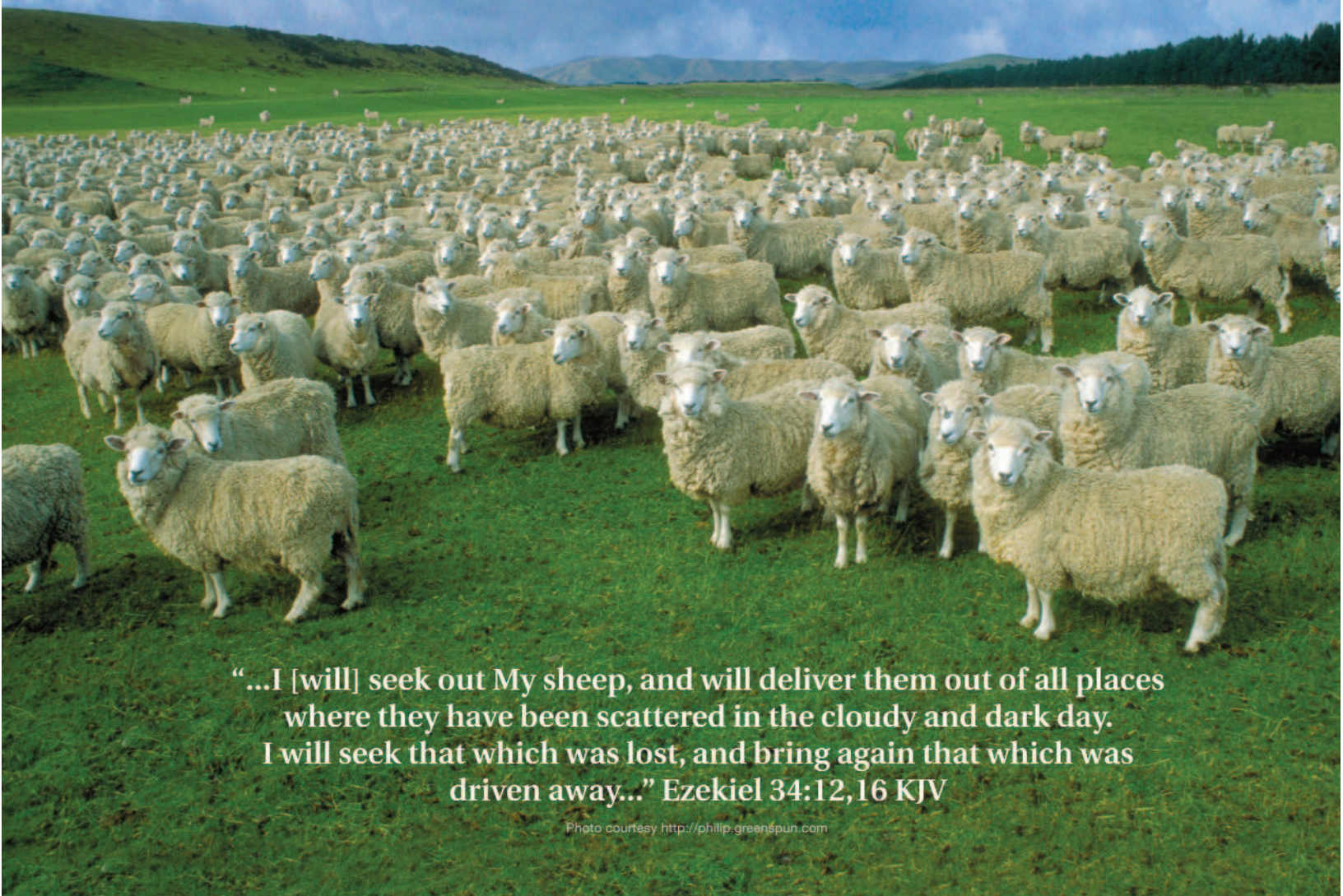


# The Philadelphia Remnant

May/June 2011



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://phillip.greenspun.com>



# The Philadelphia Remnant

MAY/JUNE 2011

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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 Valley Springs, 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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# God's Holy Spirit - Tree of Life

By Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong

June 6, 1981

**G**reetings. Greetings, everybody! It's nice to be back here again. Tomorrow is the annual Day of Pentecost, and I will be at the session tomorrow, so I cannot be with you, and I have to bring you my Pentecost message today.

You know, most churches pay no attention to Pentecost. I remember as a boy growing up in a Protestant church, the Quaker church it really was. There are several types of Quaker churches, by the way. There is an old fashioned type where I understand they used to twiddle their thumbs, and they would wait for the spirit to move them. Well, I was not brought up in that type of a church at all. Ours was more like the Methodist or Baptist church of today in the Protestant world and not much different, and believing a good deal of the same type of doctrines.

But I remember as a boy hearing the preacher talk about Pentecost. That was a strange word to me. I had no idea what it meant, and you know what I think now? I think the congregation or the church of the grown-ups—they didn't have any more idea than I did what it meant. It didn't really mean anything to them.



MR. HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG

Tomorrow is the day that we call Pentecost, but really it begins now, in just a few hours from now at sunset this evening. It's been called Pentecost from the New Testament. Originally, it was called the Feast of Firstfruits, and it also is called the Feast of Weeks in the Old Testament. It means nothing to most people. Well, it should because it is

the day on which the Church was founded and beginning at sunset tonight is the 1,950th anniversary of the Church of God. One (hundred) time cycles plus 50 years, exactly, precisely, beginning tonight at sunset. I prefer to call it an anniversary rather than a birthday because we don't celebrate birthdays, but it is an anniversary.

Now, the word "church" comes from the Greek word "ecclesia." And it means not only a crowd or a group, of course, the church of Luther may only mean Luther's crowd or Luther's group. The Church of God means the people of God. Now, the congregation, and "congregation" means the same precisely as the word church, it



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**PENTECOST – COUNT FIFTY**

has the same meaning. It's a group of people, but in the Old Testament we have the congregation of Israel. They were the firstborn children of Israel.

We are the Church of God, and we are the Spirit-begotten Church of God. We are already, now, the children of God because if we have the spirit of God, His Spirit witnesses with our spirit that we are the children of God. And as you read in I John 3, “**Behold,**” all of us now, we are the children of God, but it does not “**yet appear what we shall be.**” In other words, what we shall be is not visible so we can appear as yet, not until the time of the resurrection, at the Coming of Christ and the time we will be born as God beings.

But the word “ecclesia” also means “called out ones,” and it means we are called out from the world. Now, why? What's wrong with the world? Why should we be called out from the world? Now, Pentecost has a terrific meaning, but it's been glossed over. The world hasn't recognized it. The churches have not recognized it. Of course, science ignores anything like that all together and modern education, government, business and industry, technology, all of the other facets of society in the modern civilization.

## **Why Called Pentecost?**

Why do we observe this day that is called Pentecost? Why is Pentecost called by all of these different names? Why the name Pentecost in the New Testament, Firstfruits in the Old, and Feast of Weeks? Well, I'll give you a hurried explanation of that, but it will be made plain as I go through.

I'd like to, if I remember it, come back to it before I close, later.

It's called Pentecost because you count 50. You count 50 from, or beginning on the Sabbath in the midst of the Days of Unleavened Bread. That is the day of the wavesheaf, and the wavesheaf typifies the risen Christ. And so 50 days from the risen Christ, the Holy Spirit came. And the Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost, so you count 50. “Penta” means 50 in the Greek language and “cost” is count, so it's “50 count.” ***The Feast of Firstfruits means that the Church is the firstfruits of God's salvation,*** and almost no one has ever understood that. I have to go through the sermon before

you will understand that.

***It is also called the Feast of Weeks. Why? – because it is. Seven is God's number of completeness. The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord our God. The seventh millennium will be the day of the Lord, just like the Sabbath is also the weekly day of the Lord and, therefore, Christ is the Lord of the Sabbath. So, it is His day. You count exactly seven weeks, beginning on the particular day, morrow after the Sabbath or Sunday. The day is the wavesheaf during the Days of Unleavened Bread. So that is why it is called those three names, and why is it important?***

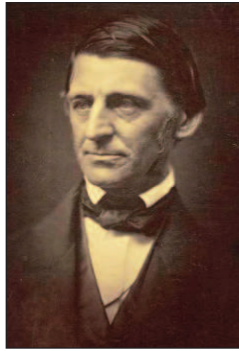


## Why Called Out of the World?

And why should we come out of the world? What is wrong with the world? Well, as we look into the world, we see the world has produced some very awesome accomplishments. I've often said that thinking of a politician and of a, well, a great writer or an author and a great financier or capitalist, if a Lincoln or an Emerson or a Vanderbilt could come back to life, they would be AWESTRUCK at the things they would see that had been accomplished.



LINCOLN



EMERSON



COMING OUT OF THE WORLD

You know that even the very fact that, if we just had it going out on the air on a station you could see and hear me and see me and hear me all over the city right now if we were on the air. In fact, on my television at home, if anyone happens to be listening over there, although they should be here instead. They are seeing me and hearing me like they

are in my home. Television, radio – awesome things when you think of it. The picture and the sound they are just there in my room at home, in one room.

Many sounds are in this room here, which you don't hear because your ear isn't tuned into that wavelength. Those are marvelous things – sending men to the moon and back, the modern computer, the automobile, the motion picture, sending unmanned spacecraft to get us close-ups of the surface of Mars and close-ups of Saturn and Jupiter.

Why I tell you, anyone who died in the 19th century coming back right today would be awestruck by those things.

But also they would be horrified to see the change that has taken place morally, spiritually and in troubles and woes, and human suffering and violence and every evil that has beset humanity, and they would be perplexed. What has caused all of this?



TELEVISION AIR WAVES



We didn't have that kind of evils a century ago. Nothing like it. And yet we are called out of this world. It was bad enough then. It's just a lot worse today. So this world, if you take our western world, if you take the developed world and you can include Japan with that, you find a great development of technology, of industry and of education. On the other hand, you also find unhappiness. You find human discontent.

I remember when I was a boy, around the turn of the century in the early 1900s, before 1910 – 1902, 1903, 1905, which I remember very well because I was a growing boy at that time, approaching my teens. Now, I had uncles. We lived down on the farm away from Des Moines, Iowa, where I was born and raised. Of course, I was supposed to have been raised in a city. It wasn't a very big city, but we thought of it as a city, and you know, the farmers, not only my uncles, but other farmers, they didn't have tractors yet at that time. They would be plowing behind a horse, but they would be singing at the top of their voice, and they'd come in and "Well, hi." They'd say to their wives, and it was all jolly and cheerful. Everybody was happy, and they had a smile. Today you have to buy a Coke to have a smile. So that's their slogan.

Seems like nobody smiles anymore today. I think that Bob Hope will tell you that the one good thing that he's done for the world, he's made them smile and laugh. There isn't



AWESOME PROGRESS, TECHNOLOGY



much laughter anymore today. Well, I just got you laughing a little bit, and that's a good thing once in awhile. We need to have a lot of good cheer and that kind of thing, and it seems like it is almost gone from the world today.

But now you get other parts of the world – China, India, many parts of Africa and you find illiteracy. You don't find education, and you find near starvation. You find people living in filth and squalor. You find absolute poverty, people starving to death. Such things ought not to be. There's no need for things like that. No need at all. It's all wrong. There is something wrong in this world.

### The Church Called Out of this World

And this is a world, because it is wrong, the Church is called out of this world, and we need to understand why. We need to understand the beginnings of this world. What started this world on the wrong track? What started the Church? Why did Christ say, **"I will build My Church,"** and how did He build it and why? And why are we in it today, and why are we here today?

Continued on Page 26

# Personal from the Editor

By Alton B. 'Don' Billingsley

## The Feast of Firstfruits - 2011

*'Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000, having His Father's name written in their foreheads. ... These were the ones who were NOT defiled with women, for they are VIRGINS. These are the ones who FOLLOW the Lamb wherever He goes. These were RE-DEEMED from among men, BEING FIRST-FRUITs (Bride of Christ) to God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found NO DECEIT, for they are without fault before the throne of God.'*

*(Revelation 14:1, 4-5)*

## Are You a Virgin?

Dear Brethren,

As we edge closer to the time of the **Great Tribulation** and the coming of Jesus Christ back to this earth, each of us needs to ask this question very seriously with prayer and fasting, while knowing our salvation could be at stake:

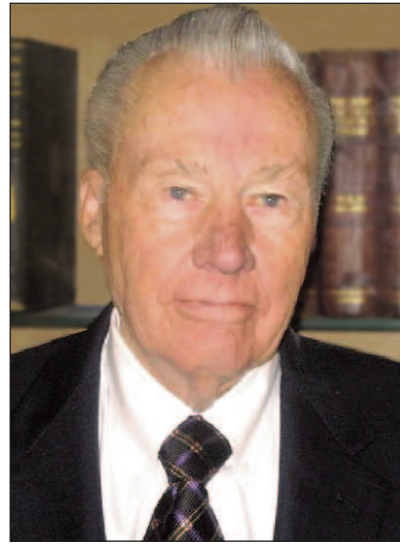
*"Am I truly a (spiritual) **VIRGIN?**"* Will I be numbered among the **FIRSTFRUITS** who will be accepted by Jesus Christ, experience the new Spirit birth, and be changed into the likeness of His glory and become His wife?"

To simplify the answer consider what is written in the above Scriptures and segmented with comments as follows:

*"These were the ones **NOT** defiled with women (the **wrong corporate churches**), for they are **VIRGINS** (having departed from them). ... (Revelation 14:4)."*

### Are 'YOU' an Adulteress?

As a **VIRGIN**, and the affianced Bride of Jesus Christ – betrothed as was Mary to Joseph (Matthew 1:18-20) – by the marriage covenant made at baptism, and based on the marriage conditions of His laws and teachings made with God, to violate any of them is an act of unfaithfulness to Him.

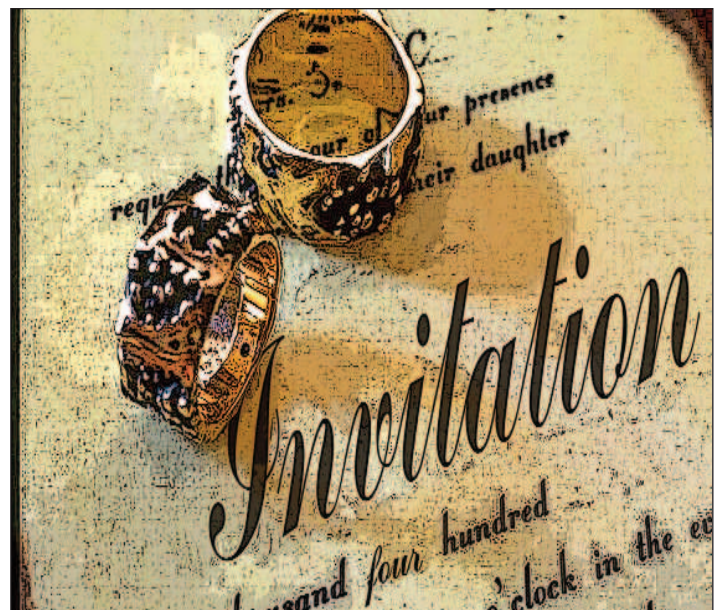


*Alton B. (Don) Billingsley*

both sides; and hence a breach of this contract was considered as a case of adultery, and punished exactly in the same way (Deuteronomy 22:23-25)."

*Clarke Commentary, Page 39: "The woman was espoused (betrothed) at her own, or her father's house; and generally some time elapsed before she was taken home to the house of her husband (Deuteronomy 20:7) ... Among the Jews, the espousal, though the marriage had not been consummated, was considered as perfectly legal and binding on*

Ancient Jewish custom was to have a betrothal ceremony (*type of repentance and baptism – God and angels rejoicing*, (Luke 15:10) corresponding to the modern custom of engagement (*becoming engaged*). It was an agreement to marry between the two (*type – Luke 14:25-26*) – though not yet bound by God. The final wedding was called a "kieldushin" ceremony. The wife remained with the parents until this took place. The Virgin Mary is such an example (Matthew 1:18-25).







**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 ...' (Revelation 3:7-13)."**

Those who deny the Seven Church Eras as history that carries over into this end time also are denying the promise of being protected from the soon-coming **Great Tribulation** as found in this Philadelphia Church Era (Revelation 3:10).

It is a deceptive fallacy from Satan himself for people to believe the ELECT people will be protected in their homes during such a tragic time as some have taught. Many Scriptures refute such erroneous beliefs and teachings.

From Scripture, and the example of Joseph and Mary, a Spiritual VIRGIN, as an affianced Bride of Jesus Christ, is to be considered an adulteress if she develops a relationship with any other church than the true Church of God! Unless there is repentance with right changes, this will mean an agonizing death in the **Great Tribulation** as made plain by Jesus Christ in the following words spoken by Him:

**"If a man ABIDE NOT IN ME, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men (*armies of the revived Roman Empire*) gather them, and CAST THEM INTO THE FIRE and they are **BURNED** (*horrible deaths during the Great Tribulation*), Revelation 6:9-11, John 15:4-6)." While this Scripture primarily deals with angels (Leviticus 16:21, Revelation 20:1-2) casting the unfruitful into the Lake of Fire, there is a duality here with what will occur to the unrepentant during the **Great Tribulation**.**

By God's law, an adulterous woman under the Old Covenant was to be stoned to death (John 8:1-5, Deuteronomy 22:22, Leviticus 20:10). For one to continue being unfaithful to our Bridegroom is an act of adultery and is subject to death!

### **The True Church of God**

There is only the ONE true Church of God. And His Church can be identified from all others by what Jesus Christ said about it in its ongoing history unto this present time:

**"And to the angel of the Church in Philadelphia (*brotherly love*) write, '... I know your works. See, I have set before you AN OPEN DOOR, and no one can**

### **The Old and the New Covenants**

The Old Covenant made with Israel was a Marriage Covenant (Jeremiah 3:14). And as many Scriptures make known the New Covenant also is a Marriage Covenant (Hebrews 8:7-13, Ephesians 5:22-32; Revelation 19:7, 21:9).

This wonderful and glorious marriage will be consummated between Jesus Christ and Spiritual Israel, the ELECT, His chosen people, upon His return to this earth (I Thessalonians 4:13-18).

### **Are We Truly Faithful to Our Bridegroom?**

To ABIDE in the LOVE of our Bridegroom has the meaning of faithfully FOLLOWING the Lamb WHEREVER He goes! (John 15:4). Not to do so is to lose sight of where He





is leading His Bride and then she becomes lost altogether. Unless this is corrected, the loss of direction can consign one to a terrible fate in time to come (John 14:6; 10:1-11)!

To abide in Jesus Christ means to LOVE our Bridegroom more than we do our parents, brothers, sisters, wives and husbands, and even our own lives – and if necessary – to forsake them and all others to remain faithful to Him until the marriage takes place with Him. Otherwise, we cannot be His affianced Bride (Luke 14:26, Matthew 22:37).

### The Marriage Contract

Among the conditions of the proposed marriage contract means to also LOVE all of His laws and true doctrinal teachings that He RESTORED within His Church through His late Apostle, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong (Malachi 4:5, Matthew 17:10-11). To LOVE them that much means to forsake the churches that have gone off track with any of His teachings and become part of His true Church who is remaining fully faithful to them.

This is what it means to be a spiritual VIRGIN and become the accepted Bride of Jesus Christ when He returns to this earth.

### The Purifying of the Bride

Scripture makes known the affianced bride must go through purifying tests to prove her unswerving loyalty and faithfulness before the actual time of the marriage. They are vitally necessary to prove her devoted LOVE for her future Hus-

band in the little time left.

These trying times began coming on the Bride after the death of God's late apostle in 1986, and they have become increasingly more difficult since the scattering of God's people, especially so without a chief shepherd to stand in the gap for us (*meaning a true apostle as was Mr. Armstrong, Daniel 12:7; 10, Ezekiel 34*).



To add to this dilemma, there are more than 450 corporate churches today. Each one is holding on to enough of the true teachings, as were taught by Mr. Armstrong, to deceive many into believing it is the succeeding one replacing the pre-Worldwide Church of God of January 16, 1986.

Grievously, members are being led away into the darkness of deception and away from the true Church of God. And similar to the Protestant churches, each one has a teaching and belief different than what was taught by Jesus Christ through His late apostle.

To sift through all of these in search of where the Bridegroom actually is requires the needed effort of going back to the basics while studying the Holy Bible, along with the original unedited *Mystery of the Ages* book written by Mr. Armstrong before he died – which was his legacy left to the true members of God's Church.

### The Bride Clinging to Her Bridegroom

During this perilous time, the chosen Bride is holding fast to the fullness of the teachings as was taught by her Bridegroom through His chosen apostle with respect for him while mak-



ing her wedding garments spotless through faithfulness and involvement in His Work. The one Church of God that is also being used to continue God's Work before the night comes when no one can work (John 4:34-38, 9:4). In this manner, the Bride is making herself ready for her coming marriage:

**“And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude ... ‘Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, FOR THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB HAS COME, and His WIFE has made herself ready ... (Revelation 19:6-7).”**

In anticipation of the upcoming marriage, joyfully the Bride exults as she eagerly waits to join her Bridegroom:

**“I will greatly REJOICE in the LORD, my soul shall be JOYFUL in my God; for He has CLOTHED me with the (wedding) garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as A BRIDEGROOM decks Himself with ornaments, and as A BRIDE adorns herself with her jewels (Isaiah 61:10).”**



#### THE BRIDE ANTICIPATES THE GROOM

Very soon now the BRIDEGROOM will enter into this earth's atmosphere. He will then cry out for His Bride to rise and meet Him, and she will joyfully respond (I Thessalonians 4:16; Matthew 24:30-31, 13:43).







## The Marriage Supper

To celebrate the joyful Marriage, Jesus Christ and His Bride will then have a feast together with the Bridegroom serving His Bride.

**“... A certain man (God our Father) gave a GREAT SUPPER and INVITED MANY, and sent his servant (apostle) at supper time (end time), to say to those INVITED, ‘Come, for all things are now ready’ (Luke 14:16-17; Revelation 3:20).”**

**“... Tell those who are invited, ‘See I have prepared My dinner, my oxen and fatted cattle are killed (choice meats with well-refined wines, Isaiah 25:6), and all things are ready. ‘Come to the wedding.’ But they made light of it and went their ways ... Then He said to His servants, ‘The WEDDING is ready, but those who were invited were NOT worthy.’ ... There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. For MANY are called, but FEW are CHOSEN (Matthew 22:1-4, 7-8, 14).”**

Jesus Christ follows up by making known that only those who truly LOVE Him more than all others, including himself or herself, shall be His disciples, His Bride to be, and she is responding with heartfelt love with faithfulness – patiently enduring in preparation for the marriage (Luke 14:25-35).



**“And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright (Matthew 17:1-2), for the fine linen is the RIGHTEOUS ACTS (following the Bridegroom wherever He goes) of the saints (Bride). Then he said to me, ‘Write: ‘Blessed are those who have been INVITED to the MARRIAGE SUPPER of the Lamb!’ And he said to me, ‘These are the true sayings of God’ (Revelation 19:8-9).”**

## One Church/One Bride

The Bride, which is the one true Church of God (Matthew 16:18), is a small flock (Luke 12:32). It is the one that is ignored by all the corporate churches though it is the only one that is upholding the fullness of the Restored Teachings that Jesus Christ used Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong to restore within His Church from 1934 to 1986.

And Christ is continuing to use him, though dead, to finish and complete the very end-time Work via his Recorded Works, through the use of web sites that He has given us before the **Great Tribulation**.







marvelous **Work** and a **WONDER**; for the **WISDOM** of their wise men will perish (*leaders of the off-track corporate churches of God*), and the **UNDERSTANDING** of their prudent (*intelligent*) men shall be hidden (*from them by God*) (Isaiah 29:14, Romans 11:7-10)."

### This Current Prophesied Work

Through the use of those **Recorded Works** of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong via our web sites, miraculously given to us without request or cost, this

To them, and even scattered members, it seems impossible that Christ would use a corporate Church so small that it is almost non-existent!

### The End-Time Work of God

This work was prophesied by God's prophets that would cover two different periods of time for this end time:

1) The first would cover the lifetime ministry of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong from 1934 to January 16, 1986:

"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, Isaiah 5:12, Revelation 3:7-13, Zechariah 4:6)."

This prophecy has a dual meaning that connects with the second time period as well.

2) Note the continuation of this end-time Work from the Passover season in 2006:

"Therefore, I will again (*after the death of Mr. Armstrong*) do a marvelous **Work** among this people, a

**WORK** began preaching the **Gospel** and sounding the Ezekiel **WARNING** since the Passover Season in 2006 – at which time Christ **RE-OPENED** the Door after having closed it at the time of the death of Mr. Armstrong in 1986 (Revelation 3:8).

In no way was God going to use an apostate pastor general, who renounced the laws of God and His teachings, to continue with His Work!





According to Christ's timetable, and because of His great LOVE, He began sending out once again the WARNING message that is reaching out to the Church of God, Israel and the world of **"... great tribulation such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time or, no nor ever shall be** (Matthew 24:21-22, Daniel 12:1)."

**"For indeed I am raising up the Chaldeans (a type of the revived Roman Empire), a bitter and hasty nation (blitzkrieg warfare) which [soon] marches through the breadth of the earth, to possess dwelling places that are not theirs. They are terrible and dreadful ... (Habakkuk 1:6-7)."**



After learning of the terrible things to befall God's people Israel (Habakkuk 1:6-11), the prophet pleaded with God:

**"O LORD, I have heard Your speech and was afraid; O LORD, REVIVE YOUR WORK in the midst of the years; in the midst of the years MAKE IT KNOWN; in WRATH remember mercy (Habakkuk 3:2)."**

*God through His prophet reveals the difference of attitude and spirit of those who do not belong to Him:*

**"Behold the proud (pious, self-righteous), his soul is NOT straight or upright in him; but the rigidly just and the uncompromisingly righteous man shall live by his faith and in his faithfulness (Habakkuk 2:4, Amplified Translation)."**

The following Scriptures reveal the time frame of the prophet's writing for they speak of the coming of Jesus Christ back to this earth:

**"I will stand my watch and set myself on the rampart, and WATCH to see what He will say to me, and what I will answer when I am corrected. Then the LORD answered me and said: 'Write the VISION (of what is coming) and make it plain (write boldly and clearly) on tablets (Philadelphia Remnant Magazine, plus other writings, Mark 13:10 KJV), that he may run who reads it. For the VISION is yet for an APPOINTED TIME; but at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it TARRIES, wait for it; for it will surely come, it will NOT tarry (Habakkuk 2:1-3)."**



One pastor referred to this Congregation as *"A faithful splinter!"* One of no consequence! Even so, this is the one Jesus Christ is now using to make possible His end-time Work because of our uncompromisingly faithfulness to our God and His true teachings. The same CANNOT be said by all of the other churches off track.

With shocking incredulity, all of the ministers of the corporate churches will come to learn that Jesus Christ would use such a tiny flock, as is this one, to enable the **Recorded Works** of His late apostle, to finish the Work He had sent him to do in this end time (Malachi 4:5, Matthew 17:18).

*There is no Scripture that makes known Christ would use any other man in this end time other than the promised Elijah, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong.*

This is the very man all have rejected in one way or another. They won't play his taped sermons in services or speak positive of him as the Elijah to come. Why? Though he is dead, **THEY ARE AFRAID OF HIM because of Christ's teachings through him – just as were the Pharisees and Sadducees of Jesus Christ during His lifetime ministry!** There will be weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth in the short time to come!



PHARISEES

### The Elect Brethren

However Jesus Christ reveals the true members, called the Elect, though scattered as the majority of them now are, will be following Jesus Christ wherever He goes from all of the wrong places they may find themselves (Revelation 3:7-13, Romans 11:4-6).

From what is implied in prophecy, Jesus Christ presently has them in a holding pattern until He chooses to bring all of us together as ONE CONGREGATION with a loyal, faithful and true pastor heading them. This apparently will not fully take place until almost the time to flee to the Place of Safety.

Two points to consider: 1) If this little flock were to now grow to the size that it will come to be, possibly around 7,000 members or better, it would no longer fit the prophecy in Habakkuk – **“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).”**

**Point 2)** A large flock would also mean they were no longer scattered while being purified (Daniel 12:7, 10; Ezekiel 34). **“... The wise will understand (Daniel 12:10).”**

### The Government of God

There must be God's government at all times in the Church of God, with true and faithful leadership, otherwise there is confusion (Amos 3:3). And God is not the author of confu-

sion but rather of order (I Corinthians 1:10, 14:33). And the true and faithful members obey God's Government.

**“These are the ones who FOLLOW the Lamb wherever He goes (Revelation 14:4, John 10:27-29).”**

### An Overview of the Faithful Bride

Though the true and faithful people of God are identified in many Scriptures, the following ones gives us an overview of them:

**“If they have KEPT My sayings, they will keep yours also (John 15:20).”**

This Scripture has the meaning of the true ministers who continue to speak the TRUTH of God and not those who speak their own erroneous beliefs and teachings. God's Spirit does not lead His people into error.

**“The Spirit of TRUTH will guide you into all truth (John 16:26).”**

Before He was crucified, Jesus Christ prayed to His Father in heaven with a loving request.

**“Sanctify (set apart for holy use) them by Your TRUTH. Your Word is TRUTH (John 17:17).”**

These are the members, the ELECT, the CHOSEN, who have been redeemed from Satan's world.



**“These were REDEEMED from among men, BEING FIRSTFRUITS to God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found NO DECEIT, for they are without fault before the throne of God (Revelation 14:4-5; 12:11).”**

These Scriptures give us an overview of what is required of each of us in this time of religious perplexity and confusion that abounds within the 450-plus corporate churches of God.

### The End is in Sight

In view of the record-breaking events now occurring in light of end-time prophecies, it seems without question that within this present 19-year time cycle, the Gospel Message and Ezekiel Warning Message will be completed by God's late apostle just short of the **Great Tribulation**.





Observing what is now taking place on the international and national scene with wars, rumors of wars, the fury of nature in different forms, acceleration of evil that knows no boundary lines, Mr. Armstrong would undoubtedly say if he were alive – “**possibly no more than 10 years, and maybe less!**”

If this is correct, it could mark the final countdown having begun for any and all to accept the invitation to open the door to their hearts and minds to Jesus Christ and then become His Bride before it comes to be too late! (Revelation 3:20)

### The Ten Virgins

This parable when put together with the Church of Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22) presents a grave warning for these people who are now so self-righteous they have lost their vigilance and are sleeping their way into the **Great Tribulation**.

**“Then the Kingdom of Heaven (during this time), shall be likened to Ten Virgins who took their lamps**

**and went out to meet the Bridegroom. Now five of them were wise (in understanding, but lukewarm in their relationship with Christ) and five were foolish (lacking in vigilance and understanding) (Matthew 25:1-2).”**



The baton will then be picked up by the Two Witnesses at or about the time of the beginning of this coming horrible time. Their mission of carrying the Gospel and Warning Messages will then be completed at the coming of Jesus Christ back to this earth (Revelation 11).

### The Meaning of the Gospel

The Gospel has an all-inclusive meaning of the Good News of God’s Coming Kingdom, along with His laws and His doctrinal teachings! Many Scriptures make this known as does the following Scripture:

**“... when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, IN **FLAMING FIRE** taking vengeance on those who do **NOT** know God, **AND** on those who **DO NOT OBEY THE GOSPEL** of our Lord Jesus Christ ... (II Thessalonians 1:7-10).”**

What should this mean to you and to me? It either means having and acting on revealed knowledge from God with His blessings – *or being rejected by Him for not acting on it.*

**“My people are [being] destroyed for lack of [true Scriptural] knowledge. Because you have **REJECTED** knowledge I also will **REJECT** you from being [becoming His Bride] priest for Me, **BECAUSE** you have forgotten the **LAW** of your God, I will also **FORGET** your children (Hosea 4:6, Revelation 5:10).”**

Because of the problems of the foolish, they will be rejected – the door will be closed to them to the wedding (Matthew 25:10). The wise will only be able to enter the door by repenting and being faithful while enduring horrible deaths during the **Great Tribulation** (same Scripture).







## Beware of Deceptive Hypocrisy

“... He began to say to His disciples, ‘**BEWARE** of the **LEAVEN** (yeast) of the Pharisees, which is **HYPOCRISY**!’ (Luke 12:1-2, Matthew 16:6, 12).”

Earlier, Jesus Christ had warned His disciples of the many false ministers Satan would use and is now using to try and destroy us (II Peter 2:1-3, Jude 3-4). Here He further makes known their lack of sincerity – teaching erroneous doctrines while *hiding* the truth about them – for fear of losing them and their tithes.

“**BEWARE** of false prophets who come to you in sheep’s clothing (beginning in 1986, and ongoing, II Corinthians 11:3-4, 13-15), but **INWARDLY** they are ravenous wolves (Acts 20:27-31), you will know them by their fruits (conduct and teachings) ... (Matthew 7:15-23).”

*The TRUTH of God is NOT that important to them! Either they have never been brought to real conversion by God or they have moved away from Him.*

To act now would add sufficient oil in the needed lamps of the Laodicean membership. They would then find the door open to be counted worthy together with others to escape the terrible horrors that are on the very precipice of taking place (Matthew 25:10).

It is now that the invitation to life or the death sentence hangs in the balance for each one of us!

Jesus Christ wants to spare every member of His Bride from the coming horrors of the **Great Tribulation**. That is why He has exhorted all of us as His people to be *watching and praying* always that He might find us worthy to escape this soon-coming time, and then most important of all, to be able to stand as His Bride before His Glorious Presence when He returns to this earth (Luke 21:36)!

Brethren, these Scriptures mean what they say! Do we not believe them enough to do what others are doing and join them in becoming the Bride of Jesus Christ? *Tomorrow may be too late!*

## What really happened before and after 1995?

The evangelists chose not to **ARISE** and take the leadership position by going back to the fullness of the original doctrinal teachings as restored in God’s Church by Mr. Armstrong! Instead, they chose to go in different directions along with top-ranked pastors. All failed due to human reasoning.

The larger corporate Churches of God have failed and been rejected for **red** of losing members and income. Some refuse to preach strong doctrine, such as the true meaning of “**born again**” and the true meaning of physical sin that connects with the bread at Passover (Mystery of the Ages, Page 212)!



There also is the wrong teaching of *a two-fold gospel, interracial marriage* (Mystery of the Ages, Pages 293-294; 166-169), also the **fear** of *reinstating the makeup ruling* knowing they would lose many members by so doing. *It appears to be fame and gain!*





They should have learned from the example of the rejection of Saul being king over Israel due to his lack of obedience to God for **FEAR** of the people:

I Samuel 15:24, 26: “Then Saul said to Samuel, ‘I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD and your words, BECAUSE I **FEARED** THE PEOPLE AND OBEYED THEIR VOICE.’ ... Samuel said to Saul, ‘... you have REJECTED the word of the LORD, and the LORD has REJECTED you from being king over Israel.’”

They should also have learned from what God said to Joshua after the death of Moses – to fully follow the doctrinal teachings that Jesus Christ used Mr. Armstrong to RESTORE within the true Church of God of the Philadelphia Church Era, as did Joshua:

“... The LORD spoke to Joshua, ‘Moses My servant is dead, now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all these people, to the land which I am giving them only be strong and very courageous that you may observe all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go ... be strong and of good courage, do not be afraid, nor be dismayed. For the LORD is with you (when the going gets tough – loss of mem-



bers and income with persecution), **wherever you go**’ (Joshua 1:1-9).”

### Not Too Late

Just as it was with Saul who became the apostle Paul and used of Christ in mighty ways, so even now, it is not too late for an evangelist to humble himself with repentance and then stand up to be counted for Jesus Christ, but time is fast running out!

### A Respite between 1995 and 2006

There was an interval period between the years 1995 and 2006 in which it would appear that Jesus Christ gave to the

leadership to see if any one or more would **RISE UP** and stand in the open gap.

As far as I know, not one did in true faithfulness in true teaching and leadership! I personally appealed to a major leader just before the formation of the United Church of God by saying, “This is a golden opportunity to go back and pick up where we left off in 1986.”

I again appealed to the leadership after its formation to begin sounding the Ezekiel warning message. I also wrote a document about observing the true Passover – and that only the apostles had the right to make changes in doctrinal teachings.

In response, I was told by the head of the doctrinal committee that Mr. Armstrong was not infallible. He was right, but neither were Abraham, Moses and Elijah (James 5:17-18), but Christ used them because they believed and obeyed God.

*All of my appeals fell on unhearing ears.*

After coming to see they were not going to make corrections of the errors in their doctrinal teachings, we gave up on them and left. Afterwards a few of us met with Mr. David Hulme in a private meeting. After hearing him say he would follow fully in the teachings of Mr. Armstrong, we went with him.



After some time, we left because he did not keep his word and began moving farther and farther away from the true doctrinal teachings.

### Faithful Flock Walking Alone

To remain faithful to the true doctrinal teachings, we had no choice but to go it alone for there was no other that we knew of who was following fully in those teachings.

About myself: I am only a Church pastor having been ordained by Mr. Armstrong in 1958. In 1991, I was transferred to the Stockton-Modesto, California Church area to become the pastor by headquarters at the time.

After the fallout in 1995, and being sifted out from among different corporate churches by Jesus Christ so as not to be muzzled by anyone in His use of me in doing His Work, I am left with only a few local brethren and with ties to other members in different places to be used by Christ until He closes the door (Revelation 3:7-8).

Though we of faithful flock are far from being perfect, we do BELIEVE God our Father and Jesus Christ, and Their teachings just as did Abraham; and as did God's late apostle (Genesis 15:6, Romans 4:3).

***And BELIEVING means we continue to remain rigidly, uncompromisingly, faithful to ALL of the doctrinal teachings that we were taught by Jesus Christ through His late apostle Mr. Armstrong; and with Christ's help, we will continue believing and doing the Work that He has chosen us to do.***

Because of preaching and writing boldly we are not popular! Even so, we continue because we want to serve and please God. We are very thankful that Jesus Christ has chosen to use us, and we try hard to please Him.



### The Closing of the Door

*Please know this open door could be closed at any time now!* And once it does, Jesus Christ will begin bringing the 7,000 members or more together with us (Romans 11:2-5, 7); and with the pastor, whoever he might be at the time, just short of the time to flee to the place of safety (Revelation 3:7-13, 12:15-16).

Will you and I be numbered among them? We can be *IF* we choose to make the right and wise decisions based on the Scriptures.

My heartfelt plea to all members is to please consider where you now are – become a SPIRITUAL VIRGIN by following Jesus Christ and moving away from all those who have proven themselves to be unfaithful to God and His way of life, and come to be a part of the little flock that Jesus Christ is now using.

It will make a real difference! But please realize. Time is fast running out!



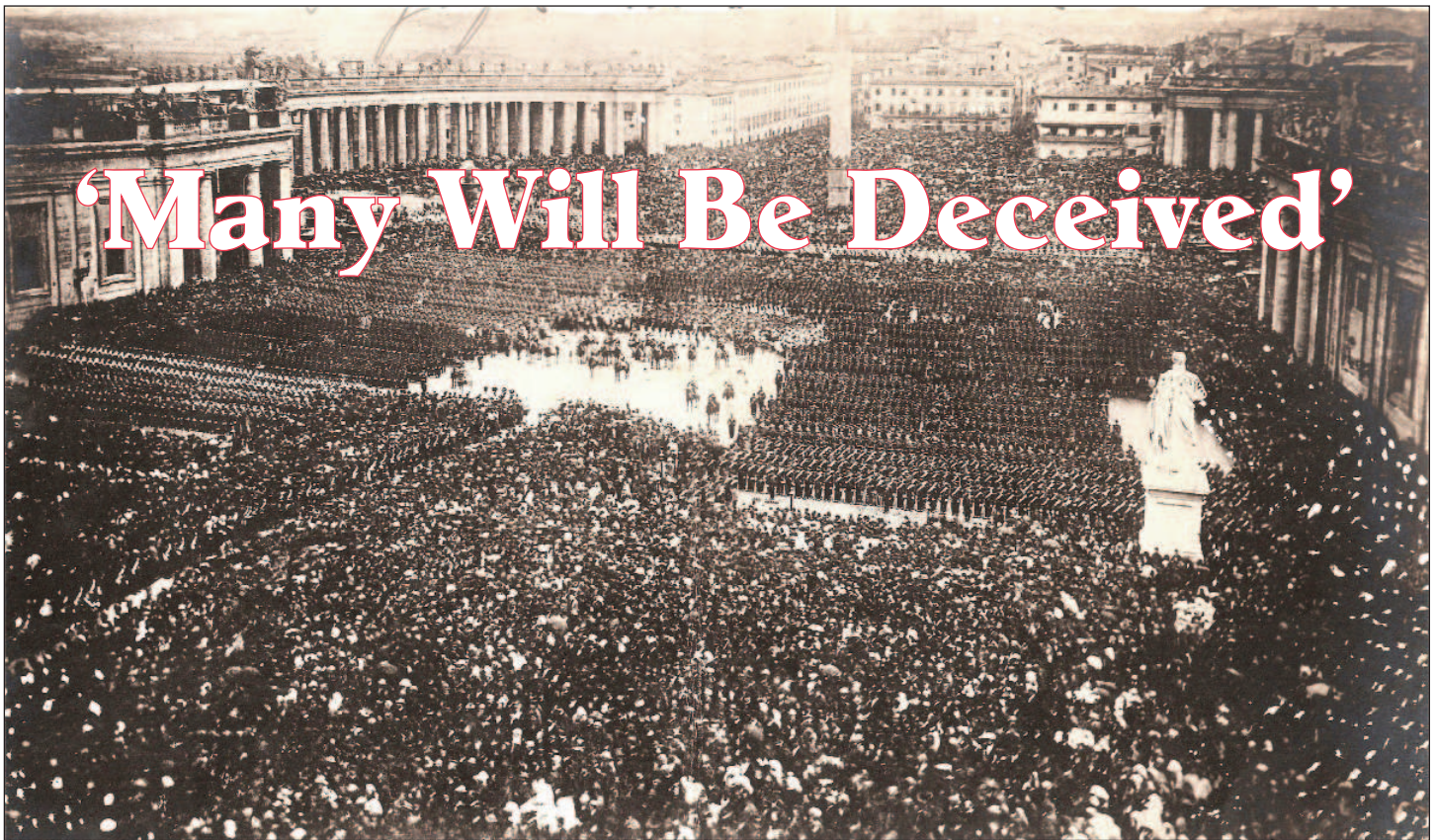
**“Let your waist be girded and you lamps burning (*full of oil*); and you yourselves like men who WAIT for their Master (*Bridegroom*) WHEN He will return from the (*preparation*) wedding, that WHEN He comes and KNOCKS they (*the Bride*) may OPEN to Him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the master, when He comes, WILL FIND WATCHING. Assuredly I say to you that He will gird Himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them (Luke 12:35-37).”**

Are YOU a Spiritual Virgin? If not, you can be by making right godly choices.



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**Is the large size of a church organization proof that it has God's stamp of approval? Is it more important to regularly meet with people of such congregations despite what false doctrines their leaders preach? The Feast of Pentecost shows us that God seeks quality not quantity, truth not deception, in His firstfruits as His plan of salvation unfolds.**

**By Mark Mendiola**

**S**hortly before Jesus Christ was murdered on Passover 31 A.D. in a horrible crucifixion, His disciples came to Him privately on the Mount of Olives and asked Him what would be the sign of His Second Coming and the end of this age. It was weighing heavily on their minds.

Jesus Christ did not immediately cite wars, rumors of wars, famine, pestilence or earthquakes as the first sign to heed although He subsequently highlighted those end-time developments, too. He warned right off that religious deception would be running rampant before His return to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. Why did He emphasize this first and foremost – and then even repeat this warning as He outlined other signs of His Second Coming?

“And Jesus answered and said to them: ‘Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many’ (Matthew 24:4-5).”

This was his first response when asked for indications of His return. Christ emphasized that many would come misappropriating His name, saying He was the Messiah, but would deceive many – the majority, the masses, the multitudes! How could this be? Today millions of people profess they are Christians, but they are unwittingly deceived just as Jesus Christ said they would be.

Many come in His name and profess that Jesus is the Christ, but they refuse to acknowledge that Jesus Christ expects obedience as their Lord and Master – or preach His True Gospel!



Christ warned that numerous false ministers who themselves are deceived would deceive countless people. They do so by preaching a false Christ and a false Gospel message, twisting Christ's words and those of His apostles to gain followings and large revenues. **They emphasize the Messenger, but not His message!** They stress that Jesus died for our sins, but do not preach the Good News of the Kingdom of God – the very same Gospel message that Christ and His true original apostles repeatedly proclaimed! Notice the consequences:



“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come (verses 9-14).”

Many will be offended. Many false ministers will deceive many. The love of many will grow cold. Most or the vast majority will be offended, deceived and will hate and betray others. Because lawlessness will proliferate, love will virtually vanish! There is cause and effect.



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These false ministers who come in Christ's name, saying that Jesus is the Messiah, mostly are united in preaching that God's law is done away and “nailed to the cross,” arguing the Ten Commandments are a burden. As a result, love grows cold. They also refuse to preach the Good News of the Coming Kingdom of God or that Jesus Christ will literally return as King of kings to establish a divine government on earth. Their message is the very antithesis of what Jesus the true Christ actually taught!

“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. ... Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them (the commandments), he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven,” Christ emphasized (Matthew 5:17, 19).

Jesus Christ said do not think that He came to destroy God's law or Old Testament prophecies. He came to magnify God's law and make it honorable (Isaiah 42:21, Luke 24:44). Yet, false ministers say the exact opposite, preaching against the Ten Commandments and ridiculing Bible prophecy!

Christ also said, “Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword (Matthew 10:34).” Yet, false ministers think that Christ did come to bring peace on earth nearly 2,000 years ago, but they do not preach that He will bring peace on earth at His Second Com-



ing. They refuse to preach **the Good News of the Kingdom of God**. Instead, Catholics and Protestants have waged wars against each other or among themselves for centuries, killing in the name of Christ!

“Jesus answered, ‘My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight ... but now My kingdom is not from here (John 18:36).’ Instead, **false ministers** counter that God’s kingdom is now on earth and supposedly composed of Christians of all persuasions in this day and age.

## FALSE MIRACLES

Christ showed these **false ministers**, **false apostles** and **false prophets** would grow increasingly worse before His Second Coming. “For **false christs** and **false prophets** will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to **deceive**, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand (Matthew 24:24).”

Like the **sorcerers** and **magicians** of Egypt in the time of Moses (Exodus 7:11), these **false christs** and **false prophets** will be able to perform lying signs and wonders, according to the working and power of Satan “with all unrighteous **deception**,” **despite their lawlessness**. “And for this reason God will send them **strong delusion**, that they should believe the lie (II Thessalonians 2:7-11).”

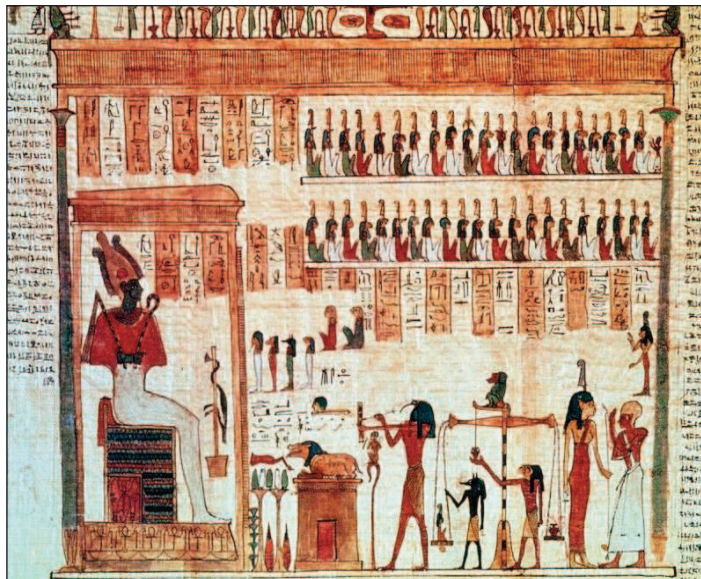
Many people are easily deceived by miracles and look to them as proof of a minister’s credentials, regardless of whether that minister preaches **the true Gospel of the Kingdom of God** or obedience to God and His commandments. They will flock to those who perform miracles in the name of Christ, who Himself said, “**An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign** ... (Matthew 12:39).”

The only sign Jesus Christ gave of His Messiahship was the fact He would be entombed three days and three nights just as Jonah was swallowed up three days and three nights in the belly of a great fish. True history shows Christ was buried on a Wednesday night before sunset and resurrected on a Saturday night before sunset in 31 A.D. – **exactly three days and**

**three nights as He emphasized**. Yet, modern Christianity denies the only sign Jesus gave that He was the Christ by teaching a “Good Friday” crucifixion and an Easter Sunday resurrection – totaling only two nights and one day. As a result, millions are deceived!

Christ also warned: “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are **many** who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are **few** who find it. ... Not everyone who says to Me, ‘**Lord, Lord,**

shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. **Many** will say to Me in that day, ‘**Lord, Lord,** have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done **many wonders** in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘**I never knew you;** depart from Me, you who practice **lawlessness!**’ (Matthew 7:13-14, 21-23)”



Contradicting the **false ministers** of the world, Jesus Christ also said, “But if you want to enter into (eternal) life, **keep the commandments** (Matthew 19:17).” God throughout the Holy Bible stresses the need to keep His statutes, laws and commandments rather than pursue miracles, which can easily deceive. However, Pentecostals eager to “call down the spirit,” blather in tongues, listen to voices in their head or witness visions usually are hostile to God’s law and ridicule the need to keep it, unlike Christ’s true disciples.

Notice what the Old Testament Prophet Isaiah warned: “Bind up the testimony, **seal the law among My disciples** ... And when they say to you, ‘Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter,’ should not a people seek their God? ... **to the law** and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them (Isaiah 8:16, 19-20).” If they do not **uphold God’s law**, but rather seek out seductive, demonic influences, they are in pitch blackness!

Even Moses warned the Israelites to beware of miracle workers who would lead them away from God and His holy righteous law. “If there arises among you a (false) prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, ‘Let us go after other gods’ – which you have not known – ‘and let us serve them,’ you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice; you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him (Deuteronomy 13:1-4).”

Contrary to false ministers who preach that God’s law is done away because it supposedly is a curse or burden, the Apostle John was emphatic to the contrary: “For this is the love of God that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome (I John 5:3).” The Apostle Paul concurred: “Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good. ... For we know that the law is spiritual ... For I delight in the law of God ... (Romans 7:12, 14, 22).”

## EARLY OPPOSITION

The Apostles Paul, Peter and John also warned about waves of false, deceiving ministers coming in Christ’s name, seducing and exploiting people in droves, shipwrecking them:

- “But evil men and imposters (seducers, King James Version, or frauds!) will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived (II Timothy 2:13).”
- “But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive (damnable, KJV) heresies ... And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words ... (II Peter 2:1-3).”
- “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world (I John 4:1).”

All of Christ’s original apostles had to combat false teachers and preachers infiltrating their congregations to devour their flocks like savage wolves. Christ Himself warned: “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves (Matthew 7:15).” He compared them to blood-thirsty, ruthless carnivores!

So did the Apostle Paul. He exhorted the elders at Ephesus: “For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves (Acts 20: 29-30).”



RAVENOUS WOLF

The Apostle Paul told the Galatians that he marveled they were turning away so soon to a different gospel. He said there were some troubling them and wanting to pervert the true gospel of Jesus Christ. He pronounced a double curse on anyone who would dare do so! (Galatians 1:6-9) He also strongly warned the Corinthians about how these false ministers would come across. His warning still rings true many centuries later!

“But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted – you may well put up with it! ... For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works (II Corinthians 11:3-4, 13-15).”

Christ’s original, true, faithful apostles were plunged almost immediately into fierce spiritual warfare, combating an army of assaulting false ministers, false apostles and false prophets at the very beginning of the Church of God, following **Pentecost 31 A.D.** – when God’s Holy Spirit was poured out on only 120 dedicated disciples of Jesus Christ.



Despite Christ's stupendous miracles during his 3½ years ministry that impacted thousands of people in Palestine, only a tiny handful were congregated on that momentous **Feast of Firstfruits** that launched His Church.

## PENTECOST LESSONS

“When the **Day of Pentecost** had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues (*languages*), as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:1-4).”

Just as Jesus Christ promised, His small flock of true disciples were imbued with the power of God's Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49, Acts 1:4). Almighty God poured out His Holy Spirit on the very day of **Pentecost** or what was called the **Feast of Firstfruits** or **Feast of Weeks** in the Old Testament, proving that Jesus Christ did not nail God's weekly or annual festivals to the cross, contrary to what false ministers almost unanimously claim!

These same Sabbaths are outlined in Leviticus 23 and Numbers 28-29. Jesus Christ and His true disciples were still observing these very days before and after Christ's crucifixion. The very fact Jesus Christ was crucified precisely on Passover and God's Holy Spirit was bequeathed on God's Church precisely on **Pentecost** underscores that these spe-



cific Holy Days remain to be observed under the New Covenant – despite what false ministers preach to the contrary.

Instead, these deceivers substitute holidays such as Easter, Christmas, Halloween, New Year's Day, Valentine's Day, etc, which are steeped in paganism and diametrically opposed to the annual High Days ordained and sanctified by the Creator God. The origins of these holidays can be easily proven by research, believe it or not! Those who perpetuate these pagan counterfeits are in the vast majority. Only a tiny few Christians by comparison continue to keep God's weekly and annual Sabbaths, including **Pentecost**, the **Feast of Firstfruits**.

Christ tells his handful of true believers, “Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom (Luke 12:32).” The Greek word that Christ used here for “little” is “mikros” or the root word for “microscopic.” It means “very tiny” or “least,” “less” or “small,” according to *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*. In other words, this flock is inconsequential from the world's standpoint.

**Pentecost** depicts when God the Father begat or impregnated members of His Church with His Holy Spirit, just as when a seed germinates after it is planted, infusing them with His divine power. The **Feast of Firstfruits** pictures the smaller spring harvest as opposed to the much larger Feast of Ingathering during the fall. Christ stated in Matthew 20:16: “So the last shall be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen.”







He repeated this expression in the Parable of the Wedding Feast, which shows a king who arranged a marriage for his son and sent his servants to call those invited to the wedding, but “they were not willing to come,” making light of it, making excuses and going off in various directions. The wedding was ready, “but those who were invited were not worthy.” The servants then brought in people off the street to fill the wedding hall with guests. Christ concluded this parable by saying, “For many are called, but few are chosen (Matthew 22:1-14).”

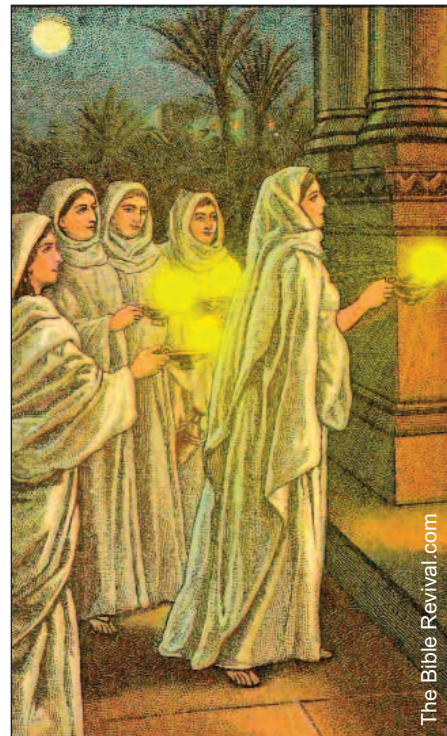
Prior to His final Passover on earth as Christ traveled through cities and villages en route to Jerusalem where He would be slain, He was asked, “Lord, are there few who are saved?” Notice His answer:

“Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open for us,’ and He will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know you, where you are from,’ then you will begin to

say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.’ But He will say, ‘I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.’ ... And indeed there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last (Luke 13:22-27, 30).”

In other words, Christ answered in the affirmative, confirming few would be saved while many would strive to enter the Kingdom of God, but would be thrust out. Although they said they ate at His feasts and were regularly taught, Christ said He did not know them, repeating it twice for emphasis! He did not recognize them because they practiced lawlessness.

In the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins, Christ also tells the foolish virgins who lacked oil in their lamps that He does not know them, either. This parable is especially meaningful at this time of Pentecost. Revelation 14:4 compares “virgins” to “firstfruits.” Oil is an obvious reference to



God’s Holy Spirit. The foolish virgins failed to maintain their oil supply, allowing it to diminish through lack of prayer and Bible study, cutting themselves off from God. He did not recognize them, as a result!

While they were scrambling at the last minute to buy oil after midnight, “the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’ But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you!’ (Matthew 25:10-12)” What absolutely chilling words!

The Apostle John emphasized: “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him (1 John 2:3-4).”



## APOSTASY IN GOD'S CHURCH

The religious deception Christ warned would prevail prior to His Second Coming not only has permeated Christianity at large, it has spread through the Church of God in general, following the same insidious pattern.

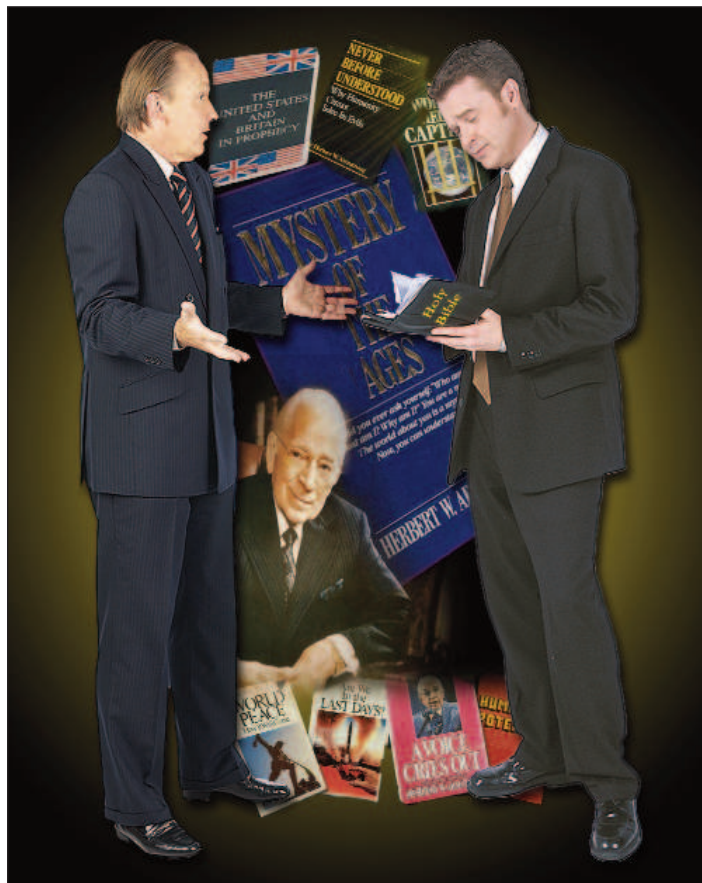
After the death of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong in 1986, the Worldwide Church of God was hijacked by Joseph Tkach and his son, Joe Jr., who came in the name of Christ, saying Jesus was the Christ, yet *deceiving many* by systematically eliminating the truths Christ put in His Church via Mr. Armstrong. *As a result, more than 100,000 members fell away!*

The Apostle Paul warned: “Let no one *deceive* you by any means; for that Day (Christ’s Second Coming) will not come unless the *falling away* comes first (II Thessalonians 2:3) ...” The Greek phrase he used for “falling away” is “apostasia,” from which we derive the word “apostasy,” literally meaning *defection from apostolic truth*, renunciation of a religious faith or abandonment of a previous loyalty.

Like the *false ministers* Jesus Christ described, the Tkaches quickly fell in lockstep with their counterparts and colleagues in the world, claiming God’s law was no longer valid under



the New Covenant, denying the need to observe the weekly or annual Sabbaths, *preaching a gospel about Jesus rather than the Kingdom of God*, *promoting the trinity*, claiming people are “born again” at baptism rather than the resurrection, ridiculing Israel’s modern identity, etc., etc., ad nauseum.

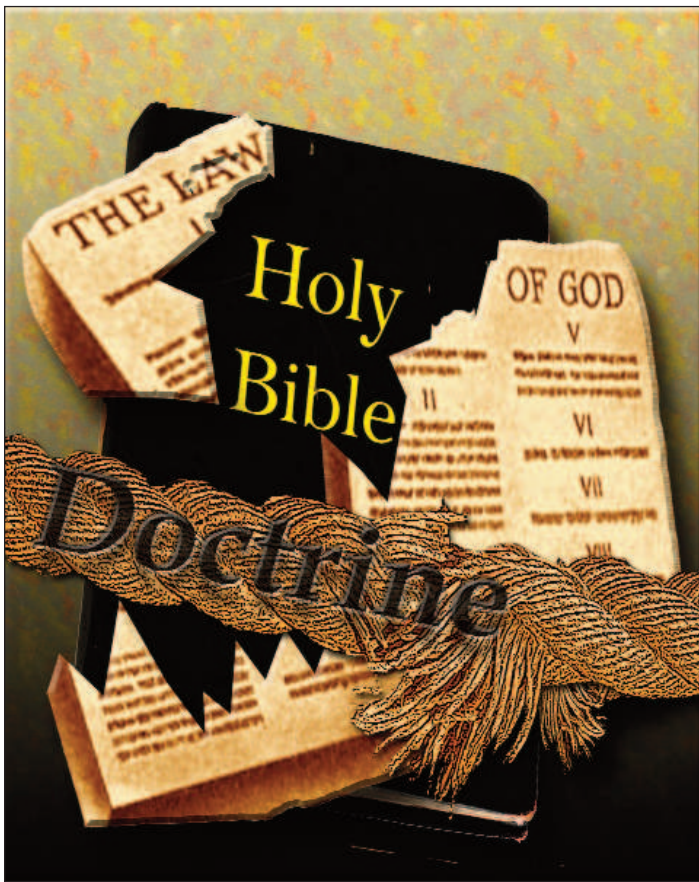


Other Church of God groups splintered off from the Worldwide Church of God, but *far too many of their leaders carried over much of the baggage of heresies they acquired from the Tkach regime*, “cherry picking” the truths restored by Mr. Armstrong. Most denied that Christ paid the penalty for our physical sins and that by His stripes we are healed. Others offered a smorgasbord of doctrines or a variety of flavors for disaffected brethren to sample.

Formed in 1995, the largest Church of God entity with the most ministers and members immediately adopted a *democratic form of government* with elders *voting on virtually all of its doctrines and policies*. As a result, it degenerated into *political bickering*, *competing factions* and *accepting many forms of false doctrine*, depending on what individual elders happened to believe. It recently suffered a major split, dividing the church into two rival groups.

Another large Church of God group that originated in 1993 also has adopted a *similar form of Presbyterian government* with *its council of elders officially establishing doctrines*,





overriding truths established by Mr. Armstrong, becoming more liberal and Protestant. To get on more television stations, its leaders have distanced themselves from Mr. Armstrong (unbeknownst to members) and sent representatives to National Religious Broadcasters conferences. Among the NRB's statement of beliefs is: "We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit," i.e. the trinity!

In its "Official Statement of Fundamental Beliefs," (possibly to appease other worldly churches) this Church of God organization states: "The Gospel of Christ is the 'Good News' of the forgiveness of our sins through Christ's sacrifice" and (oh, by the way) "of the soon-coming Kingdom and government of God." In other words, this group puts the message about the Messenger ahead of His message, making the Gospel of the Kingdom of God almost a whisper, footnote or afterthought, not its primary thrust!

In a July/August 2005 issue of its main magazine, this group's presiding evangelist wrote: "We at *Tomorrow's World* gratefully preach and publish the message of Christ's sacrifice for our sins, proclaiming the good news that through Jesus' death on the cross we can be totally forgiven our sins!"

As Christ warned, they would be coming in the name of Jesus, saying He is the Messiah, but downplaying, completely ignoring or pervverting Christ's true Gospel of the Kingdom of God, deceiving many.

Two other Church of God groups are headed by dictatorial leaders who both have proclaimed themselves apostles. One declares that he is "That Prophet." The other reportedly says he is a "High Priest." Taking on these blasphemous titles that belong only to Jesus Christ, they in effect are demanding the worship of their followers!

The Bible refers to and condemns false ministers who bully, intimidate, threaten, blackmail and even enslave God's people. It is filled with warnings about false apostles, false prophets and false christs who make merchandise of the brethren as if they are commodities to be traded and exchanged for profit. It speaks of those who promise liberty, but actually enslave or hold God's people in bondage (II Peter 2:3, 19).

Jesus Christ told His disciples they were not to "lord it over" His people, but serve them (Matthew 20:25-28). Yet, there continue to be "tyrants" in the ministry who abuse and browbeat their followers, demanding to be served. You do not read about Christ's true apostles acting so arrogantly and contemptuously! God's true original apostles refused to be adored (Acts 10:24-26, Acts 14:8-14). These despots who exalt themselves will be abased, Christ promised (Matthew 23:12). Pride comes before shame and destruction (Proverbs 11:2, 16:18).

## CHRIST KNOCKING OUTSIDE

Christ said the time is coming when He will rise up and shut the door into the Kingdom of God and eternal life. At that time, many who were called and invited to the wedding feast will pound on the door and plead, "Lord, Lord, open for us!" Christ will then be compelled to tell them, "I do not know you. Depart from me, you workers of iniquity or lawlessness!"

This will apply as much to false ministers of the world as Church of God elders who have led their flocks astray by falling away from true apostolic doctrines, preaching pervverted counterfeit gospels and deceiving their followers – often deliberately, subtly and secretly!



In the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins, Christ warned that the foolish virgins who allowed their oil supplies to dwindle and squandered their time also would be **shut out** of the Kingdom of God and wedding supper. **The door would be slammed in their faces**, too, for not valuing their calling or invitation. They, too, exclaim: “**Lord, Lord**, open to us!” Christ also tells them: “Assuredly, I say to you, **I do not know you!**”

Mr. Armstrong used to explain that all 10 virgins represent Laodiceans or members of the last dominant era of God’s Church. **Only half of them** will qualify in the **Great Tribulation** to enter the Kingdom of God. **The rest will be shut out by Jesus Christ**, who tells the church of the nauseating Laodiceans: “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, **I will vomit you out** of My mouth (Revelation 3:15-16).”

The lethargic Laodiceans have the attitude that they are rich, increased with goods and in need of nothing. In other words, they are smug, materialistic and arrogant. **They do not realize that they are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked spiritually**. They are in **the vast majority** as opposed to the **tiny remnant** of the Philadelphia era **holding fast** with white knuckles!

Christ, in turn, tells the sassy, disrespectful Laodiceans: “I counsel you to **buy from Me gold refined in the fire** (of the **Great Tribulation**), that you may be rich; and white (wedding) garments, that you may be clothed, that the **shame** of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore **be zealous and repent**.”

**The Laodiceans have shut Christ out of their lives. Christ does not know them, either.** Like the foolish virgins who must **buy oil**, they must **purchase gold, white raiment and eye salve** at the last minute. He urges them to repent of their apathy, be zealous and open up to Him, developing a close interpersonal relationship.



**“Behold, I stand at the door and knock.** If anyone **hears My voice** and **opens the door**, I will come in to him and **dine with him**, and he with Me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne (verses 16-21).”

Christ warned that prior to His Second Coming, **many** would be deceived; **many** would be called but **few** chosen; **many** would take the broad way of destruction; **many** would seek to enter the Kingdom of God but would not be able. **Many, many, many** ...

The Feast of Pentecost shows us that **God’s firstfruits** imbued with **His Holy Spirit** are **a tiny select few** or elect who will be gleaned at Christ’s return and given the awesome privilege of marrying Jesus Christ as His bride adorned in white. They will be allowed entrance into the Kingdom of God because **they have kept their garments clean and not soiled by false doctrine or deception, holding fast**, unlike the **vast majority** of professing Christians. When Christ finally returns to this earth as King of kings, those with Him as **His privileged firstfruits** will be **called, chosen** and **faithful** (Revelation 17:14) at His wedding and subsequent marriage feast.

Ask yourself. How many truly value their calling, obedience to God’s commandments, their royal wedding invitation or the precious gift of God’s Holy Spirit? Christ would answer: **“Very few!”**





# The Tree of Life

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## Continued from Page 4

We can't understand, brethren, all of this if we don't go back to the beginning. Now, you get to the beginning, and there again is something that humanity and civilization and the Church has just glossed over. They have just passed over. It has not meant anything to them at all. And you have to go back and understand it.

Now, before mankind inhabited the earth, and it began with the creation of the first man, Adam, and God created his wife, Eve, but before man there were angels on the earth. God placed them here. The angels sinned, and we find that they were led into that sin by a super archangel, Lucifer.

Now, Lucifer was placed on a throne on the earth. I've gone into all of that before. We don't need to read the scriptures in the 14th chapter of Isaiah and the 28th chapter of Ezekiel, and how the angels sinned in II Peter 2, verse four, and so on, but they did. And the throne was set on the earth and God set the throne there, and He set this super archangel who was a cherub – Lucifer – on the throne to administer the government of God.

## The Government of God

Now, the government of God had been administered from the throne of God in heaven, that is God's heaven. There are three heavens mentioned in the Bible. The one is the earth's atmosphere, where the birds fly and where some of us fly in airplanes. The second heaven is what we call outer space, on beyond. But the third heaven may not even be as far as outer space. We don't know because we don't know where it is, except I think we have one sign that it is in the far, far north. But that is the throne of God, and that is not necessarily a planet at all. God is invisible to us. We wouldn't see if we could see that throne because God is spirit, and we can't see spirit unless it is specially manifested in some manner so that our physical, human eyes can see it. But there was a government of God, and this super archangel Lucifer was one of the two cherubs whose wings

stretched out over the very throne of God, and he had been trained at the very throne of God in the government of God, and he was sent here to administer that government.

Now, God had created angels, and they are spirit beings, and first of all, God is Creator. But what is God creating? What is the ultimate thing that God is creating? Sure He's

created beings. He's created angels. He's created men, but those are only certain entities, but there is something greater He is creating, and that is righteous, perfect, spiritual character in those created entities that God has created.

Now, the way to that character and the way of any government, any government is based on a foundation constitution or law. In the United States government, it's based on the Constitution. We know that. All laws have to conform or be based on that basic law or Constitution. God's basic law is love – L-O-V-E, and love is

out flowing toward others. Now, love is first of all to God, and God is love, and God has love out flowing toward us. But we must return His love in love and in obedience and letting God direct and help and give to us.

The second is love toward your fellow being. Now, in this case it was love toward the angels, and that is the basis of God's law. It isn't a lot of just separate little specific laws. You know we have so many laws that policemen could not remember one sixth of all the laws he's supposed to enforce on his beat. But God's law is just simply one word, and it's magnified in the two – love toward God and your fellow – the two Great Commandments.

Now, toward man it's been codified in the 10 Commandments – the first four toward God and the last six tell you how to love man. But they are just broad principles, and you apply those principles.

## Principles Drawn from the Law of God

Now we derive all of our doctrines from God, and they come from the law of God. We have a no smoking doctrine







in the Church. You can't find anything about that in the Bible, but it comes from applying the spirit or the principle of the law of God of out flowing concern for others equal to your concern for yourself.

Now, actually except for the stink of it to your nostrils, the smell, because you can't taste smoke anyway. A lot of people don't know that, but you might try and experiment sometime. You'd find you can't taste smoke. You smell it. So, instead of saying, "It tastes better," like the cigarette manufacturers do, they should say "It stinks worse." Yes, that's what they should say.

But God has a basic law to create happiness, to create co-operation and peace and mutual well-being between one another and in relation to God. Now, this Lucifer rebelled and led his angels, and, as a result, they inhabited the earth before man. As a result, the earth became without form and void, or the Hebrew words are "tohu" and "bohu" and a better translation then, well, it really means "it became, decadent" but, well, anyway in six days, God renewed the face of the earth for man. And the seven days that you find in the first chapter, or the six days in the first chapter of Genesis were renewing the face of the earth actually, beginning with verse two. Anyway, we won't need to go back into that today.

## The Creation of God

But go back to the beginning, the beginning of God Himself in John 1:1. I've gone into this a number of times, let me just read it once more, "**In the beginning was the Word.**" That is a personage called "**The Word.**" He was the spokesman. He was the spokesman. The Word "**was with God.**" God is another person. There were two per-

sons, and the one person called "**The Word**" was with another person called "**God.**" "**And the Word was God.**" The Word also is God.

Now, you could say that John is with Smith, but John is also Smith and John is Smith. Well, you see Smith is John's father, and John is the son of Smith. So he is also Smith. Of course, now the Word was not at that time the Son of God, but did become that later.

**"The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him,"** because in Ephesians 3, now in the 14th (verse) we find "**the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us**" and became **Jesus Christ**. And in Ephesians 3, verse nine, God "**created all things by Jesus Christ.**" He is the Word. He says I have spoken nothing of myself. The Father that sent Me told Me what I should speak and what I should say, and the Father told Him. He is the Word. He spoke. The Holy Spirit is the power that did it, and that is the way creation was accomplished.

In Him, the Word, was life – L-I-F-E – life. In God was life. In the Word was life. "**And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.**" And all things were made by Him, and He spoke only as the Father told Him. Those are absolutely together, and lots of times when Jesus Christ was on earth He said, "**My Father and I are one. I have kept My Father's commandments.**" They were 100 percent together. Two can't walk together except they be agreed. The Word and God were in perfect agreement. Jesus agreed perfectly with His Father. He agreed perfectly with His Father.

Now, the Word had life, and He gave life and imparted life to the angels. They had life. That is life inherent, immortal life, eternal life within themselves, self-contained life. And





He set them here to accomplish things on the earth, but they had to get along with one another, and God's law regulated their conduct with one another and with God.

But it resulted in rebellion, and they followed Lucifer in rebellion. And so, the government of God which was established on earth, on the throne of the earth by Lucifer, became non-existent. It was no longer enforced, and the government of God was now no longer enforced on earth. So here is an earth without government.

Now, God is the Creator, and primarily what He is creating is character. He gave His law, which is a foundation of building that character, to the angels. They did not build that kind of character, and so Lucifer, their great archangel leader, became Satan the devil, and his name was changed to Satan. His angels now became demons. They're perverted in mind. They had minds greater than the human mind. They were spirit beings. They were immortal. They had life! And now they have to live that life forever in unhappiness, in mental torture.

## The Creation of Mankind

Now God said He would now reproduce Himself out of man, made out of matter. Now He said, **"I will create man in My own image."** You turn back to Genesis 1, and you read in the first chapter, **"In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth."** Now here the word for God that Moses used in the Hebrew language, in which he originally wrote was "Elohim," and Elohim is a uniplural noun. It means more than one person. In other words, "God" now meant the two persons of God and the Word.

But how did God create? – by the Word. The Word spoke, and it was done. And later you find in renewing the face of the earth that the spirit of God moved on the waters, second chapter. And the earth had become chaotic and in confusion and now God was renewing it. So the Word spoke, and it

was done! The spirit was there to move, and He said, **"Let there be light"** because darkness had come from Satan. He had turned light and truth into darkness and error. And now it became light, and then He proceeded to divide the land from the water, and it was all an ocean surface at the time, and so He brought out the dry land and in the six days He renewed the surface of the earth for man.

And in the 26th verse, after in the 24th and 25th verses He had created on the sixth day, the latter part of the sixth day He had created land animals, each after its kind – cattle after the cattle kind. Well, of course, that means dog after

the dog kind, and horses after the horse kind. But then He said, **"Let Us,"** not Me, verse 26 **"Let Us,"** more than one person, make man after OUR kind after OUR likeness. In other words, let Us make man after Our kind. Cattle are after the cattle kind, elephants after the elephant kind, whales after the whale kind, and dolphins after the dolphin kind, birds

after each bird kind. But man was made after the God kind because God was going to take man and reproduce His own self and put His own holy, righteous, perfect spiritual character into man. What an accomplishment!

All right, so He made man, but how did He make man? Now, He had made the angels immortal. He had given them life. He did not give man life. Now, the Word, in Him was life. He had life, but notice He didn't give man life.

The second chapter and verse seven, **"And the Eternal God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man,"** made from the dust of the ground, **"became a living soul."** Not an immortal soul. What is made of the dust of the ground became a soul. A soul is made from the dust of the ground and is mortal, is material, not spiritual at all.



Man himself is wholly matter. He does not have life. He has a physiochemical existence. He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man gets his life from breathing air into and out of his lungs. The lungs oxidize the blood as it circulates through the lungs back to the heart.

Now, the angels had life, and then they were tested as to whether they would live the way that would produce happiness and joy and production and accomplishment in happiness. But they didn't. They went the selfish, self-centered way.

Now, God is going to give man an opportunity, but man will have to demonstrate and build the character first before he gets life, and God did not make man with life. He only made him with a temporary existence, and it is wholly of the ground.

Do you know that there is energy in the ground?

We've had an energy crisis, and we've talked a lot about it. Now we're beginning to find that there's so much gas and other things in the ground that if we'd have only known it we wouldn't have had an energy crisis, but we just haven't worked at it and produced those things and now we have to depend on the oil countries, and they hold that as a club over us in the United States.

But all energy that we have is only what energy we get temporarily from food and water, and it comes out of the ground.

## The Two Trees

But now, God did not give the man life. I want you to notice in verse seven, He gave him this chemical temporary existence. In verse eight, the Eternal God **“planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed ... out of the ground made the Eternal God to grow every tree that was pleasant to the sight.”**

Now, God is love, and He wanted to make everything pleasant to the man He didn't try to make things unhappy and unpleasant. He wanted the man to enjoy beautiful things through the sense of sight, pleasant to the eye, the sight, and that's one of the senses. And good for food, that's one of the senses – taste. And **“the Tree of Life also in the midst of the garden and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.”** Now then, God had put the man in the Garden of Eden and God said, **“Of every tree of the garden,”** verse 16, **“thou mayest freely eat: but of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.”**



Now the one tree was the Tree of Life. In the Word was life. He gave life to the angels. He did not give life to man, but here He is offering life to the first man and said you may freely have it. But He says, “I command you not to take death,” because the other tree would result in death.

Now, how would it result in death? I'll come to that later. The first tree would result in life. The first tree would result in life, and

God offered that to him. God wanted him to have life, but to have it he had to reject the other tree, didn't he? He couldn't take both. He had to decide. He had to make a choice.

Oh, how we've passed right over this. Brethren, let me tell you right here, the lives, the happiness or lack of it, of billions and billions of people depended right on this decision that this first human was going to make. We're all his children. We came from him.

Now, the meaning of those two trees, that's just been glossed right over. You know, we've even glossed over it ourselves. ... Now, God doesn't just say this arbitrarily because if you disobey, because you don't jump at the crack of My whip I'm going to kill you, and you're going to die.



No, there has to be a reason. God says only what's good for the man, and it wasn't good for the man that he take of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. It was good for the man if he take of the Tree of Life, and that's what God wanted him to do. So, we have to get a little bit of the meaning of those two trees.

Now, the one was the Tree of Life. He would have received life if he had taken that. Let's go back and consider that. Let's not look over that Tree of Life. What if Adam had taken the Tree of Life?

Brethren, we wouldn't even have a Church today! We wouldn't have a Day of Pentecost! We wouldn't have troubles in the world today! This whole world would have been different! Right there is where the whole thing happened. Remember, Satan was still there. Now, he's Satan, no longer Lucifer, but he's still there. He didn't get to Adam directly, but he did get to him through his wife.

Now, one of those trees was life, the other was going to result in death. How would the first tree give Adam life? It would result in that. It didn't mean that God would have given him life, immortal life immediately. He had done that to the angels. He created them that way. He didn't create Adam that way. Why?

## How God Gives Life Today

How does He give life today? We have a chance to receive life today. How do we get life? Now, to understand, everything isn't explained in one place in the Bible. It's like a crossword, like a jigsaw puzzle, not a crossword puzzle, a jigsaw puzzle. You have maybe a thousand different pieces here, and no one of them makes sense at all. Two or three of them put together don't make real sense. You have to get more than that, but you get them all together in the right manner together, the way they belong together, and you'll have a beautiful picture. In fact, it is a beautiful picture just cut by a jigsaw here and there into a lot of little pieces. And you have to put them together.

The Bible is like that. Some of the things in Genesis you have to find filled in, in the New Testament or in the prophets, in Isaiah, some in Revelation, some in Ezekiel, some in the minor prophets, some in Matthew, Mark or Luke or John. You have to get a piece here and a piece there, put them together in the proper way. And I'm putting something together for you here that even this Church has never had put together properly before. So **OPEN UP YOUR EARS AND LISTEN!** Who was it, Mark Antony who said, many hundreds years ago, "Ladies and gentlemen, give me your ears?"

I ask you, not only open your ears, open up your mind. Think on this! This is something that's new to this Church.



It's something you need to understand. God does not give life, and He was not going to give man life inherent, instantaneously, if He was He could have created the man that way in the first place, couldn't He? That's the way He created angels. Why did God create man without it and then let him make a choice? How does God give life now? How does He? Man did not have life.

Now, let's look at the New Testament, and we'll see how God gives life today. Turn over into the eighth chapter of Romans. Now, you will notice verse 16, "**The Holy Spirit of God bears witness with our spirit,**" so there is a spirit in man. We have a spirit, and yet man is wholly mortal. Now, I'm coming to that a minute later. We are wholly mortal, but there is a spirit in us, and that spirit is not a part of us. It's just something in us. A man swallows a little tiny marble. That marble is not part of him, and we hope that it'll pass through or that the doctor will get it out some way because it doesn't belong there. But there is a spirit in man, and it does belong there. That's different.

But if you receive the spirit of man, on the Day of Pentecost Peter said, "**Repent and be baptized in Jesus Christ for the remission of sins,**" and that meant you repent and believe. And your baptism is a public demonstration of

your faith and belief. **“And you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”**

Now, if you receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, **“the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.”** We become the children of God when we have the Holy Spirit, but we are not immortal. We are still flesh and blood. We still have a temporary existence, but the spirit is an impregnation of immortal life. That’s all. We are begotten, not yet born, notice the very next verse here, and if we’re children, then heirs, heirs of God and of Christ, CHILDREN of God and His HEIRS of our Father. But you see, an heir doesn’t get his father’s estate until there is a death, usually in human life the death of the father. In this case, it was the death of Christ, and it really comes after our death or change, which is an instant death and resurrection. But we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ if we have the Spirit of God.

Now then, notice verse 11, **“But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken,”** that is make immortal, give life to your mortal body “by His Spirit that dwelleth in you,” and that shows a resurrection.

Now, if you **“have not the Spirit of God,”** verse nine, you’re **“none of His.”** You’re not a Christian. I don’t care how many churches you have your name on as a member. Just being a member doesn’t mean you’re Christ’s. You’re not Christ’s unless you have the Holy Spirit.

Now, if you have the Holy Spirit, let’s go a little bit further now in I Corinthians, the second chapter, now notice this, as man is made mortal, **“as it is written,”** as God made man of the dust of the ground, **“eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither has entered into the heart of man, the things (which) God has prepared for them which love Him.”** In other words, spiritual knowledge. Spiritual knowledge can’t enter your mind. **“But, God hath revealed”** these, that is spiritual truths, spiritual knowledge, **“unto us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.”** You can only receive spiritual knowledge through the Spirit of God. Now, man receives the knowledge of things through the eye, the ear, the sense of smell, taste and feel. You cannot receive knowledge of anything normally, any other way, just those five ways, five senses, no other.

## The Limitations of Man

Now stop and think about that. You are limited, and you can only see what is material or physical. You can only hear vibration, which is physical. You can only smell something that is physical, has a physical fragrance or odor. You can only taste physical things. It’s a physical sense. You can only hear, smell, taste anything. In other words, no knowledge can ever enter your mind except through the eye, the ear, the nose, the sense of taste or the sense of feel, and you are limited to physical, materialistic knowledge. Now, you are limited, and God created Adam in a manner that he was limited to physical materialistic knowledge, and he could not have other knowledge.

Now, let me just give you one other thing while I’m on it, right there. Look at the wonderful things man has created. They’re all physical and materialistic. Look at the troubles of man, and every bit of them are getting along with his neighbor or with God, and he can’t get along with God because the carnal mind is hostile against God, enmity against God – Romans 8, verse seven. And he is not subject to the law of God, which is love, neither indeed can be.

A natural mind is hostile against God. A natural mind is self-centered. It’s covetous. It wants everything for self. Toward others it’s competitive. It’s hostile. It wants to get from. It wants to take. In other words, it believes in “get.” Where God is love, and love is out flowing, and that’s the way of “give,” not “get.” Now, the law of God is the way of “give.” The other way is the way of “get.”

Now then, if we have the spirit added, I want you to notice, God reveals spiritual knowledge. You can’t see it. Eye has not seen. Ear has not heard. You don’t get it through the eye or the ear or smell or taste or feel. But, notice this, **“But God has revealed,”** spiritual things, **“by His spirit.”**

Now take verse 11, the next verse, but **“what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?”** Man has a spirit in him. It’s not man. It’s not part of man. It’s just something inside of him, and it came in him with his first breath. But it is a spirit. Now that spirit in man can’t see anything. Your brain sees through the eye. Your brain hears through the ear. Your brain smells through the nose and tastes through the mouth, and it feels through the sense of the nerves. So the spirit only imparts a power of intellect to a physical brain. Now, animals don’t



have that spirit. They have an automatic instinct. Humans don't have that instinct like animals do.

Did you ever see a little calf born? Inside of two or three minutes, certainly less than five, it's up on all four feet and knows how to walk right away. And it knows where to go. It goes for its dinner. And the old mother cow just stands there dumbly, stupidly waiting for the calf to come and get her dinner. And, in one case, I happened to see on a movie screen where the calf went to the wrong end and the mother just nodded the calf right back to the right end to get its dinner. But usually the calf knows exactly where to go.

Now, a human baby can't walk for one year. A human baby is helpless and has to be taught everything, and a human baby has to learn how to think, and it is motivated by its mind. Animals don't have minds. They just have a plain brain and instinct.

## The Human Spirit

The human spirit is a computer. All of the memory is stored up in the spirit not in the gray matter of the brain. In a computer, you program knowledge into the computer. The computer cannot give you anything back that hasn't been programmed into it. But you can program millions of pieces of knowledge into a computer, and it will give you whatever you want back instantly, with instant recall. Now the spirit is like that in man.

The body that comes up in the resurrection is not the body that died. The brain is buried, and it rots and decays and yet in the resurrection, you [will] know everything you did know. You [will] look like you did look. Why?

The spirit in man is like a mold. Now, the man that made the big fountain out front here, I saw that fountain when it was made. I believe it was plaster of Paris or whatever it was made of in the first place. Then they made molds of the various parts of it that were later welded together. And I was in the foundry where it was done. And the mold was just the same thing, but exactly opposite, so that when they poured the molten bronze into the mold, it came out exactly like the original.

Now, the spirit is like a mold, and, in the resurrection, the spirit will bring a new body, but it will put in that new body precisely the same knowledge, the same memory, the same

character, the same fingerprints, the same footprints that you had in this life, but it will be different matter. Of course, that's the resurrection to judgment, but if you're resurrected in the first resurrection, you will be composed wholly of spirit, but in the same identical form and shape because man is in the form and shape of God, but he's composed of different material.

## Man Made to Have Relationship with God

Now, man was made to have a relationship with God, and there are two differences between a man and an animal. An animal is not made to have a relationship with God. First, it is not in the form and shape of God. Secondly, it doesn't have a spirit, and God put a spirit in man, and that spirit needs another spirit – the Holy Spirit – and I just read you in Romans 8 where when we receive the spirit of God, it joins with our spirit, and it witnesses with our spirit that we are the children of God.

We're only half there if we are born with the one spirit, and every human that's ever been born was born with that one spirit, but you're only half there mentally. I say that the most ignorant men in this world are the ones with the most letters after their name, the most highly educated. Because all education in this world is materialistic education, and they have no spiritual knowledge at all, and all of our troubles and our discontent and all of the evils and sufferings come from a lack of spiritual knowledge and breaking spiritual laws – toward self, toward neighbor, toward God – because the law of God is love to God and loving neighbor as self. It means the right kind of self-love and self-concern, too, for that matter.

So if you have the Holy Spirit, now notice this: **“For what man knoweth the things of a man?”** I say a man is confined to physical, materialistic knowledge. What man could know that save the spirit of man which is in him? That spirit makes it possible for you to have this knowledge and give you instant recall and to be a thinking kind of a being. Animals are not. They can't think. They can't reason. They don't come to conclusions. They can't think creatively. Humans can. Humans have to learn slowly.

A child begins to walk after about one year. But listen, Satan begins to get to a child when he is two or three or five or six months old. And parents neglect their children until they are about six years old when they can send them

to school. Satan does not neglect your children! Satan gets after them when they are two or three months old or less, and by the time they are six or eight months old those children already have a selfish something instilled within them!

Well, let's go on with this. I only read half of this 11th verse. Now even so, **“even so the things of God,”** or spiritual knowledge, **“knoweth no man.”** No man has spiritual knowledge save the spirit of God or through and by the spirit of God. Because spiritual knowledge is revealed knowledge, revealed by the Holy Spirit being in your mind with your spirit. And you cannot comprehend spiritual knowledge or the law of God without the Holy Spirit.

### The World Blinded Today

We wonder why the world can't see these things. We wonder why when we are converted, we try to convert our friends and relatives, and they laugh at us. They think we're crazy. I'll show you why. Read verse 14, **“but the natural man,”** that's what they are, **“receive not the things of God.”** You try to give them those things. They won't receive them because **“they are foolishness unto them: neither can they know them,”** for these things are spiritually discerned. God has to reveal them through His spirit.

Now, Adam, the first thing he would have received, God wouldn't have given him immortal life right away. He would have given him the Spirit. He would have been BE-GOTTEN of God if he had taken of the Tree of Life. That's what he would have gotten first.

### The LOVE of God

Now, the next thing he would have received would have been LOVE. The love of God because love is the fulfilling of the Law and the Law is love. Now, read Romans 5:5, **“The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.”** The Holy Spirit gives you the love of God to fulfill that Law. You don't

have the love by natural birth to fulfill the Law of God. You can fulfill it to some extent by letter, but not in the spirit. You can't do it without the Holy Spirit of God.

Adam then would have first had knowledge, revealed knowledge of spiritual knowledge if he had taken of the Tree of Life. The next thing he would have had was the love to fulfill the Law of God once he had the knowledge of that Law and of that way of life.

Now, the next thing he would have received, if you will turn with me now to Galatians, Galatians two and beginning in verse 15, **“We know that a man is not justified,”**

verse 16, **“by the works of the law, but by the faith OF Jesus Christ.”**

Justification has to do with your past, that is, justify a guilty past by squaring it up and paying the penalty in your stead. It doesn't say your faith IN Christ. It's the faith OF Christ! That is given to you through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives you a divine faith you never had before. You don't work up that kind of faith. That is a gift of the Holy Spirit of

God, and the next thing Adam would have received would have been that kind of faith. It's the faith OF God, the faith OF Christ.

### God's Spirit of POWER

Now, the next thing that he would have received you find in Acts the first chapter, Acts the first chapter and in verse eight, where Jesus said to the disciples, after His resurrection they asked Him if the Kingdom of God would come immediately. He said, **“No, but you shall receive POWER after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you.”**

You will receive POWER. The Holy Spirit will give you the POWER to overcome, POWER to do what you have to do for God, POWER to follow what the Spirit of God gives you knowledge to do, what the love of God gives you the love to perform with, and what the faith in Christ gives you





to rely on Christ for guidance, for deliverance. You know, we need that, because many are the afflictions of the righteous. You are going to have many afflictions, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. You have to have a connection with God to get help to be delivered when you're in trouble.

## The Meaning of Pentecost

Now then, let's go a little further. All this has to do with Pentecost. You'll see why a little bit later. Now, Adam had to choose. One was the Tree of Life. He wouldn't have gotten it immediately, but he would have immediately had knowledge from God. He would have lived a different way. He would have taught his children a different way.

Oh, I think Satan would have still been there for a while until Adam himself had been made immortal and then Satan would have been put away. But in the meantime, Adam would have known how Satan was not neglecting his children when they were two or three months old, and he would have taught them, and he would have taught them so much, and he would have been in constant communion with God. And he would have had the help of God Himself in teaching his own children. You can have it, but DO you have it? You have to go after it. You have to ask for it. So the question is whether you do have it or not.

## Adam's Wrong Choice

But Adam made the other choice. Adam took to HIMSELF the knowledge. He didn't get the Holy Spirit to reveal God's spiritual knowledge. He took to himself knowledge, and the only knowledge he could take to himself was materialistic knowledge. He took to himself the knowledge of the way toward good or toward evil. He took to himself the knowledge of what IS good and what is evil, and he took to himself the knowledge of how to get it. And what he took to himself was self-centeredness. What he took to himself was vanity. What he took to himself was hostility toward

others. He rebelled against God, and he had a carnal mind that is hostile against God and is competitive against other people.

And instead of cooperating with other people and helping them, and they help us, we go in to fight one another, and one impedes the progress of another, and yet they say that competition is the way today. Oh, it's competition! – competition in sports, competition in business, competition in society, competition in government, in politics, in everything, competition in business, competition in EVERYTHING. He took to himself that knowledge, and HE CUT

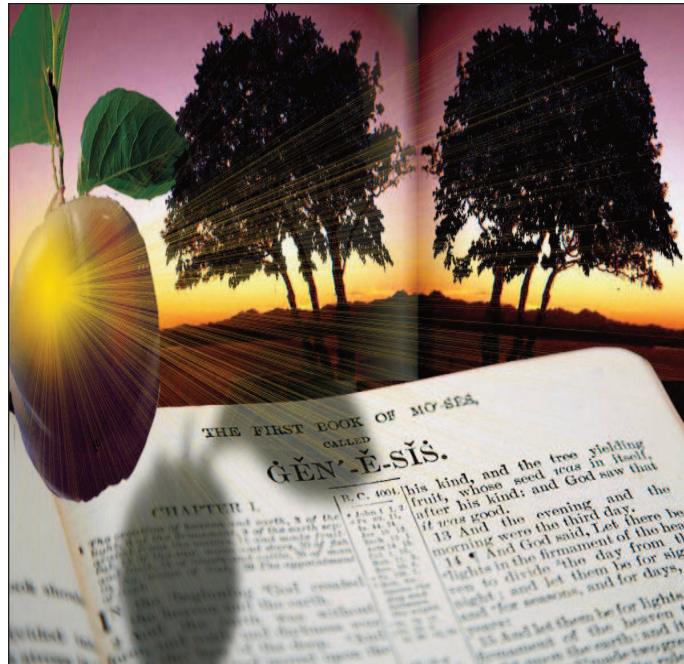
HIMSELF OFF FROM THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD! And so he PRODUCED KNOWLEDGE!

Now, in the 1960s the world's fund of knowledge was doubling ... and I mentioned this in (a) graduation ceremony that the university of today, the modern university, is a factory, and it is manufacturing knowledge. The purpose of a university is producing knowledge, but they only produce materialistic knowledge. They cannot

produce the knowledge of our troubles of how to solve our problems, our troubles, because those things are spiritual problems, and the knowledge that is required to solve them is spiritual knowledge. And men can't manufacture that kind of knowledge.

Adam started manufacturing knowledge humanly! And the world has been doing it ever since. Now, it never got to a knowledge explosion until in our time in this 20th Century. Vanity, it's looking to self-knowledge, self-love, vanity, coveting, hostile against God and hostile against neighbor. Romans 8:7, "**The carnal mind is hostile against God. It is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be.**" And, it's hostile to neighbor.

So, now what happened? When Adam made that choice, go back again to Genesis and in the third chapter of Genesis



and you find in verse 22, **“The Lord God said ... now, lest he,”** the man, **“put forth his hand, and take also of the Tree of Life, and eat, and live forever.”** Lest he gain immortal life going the way he is in the kind of knowledge production that will only bring on TROUBLES and HEARTACHES and SUFFERING and ANGUISH.

Lest he do that and live in unhappiness and wretchedness and suffering forever, **“therefore the Eternal God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden, to till the soil from whence he was taken ... he drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword”** that pointed every way **“to keep the way of the Tree of Life,”** lest man go back and gain immortal life, living the wrong way.

In other words, my brethren, God will not GIVE you IMMORTAL LIFE in suffering and unhappiness. God wants you to ENJOY eternal life. God is Love, and He loves you so much that if you’re going to bring suffering on yourself He’ll stamp you out! And you’ll finally become as if you’d never been. You’ll be ashes under the souls of our feet. If that’s the way you want it. You make your own choice!

But, God shut off the Holy Spirit from that time on. The Holy Spirit was shut up until the time of judgment. Now, God’s judgment, you have to understand, judgment is not just a sentencing and punishing. Anyway, God’s punishment is corrective, not revenge, and until the time of judgment.

Until others could have a chance like Adam did, to make a choice, God shut up the Holy Spirit of life. And right here is where so-called Christianity jumps the track. Life was shut up from human beings, and human beings only have a temporary existence, not life. They don’t have life until the time of the Second Adam, which is Christ, until Christ should come. And meanwhile, as you read back here in Hebrews 9:27, **“As it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment.”**

## Choices/Judgment

Adam did die, and it’s appointed to other men to die, but after that comes the judgment. Now, the judgment is a trial and test as to what choice you will make, and even if you make the decision to make the right choice, then you have to receive the knowledge of God and receive the love of

God and the faith of God and power from God. And you have to GROW in that knowledge, and the Spirit and grace, before you get immortal life because that is open to us today.

Judgment was on Adam. Life had been offered to Adam, but it was withdrawn when Adam made the wrong choice UNTIL the Second Adam, Jesus Christ. So it is that we read in I Corinthians 15, verse 22, “For as in Adam ALL die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” Now, death came by Adam, and in Adam all die, and it’s appointed to men once to die, but after that the judgment.

Christ came, the Second Adam, became a human being. He had to make the choice like Adam did. He chose to reject Satan. He chose to obey God. He kept the Law of God. He said, **“I have kept My Father’s commandments. I have set you an example that you should also keep God’s commandments.”** That’s what Christ said.

Christ Who never sinned, Who never brought a penalty of death on Himself, but Who is the one by whom God made all of us and was therefore our Maker, Christ paid the death penalty for us in our stead. So that if WE will now make the choice that brings judgment to US, but not to everybody, only to those that are called. Adam and universal sin as Adam’s children cut humans off from the Holy Spirit or from real life until the time of judgment, but through Christ judgment was opened to the Church.

Now, in I Peter four and verse 17, **“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God.”** That’s the Church of God. Judgment finally has begun. Judgment was cut off from man, and Adam was driven out of the Garden of Eden, and humanity has never had a chance of salvation. Ancient Israel was called. Ancient Israel was given the Law of God, but they were not given the Holy Spirit. They were not being judged. They did not have a chance for life. They were not given a chance to earn LIFE, and they never received any life. They still had a chemical, temporary existence.

## The Church of God Predestinated to Be Called First

Now, understand this, only certain ones that were predestinated are called first, called now. Ultimately, God will call everybody, but God has a plan the first man rejected. Now,



billions of people have lived and gone the wrong way. He wants to save all of those billions. God is not willing that ANY should die, but that all should come to repentance and immortal life, but God has a master plan for bringing that out.

The Church are called first, and they are the Firstfruits and today, or beginning tonight at sunset and tomorrow is the anniversary of the beginning of the Church and that is the FIRSTFRUITS, the first that God has called to have a chance of judgment. Judgment is on the Church or judgment must begin at the house of God.

But now I want you to notice in John 6:44, yes John 6:44 where Jesus said, **“NO MAN CAN COME TO ME, except the Father which (*hath*) sent Me draw him.”** God isn’t calling everybody. IT’S ONLY THE FIRSTFRUITS! And the Day of Pentecost was just the starting of the FIRSTFRUITS, not of salvation to everybody.

Now, there’s a reason why God couldn’t call everybody all at once, and a very, very good reason. Because we, just the same as Christ had to do, the same as Adam had to do and Adam failed, Christ succeeded, the Second Adam. We have to face Satan and overcome Satan! Just the same as Adam faced Satan, just the same as Christ did, we have to. So it is only those that are called by the Father.

Now, I want you to notice in Ephesians the first chapter, verses 11 and 12, speaking of Christ in verse 10, in verse 11, **“In whom also WE,”** in the Church, **“have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh ALL things after the counsel”** of His might **“that we should be to the praise of His glory, Who FIRST”** put our hope in Christ. The FIRSTFRUITS!

## PENTECOST/FIRSTFRUITS

The Day of Pentecost was the beginning of the FIRSTFRUITS, just the FIRST to be converted. It doesn’t mean that everybody is converted now. Only a few are called, and only those few have a chance, those who were predestinated. Now Adam and through Adam the world was cut off, but through Christ judgment was opened first to the Church. Now, let me show you a prophecy, it’s back in Joel, Joel the second chapter and verse 28, **“And it shall come,”** this is a prophecy, **“it shall come to pass after-**

**ward that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.”** Now the time of pouring out His Spirit to ALL flesh hasn’t come yet, but the time of pouring out His Spirit to just all that part of all flesh that is the Firstfruits had come on the Day of Pentecost. Because on that day, on the Day of Pentecost, Acts two, beginning with verse 15.

The Holy Spirit had come on that day of Pentecost, the first time the Holy Spirit came for a group of people, and the Holy Spirit came as a sound of a mighty rushing wind that they could hear! And the Holy Spirit came visibly like flames of fire of tongues, but in fiery tongues sitting on the head of each one of them, and they could see it and that was a terrible manifestation.

And a great crowd came running and gathering. And they began to speak with other languages so that everybody there from every country heard the whole 120 speaking in his language and understood what was being said. You don’t hear that kind of tongues speaking anymore. It never has happened before or since.

But Peter said on that day when many thousands came running in he said, **“These are not drunken, as you suppose, seeing that it is the third hour of the day,”** or about nine o’clock in the morning. **“But this is that was spoken of the Prophet Joel; ‘(and) it shall come to pass in the last days,’ saith God, ‘I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh.’”**

Now, this is only the Firstfruits of all flesh and a type of everybody that will have the Holy Spirit beginning in the Millenium and in the Great White Throne Judgment to follow, but let’s understand that. God called the Church out from this world. Now, the Church of the Old Testament had an existence and human existence started with Adam, but LIFE coming into human beings started with the Second Adam or Christ. Israel was a type of the Church, but Israel was physical, and the Church is spiritual begotten, and God gave the seven annual festivals to Israel, but they didn’t understand it. They didn’t know why.

When I first heard it, and for several years after that, I didn’t know why. I just knew that God said it was forever, and I was willing to obey. And so I kept all of these Feast Days and at least all of these Holy Days for some years until I found out the meaning, and when I did I found that

we are to keep more than just the Holy Days, but keep the Feast of Tabernacles seven days, which I did from that time on.

## Jesus Christ Came to Give Life

Now let me see, one other scripture I wanted to read here the 10th chapter of John and verse 10 where Jesus said, “**I am come that they might have LIFE, and that they might have it more abundantly.**” That’s why Jesus came in the likeness of the human flesh. Adam had not gotten life. Life had not been given to the people until that time, and Jesus came that we might have LIFE.

They didn’t have life. They only had a human existence, but the first thing you get with life before that immortal life is given to you is spiritual knowledge, then the love of God, then you receive the faith of Christ and then you receive power. And if you grow in grace and in knowledge, and you endure until the end, you shall then receive life eternal.

Now, we which are called now are going to sit with Christ on His throne. We are going to be given power over the nations. When Christ is coming He is coming to His Temple, and we are that Temple. We are going to rise and meet Him in the air. We are the affianced bride of Christ to marry Him.

We will be God beings and we, in the Church, and, of course, that begins back in the Church of the original apostles, and there are going to be many, many thousands. There are many thousands of us today. It will probably be, probably be even a few million. I don’t know, it isn’t going to be an awful lot.

But we will be God beings and it will be enough to do the real ruling of all that are left alive in the beginning of the Millennium, and at the end of that time there will be more, and we will be God beings and then there will be the resurrection to judgment of ALL WHO EVER LIVED!

Frankly, I wonder if that included Adam. I think maybe judgment in God’s form is a time of trial and test. Adam

had to make a decision, but living a time of trial and test over years of proving it by your performance. Adam didn’t, and it was taken away from Adam before he could live that long, and he had no chance of repentance because Christ hadn’t come. We have. It may be that even Adam will be in that resurrection to judgment at the end of the Millennium. It’s a wonderful thing.

## Feast Days Pictures God’s Master Plan of Salvation

Now, the Feast Days picture God’s plan. Of course, the first is the Passover, and the second is our coming out of sin.

The third is the receiving of the Holy Spirit, which gives you as I say the knowledge of God, the faith of Christ, the love of God to keep the Law, the love to fulfill the Law. All of those things and finally at the coming of Christ, eternal life. But we are the Firstfruits, and that’s the meaning of the Day of Pentecost that we will observe beginning at sunset tonight. I hope that makes it a little more clear to you than it ever has been to you before.



In the meantime, remember Christ is here, and God the Father is here, and our fellowship is with Them and with one another and what a wonderful fellowship it is, and to have the truth of God, a wonderful, wonderful thing.

Be sure and keep praying, praying for one another, praying for the Work and if you will praying for me because I need it. I need it constantly all the time. I was only able to come today because I pray and ask God for the strength and help to come, and He gave it to me, always does. And so I’ll need strength to go up there tomorrow, but God will give it, but you pray that He will, and He will and God be with all of you. Bye, bye for now.



It is with sorrow that we are compelled to edit out 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 130, Valley Springs, CA 95252, Phone # 209.772-0737. **Don Billingsley**





## Palestinian State Could Be Declared This September

**T**he noose is tightening around the embattled Jewish state of Israel, strangling the tiny country as it is caught in the swirling vortex of momentous events! Islamic extremists are on the verge of overthrowing well-established moderate Arab governments throughout the Middle East and Northern Africa.

Now, Israel faces the prospect of the United Nations, European Union and the Obama administration aggressively advancing the establishment of a Palestinian state – which Israelis fear could easily turn into a violent terrorist state dedicated to their country's destruction.

Pressure is mounting for such a state – which would be carved out of Israel and possibly include East Jerusalem as its capital – to be declared unilaterally and recognized by the UN General Assembly as sovereign this September.

This comes as U.S. President Barack Hussein Obama shifts away from America's historically strong alliance with Israel in favor of currying favor with oil-rich Muslim regimes, tipping the balance overwhelmingly against Israel. In a major speech on May 19 (the day before he was to meet with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu), Obama became the first U.S. president to ever call for Israel to revert to its borders prior to the Six Day War of 1967! Netanyahu called the move "indefensible."





White House photo

PRESIDENT OBAMA, JOSEPH BIDEN, MAHMOUD ABBAS

Israel's existing borders were established following that war in which Israel swiftly captured the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan, and the Golan Heights from Syria. About 60 percent of the West Bank remains under full Israeli control. More than 500,000 Israelis now live there.

**By calling for Israel to return to her pre-1967 borders, Obama aligned himself with radical Muslims still smarting from Israel's stunning defeat of Arab countries and seizure of strategic land buffering her from hostile neighbors four decades ago. Those same anti-Semitic forces have vowed to drive Israel into the sea and wipe the Jewish nation off the map.**

**Obama's speech was an insulting slap in Netanyahu's face and an affront to Jews throughout the world.**

In March 2009, Israel National News reported that an unnamed former high U.S. intelligence official warned the United States would abandon Israel in favor of the Arabs. **"This is just the beginning. Israel could be about to lose the support of the United States,"** INN quoted him as telling Douglas J. Hagmann, director of the Northeast Intelligence Network (NIN).

**"The Obama administration is no friend to Israel, is no friend to the Jews in America and is no friend to democracy or freedom in America,"** Hagmann said on Israel National Radio.

**"Just by his very appointments, we can see him filling positions of power with people who are anti-Semitic, who want to see Israel essentially dissolved as a nation, if not by**

diplomacy, then certainly by war. ... I have every reason to believe, based on what I've seen at my level of clearance over the last several years, that **Israel will soon be completely on (her) own ... or worse.**"

The latest push for a Palestinian state heightens fears among Israelis and supporters that such a state would be unilaterally created without negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis. In other words, a potentially hostile state would be forced on Israel in direct conflict with that Jewish state's best interests, jeopardizing her very existence!



NETANYAHU

Further threatening Israel's sovereignty was an announcement in Cairo in late April that the Fatah and Hamas factions of the Palestinians have reconciled to hold elections and form a transitional unity government that would head a Palestinian state if one is declared in September. Hamas is a terrorist organization bankrolled by Iran and Syria. Fatah dominates the Palestinian Authority that has negotiated with Israel.

"Fundamental differences persist between Hamas and Fatah, as underscored by their contradictory responses to Osama bin Laden's death this week," the *Christian Science Monitor* reported on May 4.

"Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh on Monday praised Osama Bin Laden as an Arab 'holy warrior,' and condemned the U.S. raid that killed him.

The Fatah-dominated PA welcomed his death, however, with Prime Minister Salam Fayyad saying he hoped it marked 'the beginning of the end for this dark era'."

After meeting with Middle East envoy Tony Blair on May 3, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called on Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas to cancel Fatah's Cairo agreement with Hamas, which he said was a major blow to the peace process. "How can one reach peace with a government half of which is calling for Israel's destruction and even praises arch-terrorist bin Laden?" asked Netanyahu, who said the Palestinian Authority needs to choose between peace with Israel or peace with Hamas.

"Peace with both is impossible because Hamas aspires to destroy the State of Israel and says so openly. It fires missiles at our cities. It fires anti-tank rockets at our children. I think that the very idea of this reconciliation shows the





weakness of the Palestinian Authority and causes one to wonder if Hamas will seize control of Judea and Samaria like it seized control of the Gaza Strip.”

The *Jerusalem Post* reported April 30 that Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak told UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon the agreement between the two Palestinian factions worries Israel, which wants a Hamas-Fatah government to recognize Israel’s right to exist, renounce terrorism and agree to honor previous agreements with Jerusalem, such as the 1993 Oslo Accords that require final borders be determined via negotiations, as opposed to unilateral actions.

Meanwhile, Israeli leaders are preparing to annex parts of the West Bank if the Palestinian Authority unilaterally declares a state in September with international backing. Annexation would enflame the Arabs. The *Jerusalem Post* reported April 26 that National Infrastructures Minister Uzi Landau said he was going to suggest the Israeli government extend its sovereignty over the Jordan Valley and highly populated areas of Judea and Samaria.

Knesset member Danny Danon of the Likud Party noted that Israeli Prime Ministers Levi Eshkol and Menachem Begin annexed Eastern Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, respectively. Danon said he hopes threat of annexation could help Netanyahu persuade European leaders to stop the United Nations from voting on Palestinian statehood at the UN General Assembly in September.

Netanyahu traveled to Paris and London in early May to continue efforts to avert European support for a Palestinian initiative to seek statehood in the UN, meeting with French President Nicolas Sarkozy and British Prime Minister David Cameron.

European members of the Quartet reportedly were pushing for an Israeli-Palestinian peace deal to be based on pre-1967 armistice lines, rolling back Israel’s gains from the 1967 Middle East war. France said European nations were considering unilateral recognition of a Palestinian state. Several Latin American countries already have endorsed it.

The *Los Angeles Times* reported in mid-April that American and European diplomats warned Netanyahu if he fails to present a new peace initiative soon, the Quartet – com-

posed of the United Nations, the United States, the European Union and Russia – ***might be compelled to recognize a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital.***

The *Jerusalem Post* reported April 24 that the European Union is divided over UN recognition of a Palestinian state. While France strongly supports it, German Chancellor Angela Merkel encouraged Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas not to seek unilateral recognition and opposed a UN resolution recognizing a Palestinian State.

“Europe is turning into the major battleground over the issue, since – according to Israeli officials – the Palestinians know that for a resolution in the UN General Assembly to have any significance, it would have to be backed not only by the Islamic and developing countries that regularly give it an automatic majority in the Assembly, but also by the moral authority of the world’s democratic countries,” the *Jerusalem Post* reported.

At a recent meeting in Brussels, Palestinian Prime Minister Fayyad requested nearly \$5 billion from the United Nations, European Union, International Monetary Fund and World Bank to launch a Palestinian state.

Martin Indyk, former U.S. ambassador to Israel and adviser to recently resigned U.S. Middle East envoy George Mitchell, told

the *Jerusalem Post* if no changes are made between now and September, ***the UN will declare a Palestinian state, “just like the UN recognized Israel in 1948.” Were that to occur, Israel could be considered an occupier of a UN-member country,*** Indyk said. The U.S. does not have veto power in the UN General Assembly.

Netanyahu is expected to lay out his vision for Middle East peace when he addresses a rare joint session of the U.S. Congress in late May. Prior to the Passover season, he told the AFP news agency that Israel will not compromise on recognition of a Jewish state nor national security alongside a future Palestinian state. He insisted Israel maintain a military presence along the West Bank’s border with Jordan under any peace deal, a term rejected by the Palestinians.

“Why don’t the Palestinians do something so simple as recognizing the Jewish state? After all, we are prepared to recognize a Palestinian state. Why can’t they reciprocate if



they really want peace?" he asked. "This explains the root cause of why you don't have peace. ... The Palestinians think: Why should we negotiate? We can get a free pass from the international community. We can avoid negotiations and pin the blame on Israel."

These latest major developments in the Middle East underscore the fact that momentous Bible prophecies are accelerating at breath-taking pace. ***Losing U.S. guarantee of her national security and under intense international pressure to give up territory, the Jewish state of Israel is facing the most dangerous threat to her existence since securing independence in 1948!*** Should radical Muslims seize control of moderate Arab countries and western democracies turn against Israel, her doom could very well be sealed.

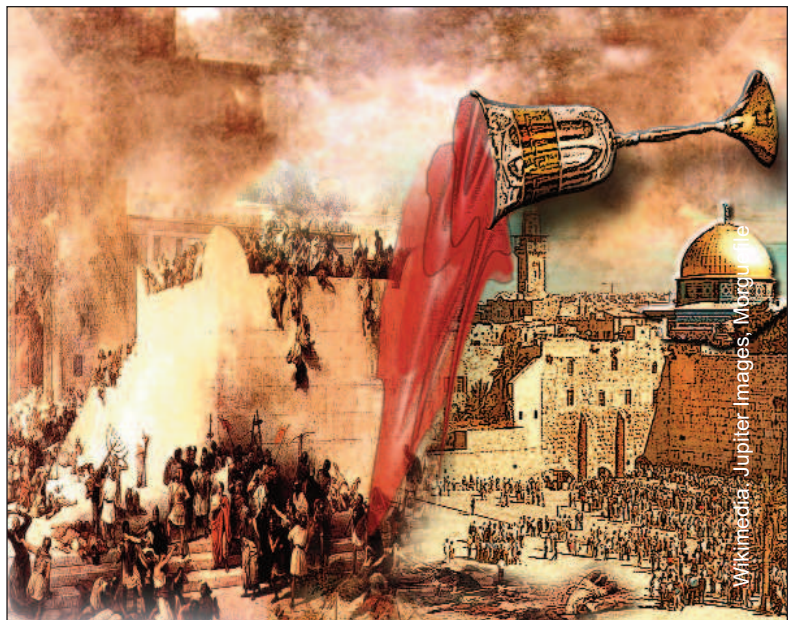
**The Holy Bible shows conditions will deteriorate in the Middle East so terribly that international troops will intervene under the guise of ensuring peace, but such military action will be at the expense of the Jewish people, who will turn to animal sacrifices in a desperate appeal for divine deliverance as they once again face extermination and betrayal by friends and foes alike.**

Jesus Christ warned in Luke 21:20-24: "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. ... For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. ... For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."

The Bible also shows these armies will be dominated by European troops that will invade the region under the autocratic rule of a resurrected modern Roman Empire and impose what Christ called "the abomination of desolation" on Jerusalem. This massive Gentile military force "will tread the holy city underfoot for 42 months. (Revelation 11:2)."

The Prophet Zechariah foretold: "Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, and your spoil will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city (Zechariah 14:1-2)."

Could the half of Jerusalem that goes into captivity be the Jewish portion while the Palestinian half is spared as Euro-



pean troops ruthlessly crush any Jewish military resistance, just as Roman troops slaughtered Jews inhabiting Jerusalem in 70 A.D.? History repeats itself, and duality runs throughout Bible prophecies. As Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong used to repeatedly warn: Watch the Middle East in general, and Jerusalem in particular!

Zechariah also warned: "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness (or reeling) to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples ... all nations of the earth are gathered against it (Zechariah 12:2-3)."

The Old Testament prophet indicates the Jewish people will not be conquered without a valiant fight. "In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a firepan in the woodpile, and like a fiery torch in the sheaves; they shall devour all the surrounding peoples on the right hand and on the left ... (verse 6)." But the overwhelmingly superior international military force will bulldoze them.

Indications are that what is now developing in the Middle East as the tide turns against the Jewish state of Israel ultimately will lead to another Holocaust of unthinkable brutality against the Jewish people!

As this Work has proclaimed for decades and as Jesus Christ warned: "Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near. ... So you, likewise, when you see these things happening, know that the Kingdom of God is near! (Luke 21:28, 31)"

— Mark Mendiola





**CHURCH OF GOD – FAITHFUL FLOCK**  
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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](http://www.cog-ff.com)

**Watchman for the House of Israel**  
[www.ezekielwatchman.org](http://www.ezekielwatchman.org)

**World News Bulletin**  
[www.worldnewsbulletin.com](http://www.worldnewsbulletin.com)

**Lost 10 Tribes of Israel**  
[www.losttribes.org](http://www.losttribes.org)

**The Ten Commandments**  
[www.10commandments.ws](http://www.10commandments.ws)

**Prophetic Events**  
[www.propheticevents.us](http://www.propheticevents.us)

**What Do You Mean Born Again?**  
[www.begotten.net](http://www.begotten.net)

**Restored Truths of God**  
[www.restoredtruths.net](http://www.restoredtruths.net)

**Pagan Holidays or God's Holy Days?**  
[www.holy-days.org](http://www.holy-days.org)

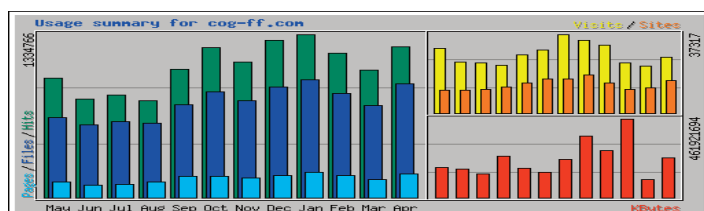
**Which Day is the Christian Sabbath?**  
[www.sabbathcentral.com](http://www.sabbathcentral.com)

**Herbert W. Armstrong – Apostle of God**  
[www.herbertarmstrong.net](http://www.herbertarmstrong.net)

**COGFF – Home School Association**  
[www.coghomeschool.org](http://www.coghomeschool.org)

**Herbert W. Armstrong – His Life & Work**  
[www.herbertwarmstrong.info](http://www.herbertwarmstrong.info)

**An Open Letter to the Scattered Flock**  
[www.bodyofchristonline.us](http://www.bodyofchristonline.us)



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