other Scriptures to find out about God.





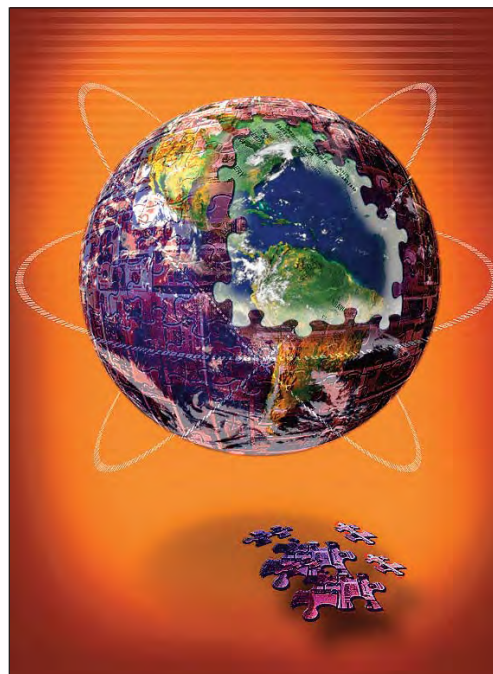
This book is trying to take the trunk and the main branches of the whole tree of knowledge that is the Bible and put it together. *But it's only a synopsis.* It doesn't go into great detail. It doesn't cover the smaller limbs of the tree or the little twigs and small branches. It's sort of a summary of the whole story of the Bible. Making it so plain that when you read the Bible you will really understand it, and ***you must read the Bible along with it*** and see how various parts of the Bible come clearly to your mind as they never did before.

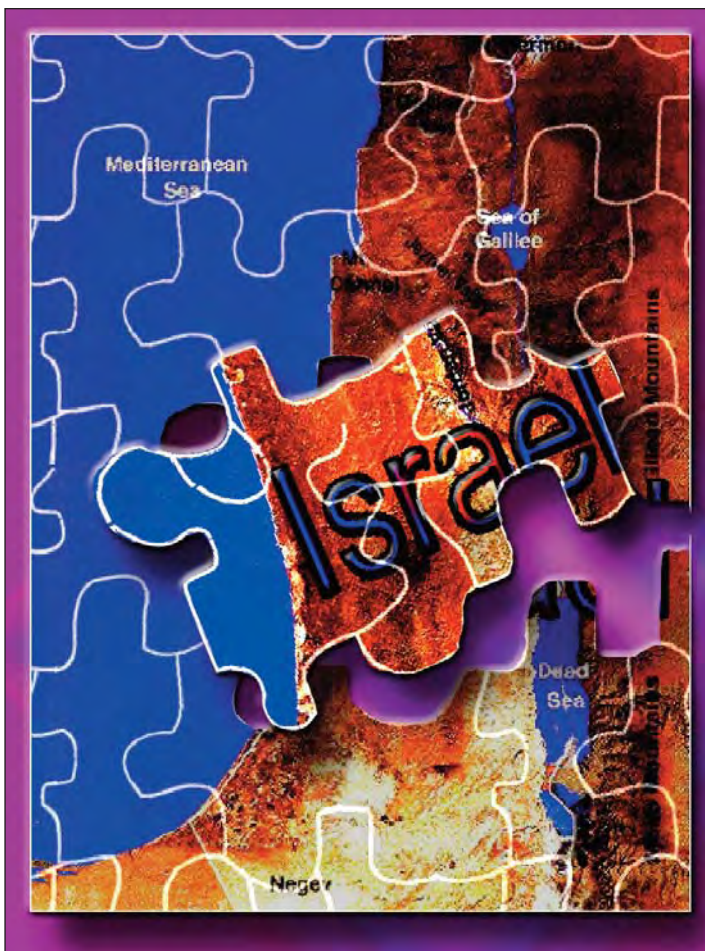
Now, **the second great mystery that will be handled in this book is the Mystery of the Spirit World.** The first thing God created was not human beings. The first thing He created was not the universe. He hadn't created the earth yet. He hadn't created the sun, the moon. He hadn't created any of the stars or anything we see in the universe. The first thing He created was angels. Now, about a third of the angels sinned, but what about the other two thirds of the an-

gels? And what about the angels that sinned, and why and how, and what has that got to do with us?

So that chapter explains about the angels and their function. About who and what they are and why they are and why did God create them. And how a third of them went wrong and did God create a devil, and how come there is a devil? The third then is man. **The third chapter is the Mystery of Man.** Man is a mystery. He doesn't understand himself. That goes into the spirit in man. That goes into the two trees. That goes into the sin of Adam and how the whole world was kidnapped and is being held captive.

Then **the next chapter is the development of Satan's world, the Mystery of the World.** What about this world? Why is the world one that is producing awesome progress? Just fantastic progress, the things we do today. The minute things we do in little instruments and machines and the great vast things, sending man to the moon and back, transplanting hearts and other human organs. All of the machinery and at the same time men with brains that can do that kind of thing don't have enough brains to solve their own problems, get along with their wives and children, get along with their next door neighbors. Or men that employ others and do these things can't get along with their employees or with competitors or anybody else. The men that head nations are men with great minds, but they can't get along with other nations. They are always having wars. Why? It's a mystery.





And how did this world develop? And as the world developed, God intervened in the world and brought out one nation. Were they His favorite nation? Israel. **Why the Nation of Israel?** God has chosen a nation. Did God discriminate against other nations? Why the nation of Israel and what do they have to do with the whole thing?

Then the next in this world came Christ and built the Church. **The Mystery of the Church and that's the biggest chapter of all.** Why should there be a Church? Most people take church for granted.

They don't know why there are churches. They say, Well, there's a church down there on the corner." Well, there are all kinds of churches around. Why? Is there any reason for them? Is there any purpose? That's a mystery, and people have never understood. We need to know why and how. Who and what and why and how.



When Christ came, He came with a message from God and His message was the Kingdom of God and the Church is merely the Kingdom of God in embryo. In other words, the Church will grow into the Kingdom of God and that comes finally. **That will be chapter seven, the Mystery of the Kingdom of God,**

and no one seems to know what the Kingdom of God is. And then what happens after the Millennium and after the Kingdom of God? That's all in the concluding chapter.

So it begins with the God who began before time was, and it ends in eternity ahead, which will never, never end. It's the most comprehensive work that I believe has been produced since the Bible, and **it is the Bible put in understandable language.** Not the whole Bible, as I say, a synopsis, but enough to give you understanding. And still it's going to be well over 400 pages, I believe. It will be, by far, the largest book so far.



But, how did I come to these things?

Well, let me go back and finish what I was saying. If Adam had taken the tree of life, he would have received the Spirit of God. That would have given him the knowledge of how to live, of God's law. Now, we say that **sin is the transgression of the law.** Adam would have received knowledge then about sin. That's

the thing we are interested in today, coming out of sin. Well, sin is the transgression of the law. Then what is the law?

Now, what is law? Law is merely the rules of human conduct or the laws of conduct; it doesn't necessarily even need to be human. Laws are the rules that regulate human

performance. Now a transgression, a violation of a law always brings a penalty. The rules of a basketball game could be called the law of the game. Now, there are all kinds of penalties. There are fouls happening right along several times during a game. And there are various penalties.

The law of God is the way we ought to live. It's the way God does live. It's the way to be happy. It's the way to do

away with pain, with sorrow, with suffering. It's the way to do away with fears and worries. It's the way to have perfect peace of happiness and joy. It's the way that produces that, and you violate it and it produces something else. If Adam had taken of the tree of life, God would have revealed His law in a more full manner.

I think that God did reveal His laws to a certain extent to Adam, but I don't think that He went into the full detail that He could have if Adam had taken of the tree of life, then he would have had a direct contact with God. He would have been connected to God. He and God would have been



joined together in a sense. And God and God's mind would have been in him. And God could begin to put some of His righteousness in him.

Now, it not only would have given him the law of God, the knowledge of what to do and how to live and what not to do, but in order to do it, you have to have something to do it with. **You can't fulfill the law except with something, and that something is love. Love** is the fulfilling of the law. But man was not created with the love that will fulfill the law of God because **the law of God requires the Holy Spirit of God to fulfill the law. It is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.**



And that is the only love that can fulfill the law of God. Now, Adam would have received the knowledge in his mind of what to do. He would have received the power to do it if he had only taken of the tree of life. He would have had direct contact with God and been made one with God, and begotten as a son of God.

Now, just as a child is the begotten son of its parents, there is in human life. The child begotten of human parents goes through a period of gestation, as we call it. In the human family, that's a nine-month period. In some animals, it doesn't take that long before their young are born. That's a



are ever going to get over it. And a lot of people need to admit their hostility to God and get it out of their hearts and their minds. But Adam eventually would have sat on the throne that is occupied by Satan, and Satan would have been deposed, but he didn't do it.

And so Christ had to come as the second Adam and do what the first Adam did not do, and Jesus Christ did have the Holy Spirit. He was born with it, and He kept the Holy Spirit and He obeyed His Father. He said, **"I have kept My Father's commandments."** And He said, **"Of myself, I can do nothing."** He was entirely dependant on His Father.

Now, if Adam had taken the tree of life, he would have been dependant on God for everything. He would have relied on God. If he got in trouble, he would rely on God to show him the way out or deliver

period of development and growth. And if Adam had taken of the tree of life, he would have received all of this. He would have been a begotten son of God, and then he would have had to develop, just as we do. But there was one difference.

Adam had never yet committed sin. God told him this before Adam had been tempted by Satan, before Satan could get to him. Satan didn't get to Adam until after God had talked to him.

Now, Adam didn't have a natural tendency to hate God or to be hostile to God. Now, the natural mind of man today is hostile against God. Romans 8, verse 7, the mind is hostile against and always are, they don't believe it, but they are. They are hostile against God whether they believe it or not. "Oh, I am not hostile to God." Oh, yes they are. And God knows they are.

A lot of people are alcoholics, but they deny it. They say, "I am not," but they are. And they need to admit it before they

him. He would have showed him what to do or if there wasn't anything he could do, God would have done it for him.

But he said, "No, I will rely on myself," and humanity has been relying on humanity ever since. They don't rely on God.



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That's the trouble. If we're sick, we don't rely on God. Jesus was cut to pieces, beaten, as we saw night before last. But we don't rely on it if we are sick. We rely on the doctors. Adam would have relied on God.

I've come to the place where I see that of myself I am absolutely helpless. I can't do anything. Jesus said it is the Father in Him that was doing the work. Anything I do, if it is any good, brethren, I'm not doing it. Christ in me is doing it. And some of the enemies that hate me and hate the Church had better understand that. And it is not me that they hate, it is Jesus Christ and it is God the Father.

That's why I pray for them, and hope they will come to their senses and understand it. They could be devoting their talents to something better, and it would bring them more happiness and joy, too. And I'd like to help contribute to that happiness and joy if they would only turn the right way that would make it possible.

Well, Adam did take of the wrong tree, and we have all been born that way. And so at that time, at the foundation of this world, at that time it was decreed that Jesus, the second Adam, would come. He would come as the Lamb of God, and He would be slain for us. He would pay the ransom price, to ransom us back from Satan who had kidnapped us.

He would be the second Adam, and He would do what the second Adam failed to do. And, through Him, God would call us out of the world that was developed from the first Adam, and actually by Satan through Adam's children.

And this world was developed, and we were born into this world, and God has called us out of this world. Jesus said, **"I will build My Church."** The word Church comes from the Greek word *"ecclesia,"* and it means **"called out ones."** In other words, "I will call out some people from this world that's been developed here, to start another world, to start God's world."

This is Satan's world, and **He said, "I will start God's world."** *And brethren, we are the begotten children of God, in the stage of gestation, being developed where we will become God when we are born. And we'll be in the world of God, and we will be kings, and we will be rulers, and we will sit with Christ on His throne right here on this earth. And we will be given power over the nations.*



Now, I didn't understand any of that, and I was giving you a little history of how this all started. I was challenged. And you know, I was wondering back, and I've written this in this book. I remember very distinctly, it was the summer of 1926, and I got to wondering about myself. I asked, "Who





am I, and what am I, and why am I? How'd I come to be here? Is there any purpose of my living? And just what am I?"

I thought maybe I was an immortal soul. I had been raised in one of the regular Protestant churches. Or else I had an immortal soul, I don't know which. But I thought that when I died, if I was good I'd go to heaven. If I was not, that I'd burn and burn and burn forever in hell fire.

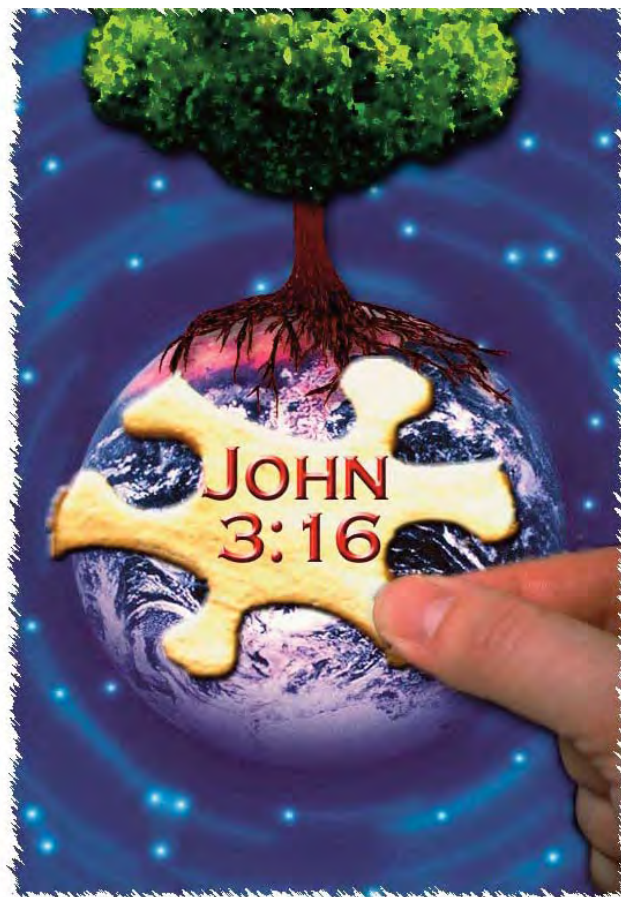
But when I was challenged, before I learned about the Holy Days or anything, I was challenged on the point of God's law and of God's government. The whole thing was government! ***The thing that Satan took away was government!*** The thing that Christ is coming to restore is government! And what he raised me up for is to restore government in His Church! And the whole test of the challenge in the first place, after God had softened me by other things that will be recorded in this book, **was a point of government.** But early in that study I ran across a scripture in Romans 6 and verse 23, the last two verses, yes, the last two verses, or the last verse, it's one verse in two parts, Romans 6:23. **"The wages of sin is death."** Now, I knew that wages meant the pay you get for what you've performed, what you've done. And that said that what you get for sin is

death, and I thought that what you got for sin was eternal life in hellfire. If you sinned you would burn and burn forever, but you'd never die. I didn't think you'd really die.

And then, **"The gift of God,"** now, this was a bigger surprise still, **"the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."** That's the last half of the same verse. And I said, "Well, I already have that gift. I'm an immortal soul. I've got eternal life. I'll never die. I'll either go to heaven or hell, but I won't die."

Then I began to look into the Bible and I saw this golden text, John 3:16 they call the golden text of the Bible. **"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish."** And I began to see that a soul can die. I saw twice where it says, **"The soul that sinneth, it shall die."** I saw back in Genesis where Adam was a soul. **God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a soul.**

And to that soul God said, you take of the tree I forbid you to take and you will die. You will surely die, and he did die.



Well, now then I saw it said that God loved us enough that He gave Jesus so that we wouldn't perish. I thought that to die meant to perish! And that was terrible. That meant that we'd be as though we'd never been. And then I began to see further in the Bible, and these things came gradually to me, before I could reveal them to you.

I Corinthians 15:22: **"As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall"** the same **"all be made alive,"** by a resurrection from the dead. Now I began to see that there would be a resurrection from the dead, and then I began to see that the final penalty is a second death and not the first death at all. And I began to see the hope of the resurrection.

And it was a long time before it dawned on me that God had closed off the tree of life in the days of Adam, and it's still closed off to the world.

And it is open only to those that God has predestinated, and God has chosen and called, and drawn to Him. If you have really come to Christ, it's because God selected you and predestinated you and has drawn you to Him. No man can come to Christ except the Father that sent Jesus draws him.

It all began to come clear, and I began to see a little more about what sin is. And it is transgression away from the law of God, and God's law is a perfect law, and we keep the law according to its spirit – not the letter, but the spirit. Now the law is one word – Love. Now, it is subdivided into two divisions. One is love toward God and the other is love toward neighbor – the two great commandments. Then that in turn is subdivided into the 10 commandments. The first four of them are love toward God; the last six are love toward neighbor. But then that expands in principle to include every possible sin. The law covers everything.

You don't have to find, I've mentioned so many times when I was converted, I wanted to know about smoking, is that a sin? And the Bible doesn't say anything about it. I didn't have to find a direct command – "Thou shalt not smoke." There is a principle involved in the spirit of the

law. The law is love toward God and toward neighbor. Did I want to smoke because of my love toward God? Did that help me love God more? No. I read in the Bible where God loved a sweet smelling savor of our prayers, but I don't think He loved second-hand cigar or cigarette smoke.

And then neighbors. You know once in a while you might find, out of a great big crowd, you might find one that might enjoy your cigarette smoke second-hand. I don't know. But I know there's a lot of them that don't enjoy it. And I can't see how you are really ministering toward your neighbor and conferring love and showing your love toward your neighbor by smoking.



Now, of course, you are to love your neighbor as yourself, and we love ourselves because **the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit** and part of loving ourselves is to take care of this body. This is the temple of the Holy Spirit. And that's an obligation. I knew the purpose of lungs, and I knew that smoke would impede that purpose. And the elimi-

nation of toxins and poisons through the breath, as the blood circulates and passes through the lungs, and is oxidized by air. I could see then that smoking violated the spirit and the principle of the law of God.

Women can't see what's wrong with **painting their faces**. Women won't admit it's vanity that makes them do it. They won't admit it's because they want to be like the world and want to be like other people. They won't admit that. Oh, no, they don't want to be like the world! Oh yes they do, or they wouldn't do it. I guess some women don't know their own minds.

I don't think any woman is going to come to me and just look me in the eye and tell me that she isn't doing it because of any vanity or because she just doesn't want to look like the other women of the world. She's ashamed not to be like the other women of the world, that's why she puts it on her. Same principle exactly as why smoking is wrong. It violates the spirit of the law! And not very many



can see that. You don't have to have a "Thus saith the Lord, you shall not do this," but there are plenty of Scriptures about **painting the face**, decide when you understand them correctly, if you don't try to twist them around like some have done.


*Brethren, I won't compromise. If you want to compromise, go join one of these factions that have turned off from us that are liberal. They'll be real liberal. They'll let you go, if you want to go **Satan's way** instead of God's way and pretend you're in the Kingdom of God, pretend you're in God's Church. If you want to kid yourself, go do it until you die! **But you are being judged now. Judgment is on the House of God!** Judgment is on us! Judgment is not on the people in China and the people in India and the people in Russia. Judgment is not on even the Protestants and the Catholics yet. But judgment is on us, and we are being judged, brethren!*

And I know that's been a thing that's come up here in the last four years in the Church, this thing. I don't think we've had much contention on the smoking issue, but we have on **women painting their faces**. It's just a little thing, yes, but it's a great big thing in principle! It's a big thing in principle! And there are many of you women sitting right here that are keeping **paint** off your faces just because I said you had to and your heart isn't in it. And you'd better get your

hearts right with God! You call me God's apostle. You'd better listen to what I say! And you'd better quit kidding yourself, because time is short.

So we begin the seven days today of Unleavened Bread, coming out of sin. We still have to come out of more sin. There are many little things, oh, there are so many, I can't go into all the things. There are many things you can say just by hurting someone's feelings with something you say. The tongue is something no man can tame. The many, many sins, the temptations that we have. Now, we all have to fight these things. And it is a struggle, but finally there won't be a

struggle brethren, if we win out. And we can't do it on our own. We have to rely on God. He will give us the help. Jesus is there at the right hand of God as our High Priest, interceding for us. Rely on God! Seek His righteousness! Hunger and thirst for God's righteousness. Rely on God. Go to Him in prayer about these things. And continually spend more time in prayer. *I think we are getting toward the Laodicean condition* and we need to check up. Now, we are just starting all over again, one more year. This is the time for New Year's resolutions, only you'd better make them stick this time.

I think I've talked to you long enough for today. We're on the way out of sin. Let's look forward to the glory that shall be revealed in us, brethren. It's a struggle. It's a struggle for me, the same as it is for you. We all have it. We're going to be accused falsely by others. We all have **Satan** to contend with. But we have Jesus Christ as our High Priest. We have God as our Father. And we can rely on both Christ and God the Father. Be sure that you do. 

Editor's Comment: It is with sorrow that we are compelled to edit out large portions of this sermon given by Mr. Armstrong due to a lack of space. However, it is available in its entirety to those who will write or call us (P. O. Box 8819, Modesto, CA 95357, Phone # 209.772-0737. **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.losttentribes.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

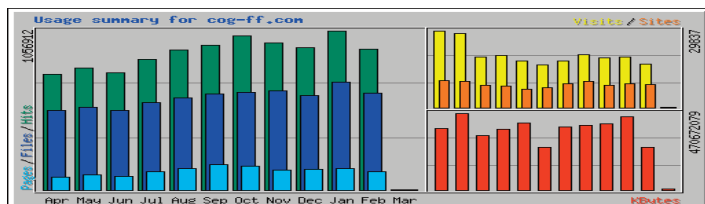
Which Day is the Christian Sabbath?
www.sabbathcentral.com

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

An Open Letter to the Scattered Flock
www.bodyofchristonline.us



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