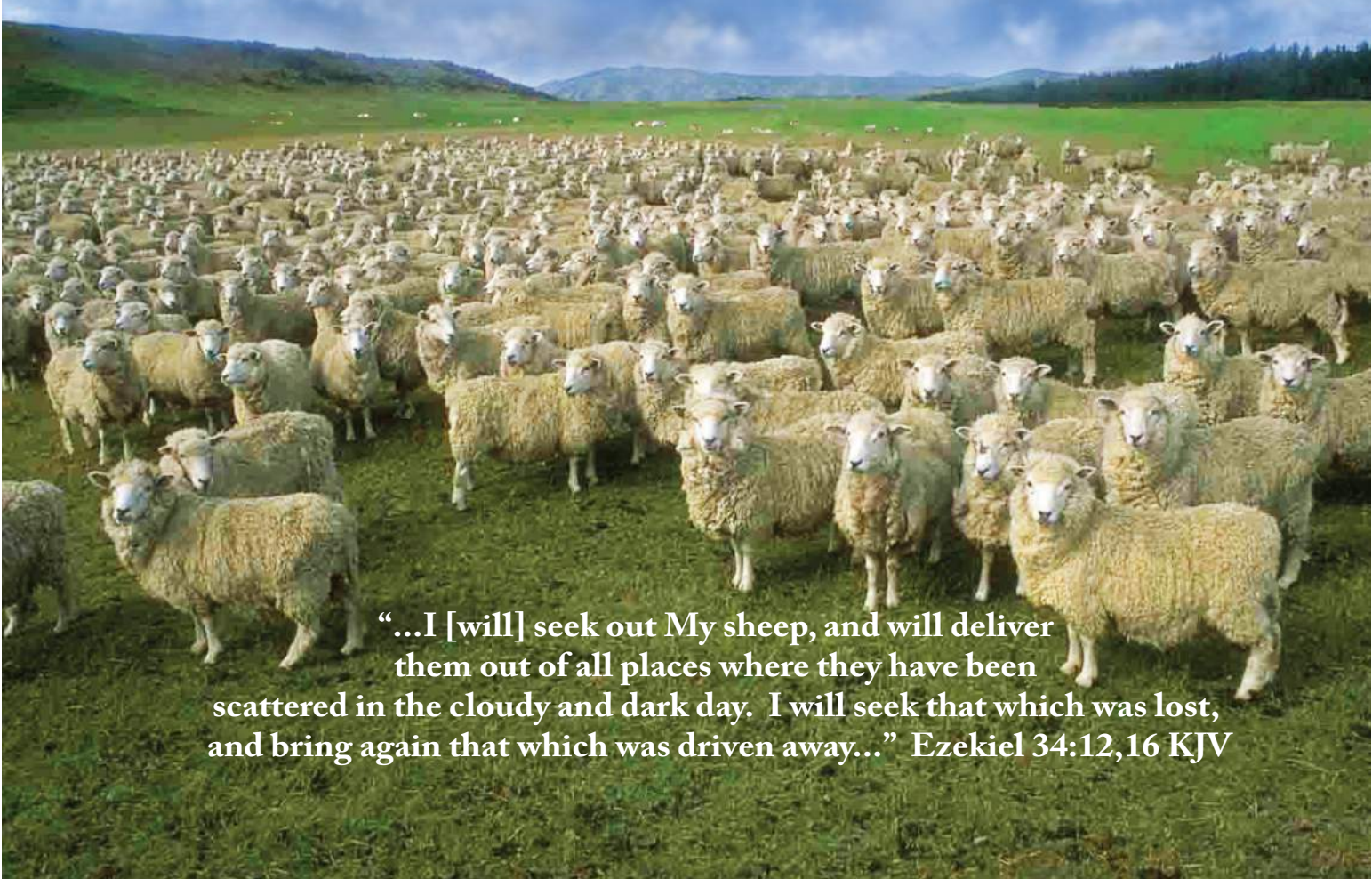


The _____ Philadelphia Remnant

April/May/June 2017



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



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

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Cover: The flock of sheep pictured on the cover of this magazine represent the scattered brethren of God's True Church. (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 in which Jesus Christ used Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong during his life-time mission reaching out to people worldwide with the message of the soon-coming Kingdom of God through his preserved recorded writings.



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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Alton B. 'Don' Billingsley

DESIGN/LAYOUT

Steve Serfontein

WRITERS

Alton B. 'Don' Billingsley
Steve Serfontein
Duane Miller
Lawrence J. Burns

PHOTOS/GRAPHICS

Steve Serfontein

PROOFING

Peggy Billingsley
Elizabeth Serfontein
Marie Duncan

TRANSCRIBER

Melissa Nash

COVER, WEB GRAPHICS

Jason Busa
Frank Olive
Steve Serfontein

PUBLISHER

Alton B. 'Don' Billingsley

CIRCULATION/BUSINESS MANAGER

Joseph Duncan

SECRETARY

Lawrence J. Burns

Published by
Church of God Faithful Flock
P.O. Box 130
Valley Springs, CA 95252
www.cog-ff.com

WHY THE FIRSTFRUITS - PENTECOST



Mr. Herbert W Armstrong
Pentecost - 26 May 1985

It's a book about law. And "law" simply means the rules of human conduct. The rules of human performance and conduct, and especially in relation to others: first of all in relation to God our Creator, and secondly in relation to our neighbors. That's what law is. The churches today are afraid of law. They say that the law was nailed to the cross. But it was the law that nailed Jesus to the cross for us, to pay our penalty in our stead.

But WHY? Why the Feast of Firstfruits? Why is this Church the firstfruits of God's harvest for His Kingdom? Is God unfair? Is He discriminating against others, to choose us first (and they have to wait and come later)? Brethren, I want to say to you, I think that most of you don't understand that AT ALL. I think that most of you think that it merely means that God chose us to get into the Kingdom first, and then they'll come in later. THAT IS NOT THE ANSWER AT ALL! And I perceive that even our ministers, when they preach, take it for granted that the whole goal is to get us into the Kingdom of God; and that's all we are called for now. For no

Greetings everybody. Well, brethren, today once again as it happens annually we come to the Feast of Firstfruits. It is generally called the Feast of Pentecost. That's because in the New Testament it was a matter of counting 50 days from the Passover time—the Sunday in the midst of the Passover time, beginning with that Sunday. And it was a matter of also 7 weeks. So originally it was given to God's people, ancient Israel, as the Feast of Weeks; but generally it was called the Feast of Firstfruits. And it is the time celebrating THE FIRSTFRUITS of God's reaping of His harvest for His Kingdom.

Now, WHY? Why is it the firstfruits? Why is the Church today the firstfruits? Now I remember very well, when I was five years old, I was always wanting to know "Why?" And I was asking my father so many what-he-called "tom fool"

questions about why this and why that. I wanted to understand it. I always wanted understanding. He said that someday I would be a Philadelphia lawyer.

And, indeed, so I am—because the greatest Law Book in all the world, as I told some of the professors in the law school down at the University of Southern California, is a book that I doubted whether they had a copy in their Law Library or not; and yet it is the greatest book on law of any that has ever been written. And it talks about law from the very beginning, in the second chapter, all the way through the book up to the very last chapter; and it's one of the largest books ever written—THE HOLY BIBLE.

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other purpose, but we'll get in ahead of the others. Then God is DISCRIMINATING against the others.

There is A REASON why we are the firstfruits. And I wish I could drive that home, but I fear that most of you just don't get it. You don't understand it at all. WHY? Why are we the firstfruits? I am going to try to make it plain this afternoon, and still I think you won't get it. So much Protestantism has rubbed off on us we can't get it out of our heads. They think God is trying to save the whole world; and then we think, "Well, He's just saving us first." And that is not the answer at all. We're not saved just because God wants us to be His favorites and get us into His Kingdom ahead of others. We are saved for a very, very great purpose. We are the firstfruits of God's harvest for His Kingdom.

WHO AND WHAT IS GOD?

Now, what is the Kingdom of God? We read in the very first verse in all the Bible, **"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."** But Moses wrote that in the Hebrew language; and the word he used for "God" was Elohim, in the Hebrew language. And Elohim happens to be a plural name, meaning more than one person. God is NOT one person. God is a Family of persons. Why did God say...In fact, it wasn't just God as a person; but THE FAMILY said, **"Let US make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness." (Verse 26.)**

The God Family said that, not a God person. Not one person. He would have said, "Let ME make man after My image; but God said, **"Let US."**

Now, WHO and WHAT is God? That's a great mystery! Most people don't understand it. That'll be chapter 1 in the new book that has just been completed. It's now turned over to the printers. As fast as they can get it out, it will be out. At least there will be a copy for all of you at the Feast of Tabernacles, if not sooner. The greatest mystery—WHO and WHAT is God?

Do you know that no religion on Earth knows who and what God is? Tell me what religion knows who and what God is—except God's own Church. You should know, brethren. We should know, we who are here, because God reveals it Himself in His Word, if we understand His Word. But the churches called "traditional Christianity" don't understand God's Word. I used to think they get their religion out of the Bible. When my wife began keeping the Sabbath, I said, "Well, the Bible says 'Thou shall observe Sunday.'" She said, "How do you know? Have you seen it there?" I said, "Well, no. I don't know much about the Bible." Well, that was about 59 years ago, and I didn't know very much about the Bible then. I know a little something about it

I said, "I know because all the churches observe Sunday; and they get their religion out of the Bible, don't they?" And she said, "Well, do they?" "Why, yes, everybody knows the churches get their religion out of the Bible. That's their source of religion." So I began to study. I began to look into the Bible. And I began to find out that they're believing today just exactly the opposite of what the Bible says. The Bible IS God speaking.

Now, we find God describes Himself. Very few people know who or what God is. As I say, no religion knows. Well, God reveals Himself. Now, I quoted **Genesis 1:1**. Let's quote **John 1, verse 1**. **"In the beginning"**—again, the same words; but instead of **"In the beginning [Elohim] created"** this (**John 1:1**) says:

John 1:1, 3 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... All things were made by him. In other words, He created the universe.

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us [and became Jesus Christ]. So Jesus Christ was with God, and He was God. But He gave up His divinity, His great glory as God, and became a human being—more than 1950 years ago. Nearly 2000 years ago now. But it said:

John 1:4 In him was life. He lived, and God lived. God is one person. The Word, who

became Jesus, is another person. And it was GOD who said to the Word (who became Jesus): **Genesis 1:26** o “**Let US make man in OUR image.**”

God said that to Jesus. Jesus is the Word, the Spokesman, the One who speaks. He is the revelatory thought of God—who REVEALS God’s thinking, who REVEALS the mind of God, who SPEAKS for God, and who AGREES COMPLETELY with God. And They are ONE precisely in belief. They are NOT contrary the one to the other. They are 100% in agreement. Two cannot walk together except they be agreed.

Now God and Jesus Christ had existed FOREVER. There never was a time when They began to live and to exist. It says of Jesus Himself, in the book of Hebrews, that He was:

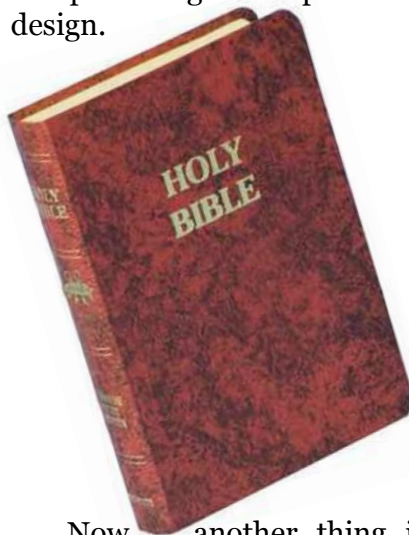
Hebrews 7:3 “**Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but...**” [has been a High Priest continually, forever; and still is.]

HOW GOD LIVED

But They LIVED. Now, if They lived, what did They do? Well, They were Creators. There are a few little things the Bible does reveal that would apply to Them. Jesus became the Son of God when He was born of a human virgin. Prior to that time, He was one with God; but He was not a Son of God. But

He became God’s Son when He was born as a human.

And Jesus said, when He was on Earth, that He worked; and He said, “**My Father works.**” So They were occupied, and They were busy. They had something to do, and what They did was creating. To create you first have to plan, and devise, and design. So They thought it out. They designed what would be created. They planned it, and They worked according to the pre-thought-out plan and design.



Now, another thing is revealed in the Bible: “**Two cannot walk together except they be agreed.**” Well, They agreed perfectly! First let me answer, “How did they live?” They live THE WAY OF LOVE. When Jesus was being baptized, God the Father looked down and said, “**You are MY BELOVED Son.**” He loved the Son, in whom He was well pleased. Jesus said He LOVED the Father; and He obeyed the Father, and kept His Father’s commandments.

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So they were in perfect harmony. They had harmony. They were together.

There’s another thing about two people. Two cannot walk together except they be agreed. But two cannot get along together except one is the boss. God made a man and a woman, and He made the man to be the leader over his wife. Women don’t like that very well. At least, some of them don’t. A woman says, “I want my marriage,” as she’s going to the marriage altar, “I don’t want to promise to obey my husband. Our marriage is going to be 50/50.”

Well, that makes me think of the old judge over in Glade-water, who drew up the first contract of the property deal that purchased the Big Sandy property for us, and our college campus over there.

He said that he settled this matter about who would be the boss on the day of his marriage. He said, “On the day we were married, I laid down the law to my wife. And I told her that I would be the boss. And I wanted that understood from the beginning. I said, ‘Now, as the boss, I would allow her to make any little unimportant decisions; but any of the important decisions I would make.’” Now, he says, “That has worked out very well all through these years. No important decisions have ever arisen, or problems.” [Laughter.] I’m afraid that’s the way it is in so many marriages.

Anyway, there has to be leadership. There has to be a way of life. Now, a way of life and rules regulating a way of life simply become a law. And a law is the foundation and the basis of government. And a government is merely the code, or based on a law. And the law is merely the rules of conduct. And the government merely is the administration of the regulation of that law governing conduct. And so that becomes a government.

And so GOD and THE WORD were in authority over Their whole Creation. And there was government because God was the head. It is stated in the Bible that there is one Lawgiver, and that is God the Father. And Jesus obeyed His Father's commands.

He said, **"I have kept My Father's commandments."** He said, though He was the Word of God (the Spokesman), He said, **"I have spoken nothing of Myself. The Father which sent Me gave Me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak."** He didn't come just alone, of His own accord. The Father sent Him. But He willingly came. He did that of His own accord, after His Father sent Him.

ANGELS WERE CREATED

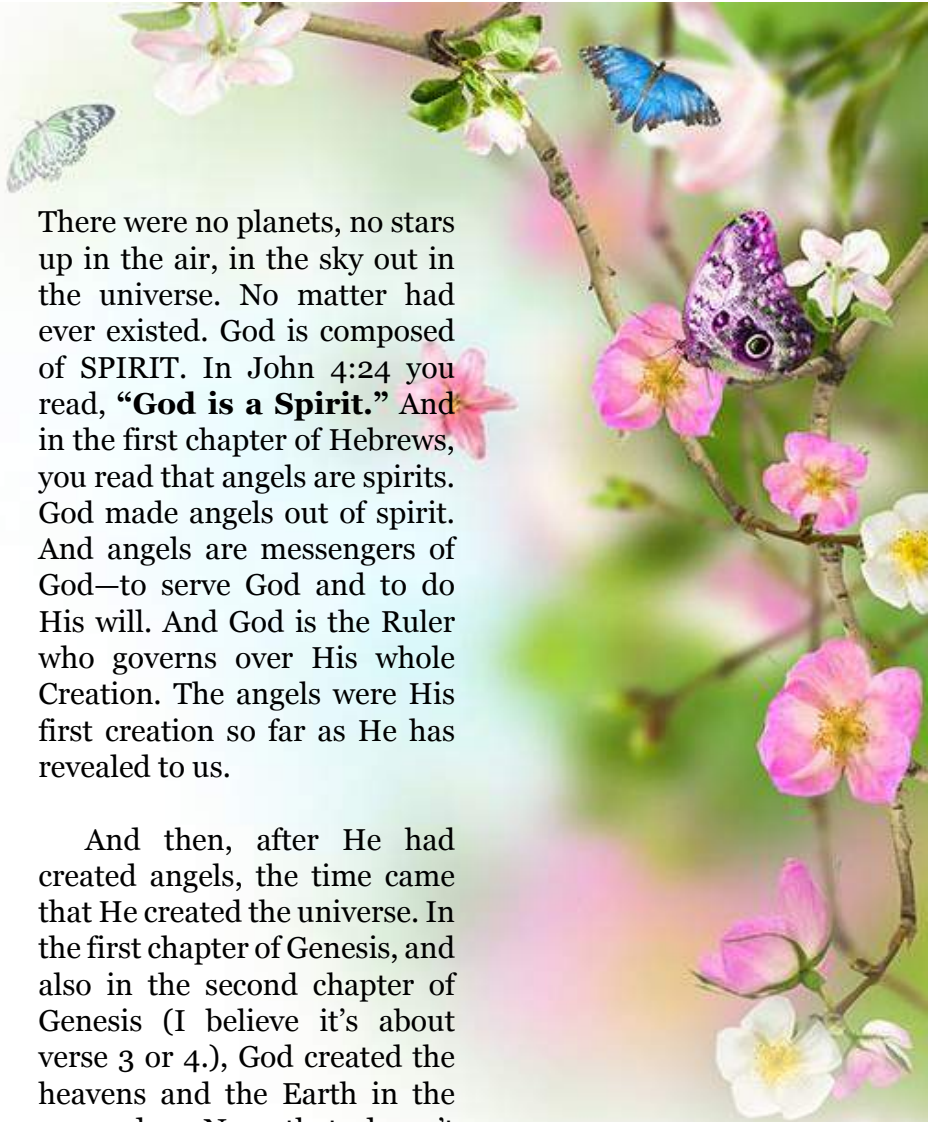
Now, first of all, They created. And the first thing They created was angels. There was no Earth. There was no sun.

There were no planets, no stars up in the air, in the sky out in the universe. No matter had ever existed. God is composed of SPIRIT. In John 4:24 you read, **"God is a Spirit."** And in the first chapter of Hebrews, you read that angels are spirits. God made angels out of spirit. And angels are messengers of God—to serve God and to do His will. And God is the Ruler who governs over His whole Creation. The angels were His first creation so far as He has revealed to us.

And then, after He had created angels, the time came that He created the universe. In the first chapter of Genesis, and also in the second chapter of Genesis (I believe it's about verse 3 or 4.), God created the heavens and the Earth in the same day. Now that doesn't mean twenty-four hour day. But in the day that He created them both—in other words, the general area of time—He created the heavens and the Earth all at the one time.

When He created the Earth, the angels were already here. The angels were shouting for joy and singing when God laid the foundations of the Earth, and first created the Earth.

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Now, at the same time, He created the whole universe. And He put angels on this Earth. That was their first abode.

And He put one super arch-angel...There are three kinds of angels revealed in the Bible: ordinary angels, and they look like humans; but they are composed of spirit. They don't have wings. Then there's another kind of angels (we don't read too much about them in the Bible) called seraphs, or seraphim. They do have wings. And then above them all, with greater power and superior minds,



were the cherubs [or cherubim]. And only three of them are mentioned in the Bible. If God created more, He hasn't revealed it to us. One of them was Lucifer. The other two are Michael and Gabriel.

But He placed Lucifer on a throne on this Earth. Now, a throne means ruler over government. And it was God's government, and the government is ruled by God's law. And God's law is summed up in one word: LOVE. But it is out-flowing love—flowing out from God towards others. God is the great Giver. It's the way of giving, the way of serving. Jesus came as a servant, not just as a lord and master. He was a Lord and Master. He says, "You call Me Master and Lord; and...so I am" And yet He came as a servant, and He washed His disciples feet even. That was the lowly duty of a servant. But this Lucifer had to build character. There's one thing God cannot create by automatic, instantaneous, fiat; and that is CHARACTER.

and you ask what does God look like? If you have seen Me, you have seen the Father. He looks like Me."

Now, what did Jesus look like? Like any other man! Otherwise, why did the Pharisees and the high priests and the rest of them pay Judas 30 pieces of silver to point Him out, which one He was, so they could take Him? He looked like any other young Jew of His time, between 30 and 33 years of age. Between 30 and 34, and He looked like any other human being. So God has the same form and shape as we do.

WHAT GOD LOOKS LIKE:

Now, let's get back to God Himself for just a minute. What is God, above all things? I say no one seems to know who and what God is. Well, God—They are two persons. They are formed and shaped exactly as we are, because God made us in Their image. And Jesus was God, and He looked like any other human being. Someone asked Him, "**Show us God the Father. What does God look like?**" "**And He said, "Well, have you been so long time with Me,**

THE CHARACTER AND GOVERNMENT OF GOD

But, now, these angels had free moral agency. They had to make a decision. Again, what is God? God, above all, is SUPREME RIGHTEOUS PERFECT SPIRITUAL CHARACTER. Character is doing

what is right, and what has a right result—and rejecting what is wrong, and will have a wrong result. Even though you might want to do the wrong, it is resisting it and doing only the right. So there are different ways of living, different ways of going, different ways of conducting yourself.

God's government is simply the rules of His way of living, the way He and the Word had ALWAYS lived; and that was the way of love. They loved one another, and Jesus served His Father. It's the way of serving, the way of giving, the way of cooperating, of helping one another. Not the way of taking away from one another. Not the way of competition or strife. Not the way of jealousy, and envy, and retribution, and hostility.

God put this super archangel, Lucifer, on the throne to rule the government ACCORDING TO THE LAW OF GOD—and THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD—that was placed on this Earth. Lucifer rebelled! And he became an adversary of God. Now, his name became Satan; and Satan means adversary—an enemy, an adversary. He became hostile. He became jealous of God. He became envious. He became resentful. And then he said that he would rise up, with his angels, and pull off a coup; and throw God off the throne. He would take over in God's place and rule the whole universe! He wanted to head the government of the whole universe.

And he refused to administer the government of God on this Earth, the government that was based on law; and the law was love. But he turned to the opposite way of life {2}. He turned instead of construction to destruction. Instead of love, he turned to hate, and jealousy, and envy, and competition.

Then God said, ***“Let US make man in OUR IMAGE.” (Genesis 1:12)*** And so: ***Genesis 2:7 The [Eternal] God formed man of the dust of the ground, [Now He took the dust of the ground, and He formed a man; but there was no life in him. He was just a hunk of dirt, but formed in the shape of a human being. Then...] God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.***

MAN BECAME A LIVING SOUL

The Hebrew word is “nephesh,” for soul. And three times in the first chapter of Genesis the land animals, 4-legged animals, are called “nephesh.” But the translators—believing that man was an immortal soul, which is not true; because they don't believe the Word of God, and they think that a soul can't die, that a soul is immortal—the word “nephesh” they translated into creature. That is, “living creatures” when it comes to animals. It's the same word, nephesh, however. ***“God formed man of the dust of the ground . . . and man became a living [nephesh],”*** same as animals.



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Now, nephesh or soul means “the life of animals.”

The man was not a soul until God breathed the breath of life into him. He was just a hunk of dirt with a certain form and shape. But when he came into consciousness and life and the breathe of air, he became a living soul. NOT AN IMMORTAL SOUL! Now, of that soul, God said, **“If you take of the forbidden fruit of the tree that I forbid you to take of, YOU WILL SURELY DIE!** That soul would die!

Satan came along, confronted mother Eve, and he said, **“Oh, you won’t surely die. God knows better than that. You are an immortal soul.”** And Eve believed him. Adam seemed to believe it.

And their children have been believing it ever since. They still believe we are immortal souls.

God speaks through the Bible. Jesus is the Word of God. The Bible is the same Word of God in writing, exactly the same Word that Jesus spoke; and Jesus is the author of the Bible. And Jesus speaks only what God the Father tells Him to speak, so it is still is the Word of God the Father as well as of Christ.

Adam had to make a choice. Why? Because God said, **“Let Us make man in Our image.”** And what is God’s image? It is PERFECT SPIRITUAL CHARACTER. And that meant character, and God cannot CREATE character

automatically. That cannot be done. That requires the decision and even the effort of the created being in whom the character will be formed.

Now, God wanted this Adam to have character, but He didn’t give him immortal life. He didn’t make him immortal. He made him of the dust of the ground and gave him a temporary chemical existence through the breath of air; and it was supported by food, or fuel you might say. By food and water that came from the ground, and he came from the ground. Incidentally, his wife Eve did not come from the ground. God performed an operation, put Adam into a deep sleep they call anesthesia in the hospitals today; and God performed an operation, and cut out one of Adam’s ribs and formed a woman out of that. So the woman came from the man, not from the dust of the ground. The man came from the dust of the ground. The woman came from the man.

INCREASING THE FAMILY

And then they two became one, just like Jesus (or, the Word) and God became ONE GOD. One God Family! And God is a Family! Now, THE GOD FAMILY said, **“Let US make man in OUR image.”** And He wanted man to become a family, but ultimately he’s to become THE GOD FAMILY. And so God said to Adam and Eve:



Genesis 1:28 “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. Now, Adam alone couldn’t do that. That’s why God had to make a wife for him, because a man can’t have children all by himself. But the two together could, and so they began to reproduce themselves. GOD IS REPRODUCING HIMSELF.

When the angels sinned, God saw that no one but God could be depended upon to rule with the law of God, with love, and never deviate from it. That’s why He said “**We’ll create man in Our image.**” In other words, ultimately after God’s character. And once man has been finally created in the character of God, you read in **1 John 3:9**, that when we reach that state and we become BORN OF GOD, we’ll be composed of Spirit; and it will be impossible for us to commit sin.

In other words, to do any wrong. We will simply live the way of God’s law, the way of love, the way of giving and sharing and cooperating and helping. And it will be IMPOSSIBLE for us to live any other way, because we will have decided not to live any other way; and God will simply give us the power to not do contrary to what we have decided. So it’ll just be impossible.

It’s impossible for God to sin. And once we are born of God, it will be impossible for us to sin. But it wasn’t impossible for Adam, because he was not born of God yet. He was only

created as a flesh and blood being, made out of the dust of the ground. He had a temporary chemical existence.

THE HUMAN SPIRIT AND GOD’S SPIRIT

Now, there were two trees in the garden. If Adam had taken of the Tree of Life, he would then have received the Spirit of God. There’s one thing I want to mention right there. When God created the human being out of the dust of the ground, He put something in him that He did not put in the animals. They are nephesh, and man was nephesh; but there is one difference. In the man, He put a spirit with his brain. It is a human spirit, not a divine Spirit. Not an angel spirit, a human spirit.

Now the human spirit, of necessity, is a self-centered spirit. But, nevertheless, it is SPIRIT. And the spirit in man empowers the human brain with intellect so that he can think. Now animals don’t have that spirit, and animals can’t think. They can’t reason. They can’t philosophize. They can’t analyze things and come to conclusions. They can’t exert wisdom and judgment. They have no concern for art, and literature, and music. But man, having a spirit with his physical brain, does appreciate all those things. And man can

think. At least, he thinks he can think. But most of them don’t think very soundly.

Now, the man was incomplete. He was physically incomplete. He needed a wife. So God performed an operation, and made a wife for him. But now he was still mentally and spiritually incomplete. He had one human spirit, but that human spirit didn’t give him his life. It was the breath he breathed that gave him his life, with circulated blood; and the blood is the life, oxidized by the breath of air in the lungs (as the blood flows through the lungs, on the way back to the heart again).

The man was mortal. He had a temporary existence, like a clock wound up that will run down and it will stop when it runs down. But man was incomplete. He had a spirit that gave him an intelligence that animals don’t have, gave him a mind that animals don’t have.

But to come to have the perfect mind and spiritual character, he needed the mind of God. If he had taken of the Tree of Life, that would have connected him with God. And then he would have had a direct contact with God, and the Spirit of God would have come into him. That is THE MIND OF GOD. That is THE LIFE OF GOD. And that would have impregnated him with GOD LIFE. That would have opened his mind, like the Mind of God, to comprehend spiritual truths that God could reveal.

Now without the Spirit of God, he couldn't understand spiritual truths, only physical things. That's why the great scientists, who do not have the Spirit of God, cannot understand spiritual knowledge. It is foolishness to them. They can understand only what they can see, taste, feel, smell, or hear—the five senses. So they just deny there is anything else. And that, of all things, is ignorance! So the most intellectual, with the largest number of PhDs and other letters after their names, are of all men most ignorant; because they don't have the Spirit of God and they can have no spiritual knowledge. And spiritual things are so much more real than material things! They'll go on lasting; but the material things are only temporary, and will soon be gone.

Adam had to make a choice. He chose rebellion against God, the same as Satan had done; and that put him under the captivity of Satan. He became kidnapped, and his children after him were kidnapped. And Satan, who is a spirit, was in-tuned in the same wavelength as Adam's spirit. So he could simply inject his spirit into Adam, which is the spirit of rebellion, the spirit of jealousy, and envy, and competition, and antagonism, and controversy.

So that came into Adam and Eve, and into their children. The first son of Adam was Cain, and the second son was Abel. I presume they must

have been about teenagers when this certain event happened. Cain became jealous of Abel, his brother; and so he rose up and slew his brother and killed him. God said,



“Where is your brother?” And he said, **“I don't know.”** He was a liar! Now he lied to God about it. And humans have been doing it, and we've all come from Adam and from his children. This world has developed. Developed with a carnal mind, a self-centered mind that is self-centered, loves only self and what it considered that belong to self. Now, some love their possessions because they belong to them. Mothers love their children because they're hers. It's selfish, but it is good. Nevertheless, it is self-centered. God loves more than just His own. He loves everything—everybody, rather. And so this world developed.

When Adam sinned, God CLOSED UP the Tree of Life. And that means He shut humanity OFF FROM GOD! God is the Lawgiver. Man had broken God's law, and the

penalty is death. All humanity was shut off from God UNTIL Christ should finally come and sit on that throne. He had to first come and qualify to do it, and remove Satan from that throne. As long as Satan's there, he had kidnapped these children; and he was going to rule over them (instead of God). And so they are shut off from God until the Second Coming of Christ, when He will come as Ruler; and Satan will be banished.

WHY CHRIST CAME

Now, there was one exception. **Jesus Christ said, “I will build My Church, and the gates of [the grave] shall not prevail against it.”** The Church were the firstfruits. Now why did Jesus say, **“I will build My Church . . . ”?**

In the first place, why did Jesus come? He's called **"the second Adam."** He came to do what the first Adam should have done, but did not; and that was to have contact with God, and obey God, and live God's way—be filled with God's love, with God's mind, and with God's power; and reject the wrong way of Satan. Jesus did that. He had to contend with Satan. Satan tempted Him; and He was tempted in all points like as we are, and yet without sin. He met Satan in immortal combat, and Jesus Christ conquered Satan. In the end, He snapped out an order and told Satan to get away; and Satan had to obey Him.

Jesus Christ came for a number of reasons. One was TO QUALIFY to replace Satan on the throne of this Earth, and TO RULE THE EARTH AS A KING. He was born to become a King, and He came to qualify to be the King and replace Satan on the Earth. The churches have lost all knowledge of that! They don't preach Jesus Christ as the coming King, as a Ruler and Someone to obey. They have lost all knowledge of it. It is all in the Bible, however; but they don't follow the Bible. They get their religion from other people before them, and people have just made it up in their minds. They don't believe what the Bible says.

I was hearing on the air this morning they are looking for the Antichrist to come. The Bible doesn't talk about some one Antichrist coming. In first

or second John, whichever it is, it says that there are many antichrists and have been. But they have certain traditions that Protestants have had, and they simply follow the teaching of these Protestant traditions. And, as I say, they have rubbed off on us a great deal.

They think that God is trying to save the whole world. The world is lost. They really picture it this way: God created man immortal, an immortal soul. Satan came along and wrecked God's handiwork. So man fell, but he's still immortal. And God's plan of redemption is merely God's effort to repair the damage that Satan did, and restore the human race back as good as Adam was before he fell. If you believe that, please erase it from your mind and get rid of it because it is a lie. It's Satan's lie. It is not true.

Jesus Christ came TO QUALIFY! When He comes to rule, He's going to rule over the world; and He's going to teach the world the law of God—the way of living OF GOD. All that's wrong in the world is the way people live! I've said that to kings. I've said it to presidents and prime ministers over the world. I've said it to audiences in capitols all over this world. That's all that is wrong with the world. It's the way people are living! THE WAY WE LIVE is causing all of the troubles. And the way we

live is rebellion against the law of God.



But the churches say the law of God is done away. I was listening to a religious

program on the air this morning. This was after our program was on the air. They were saying how God will just forget about your sins. There wasn't one word said about repentance. They were saying the law is done away. And it was from the ministers of a church that I know who believe the law is done away, and they will debate it with you any day (that God's law is done away).

Well, God's law is the right way of living. And all that's wrong in the world is the wrong way of living. Whatever we sow, we reap; and we're sowing the wrong thing because we live the wrong way. It's just that simple. But people cannot seem to understand that, because they are deceived by Satan. And Satan is the Great Deceiver.

CHRIST TEACHES HIS DISCIPLES:

Well, Jesus said, **“I will build My Church.”** Now what did He do? He called twelve disciples; and they became His students, or learners. A “disciple” means a learner or a student. Jesus started a school, and Jesus was the Teacher. And He started teaching these students—twelve that He had CALLED. Later He said to them, **“You didn’t choose Me. You didn’t volunteer.”** Peter didn’t volunteer and Andrew, his brother. They wanted to be fishermen. Jesus saw them out there on the Sea of Galilee in a boat, fishing. That was their business, their job. He said, **“Come and follow Me, and give up the job you’ve got. I’m calling you to a different job.”** They forsook all, and followed Him.

He called others. Later He said, **“You didn’t choose Me. I’ve chosen you. I’ve drafted you! I didn’t plead with you to ‘Please accept Me. Please give your heart to Me.’”** Brethren, you cannot find any place where Jesus went around saying, “Please believe on Me. Please give your heart to Me.”

A young man came to me one time, several years ago, up in Oregon. He said, “Mr. Armstrong. I gave my heart to the Lord last night.” Well I said, “Did you? Where was that?” “Why down in the First Christian Church.” “Well,” I said, “that must have been a

wonderful event. Was there a physician there with anesthetics; and did he put you in an operation, and open up your body and take your heart out?” “Well, no. No,” he said. Well I said, “Did you get hold of your heart and hand it over to Jesus? Was Jesus there?” “Well, no.” “Well, what did happen? What did you do? You said you gave Jesus your heart.” He said, “Well, I guess I just don’t know.” He didn’t know what he did do. It didn’t mean anything. No, it didn’t.

A Methodist preacher came to me up in Oregon. He said, “I’ve just married a wife. She’s got some money. And I’m just too proud to let her support me. I’m an ex-minister; and the only thing I know, that I’ve ever done, is to preach. But,” he said, “I haven’t had a job, and I haven’t had any pulpit.” He said, “Do you know of any vacant pulpits in Lane County, Oregon here. My wife wants to live in this county, and I have to get a job right here somewhere.” I said, “Yes, I do know of one vacant pulpit. But,” I said, “that won’t help you any.” “Well, why?” Well, I said, “Because that’s a Church of Christ, or Christian Church; and you’re a Methodist. And,” I said, “They have different doctrines than you do, and different beliefs.” “Oh well, that doesn’t make any difference,” he said, “if I can have the job, I’ll preach whatever they want me to.”

That’s the average preacher today. “I’ll preach whatever they want me to.” Yes, I’ve met all kinds. And this world is full of them.

Jesus came TO QUALIFY to sit on THE THRONE and RULE. He called out some students and began to teach them—to teach them the way and the law of God, to teach them God’s plan, to teach them God’s purpose and what God is going to do with us. That God is trying to make us HIS OWN CHILDREN, to be BORN OF HIM. And He taught them that which is born of God will be SPIRIT. God is a Spirit! We won’t be human; we won’t be flesh, any longer. We won’t be made from the dust of the ground. We’ll be spirit beings. And He taught them. After He had taught them, He also came to die for not only them but the sins of the whole world. And so He did that. Then He went to heaven and established the Church after He had arrived back in heaven.



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Now we spent a day over in Munich, in southern Germany; and I found it was a holiday. I hadn't heard of that holiday before. They call it Ascension Day. Well, it probably was the same day of the year that Jesus ascended to heaven, which is ten days before the Day of Pentecost (*which is today*). It seems to me they had the wrong day. It must have been more than ten days ago. Anyway, there is nothing in the Bible that says there is any such day as Ascension Day that we are told to keep. And I hadn't even heard of it, because I've been living according to the Bible and not according to men's traditions.

But Jesus taught these people. He called them OUT of the world, to live His way—to live by the law of God, and live a different way than the rest of the world was living. And to teach them that WAY OF LIFE, about the government of God. And to teach them of God's purpose, that we would become God; and that God is reproducing Himself. After He had taught them, He gave them a great commission. He said:

Matthew 28:19-20 “Go . . . [into all the world] and teach [in] all nations, baptizing [people] into the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; (20) teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.”

LEARNING TO BECOME TEACHERS

So Jesus came to start a school. And He taught them the way of God, the way of GOD'S CHARACTER, so they could be born of God. Then He told them to go out and become teachers themselves, like He had been a Teacher to them; and teach others. And the others that they were to teach were also to be taught, to learn, so that they could become teachers. And the whole purpose of the firstfruits was to call some people out to become teachers; so that, when Christ comes to save the world, they could be kings and priests under Christ. That's why, to those called into the Church (the firstfruits), Jesus said:

Revelation 2:26-27 “He that overcometh...to him will I give power over the nations: “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne” [when He comes and takes over the throne of the earth, away from Satan.]

In other words, Jesus came to QUALIFY TO RULE in the place of Satan. He came to call a firstfruits out to become teachers and to become rulers and governors (like He is, with Him when He sits on the throne); and rule the others, and teach the others when God starts to save the world. He didn't come to teach us just to be saved. He came to teach us TO BECOME TEACHERS!



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Now, we are concerned with a certain project over in Jordan—just outside of Amman, Jordan. It is a school for the mentally retarded. The first time I saw it was two years ago; and they had a fine new facility, new building. It was very modern, very nice. And they had little children there, from the ages of about four years old up to thirteen, all mentally retarded. And they had to even teach them to put a button in a buttonhole. They even had to teach them to sit on the toilet, because they didn't know anything.

And I said, "Is this all of the mentally retarded people in Jordan?" "Oh, no. This is a small fraction of them. Why, Mr. Armstrong, there are thousands of them." Well, I said, "Maybe we could raise money and build a bigger place, and you could take in more of them. Let's get more of them." But they said, "Wait, Mr. Armstrong. We can't do that. Even if we had the money to buy the buildings, and more buildings, we couldn't take in more of them here until we first train more teachers."

God cannot start the Kingdom of God until He first trains teachers. And He has called you and me to become those teachers! **THAT'S WHY WE'RE THE FIRSTFRUITS. WE ARE CALLED TO BECOME TEACHERS!** And it is, let's see, I believe it's the 5th chapter of Hebrews, where the apostle Paul says to them,

"You ought now to be able to be teachers [verse 12], and you have to be taught just the kindergarten truth about the Kingdom of God. You haven't learned. You should have been better students."

We are NOT CALLED just for salvation; and, if it were for salvation, we wouldn't have been called at all. You wouldn't have been called at all just to get you into the Kingdom. **THAT'S NOT WHY YOU WERE CALLED.** You were called to become a student. You were called to learn how to save others when God's Kingdom comes, when Jesus is sitting on the throne on this Earth. Brethren, **YOU DON'T GET IT.**

I've heard ministers speaking as if they never heard of that! I've said to some of them, "I don't think our people understand that." And they say, "Oh yes, they do, Mr. Armstrong." Oh no, you don't. Brethren, you just don't understand that. We're not called to just be the first ones to get into the Kingdom of God. We are called for a special mission—to become teachers. We are not called to become some to go out and convert the world now. We are called to learn how, in the resurrection, we can be rulers and teachers.

TO THE CHURCH—and not to anyone but the Church—Jesus said, **"If you overcome** (you that are studying to be teachers, if you overcome) **I will grant for you to sit with Me on My throne; and help Me rule the world and teach the world."** Jesus is the Teacher, and Jesus is a Ruler. **Revelation 5:10, we will be "kings and priests; and we shall [RULE] on the earth."** Brethren, I don't think you'll ever learn that.

Has my teaching been in vain, brethren? Sometimes I wonder. I get terribly discouraged. I don't think you get it. I think so much Protestantism has rubbed off on you that you just don't understand the truth when I give it to you. And it is really Christ giving it to you through me, because I'm certainly not competent to give it to you. Of myself, I could not do it at all.



WHY THE FIRSTFRUITS?

Why are we the firstfruits? WHY? I'm not talking about what, when, or how, or

anything else; but why? We are the firstfruits to become teachers to teach others. The Church is school. And we are to be taught the way of God, the way of life; and to be taught of God's program—of God's program to reproduce Himself. And He's not trying to save the world. You wonder why you can't convert your relatives and your friends; and so do I, and I still do. I can't get over it. I can't see why they can't understand any of the Bible whatsoever. They can't, and they won't until God calls them. Jesus Christ said:

John 6:44 “No man CAN come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.”

Predestination was discussed this morning. Predestination has nothing to do with who is going to be saved and who is going to be lost. Predestination means that God predestinated that He would call certain people out, after Christ came to qualify; and we have to do the same thing.

If we are going to rule, we have to do the same thing. We have to overcome Satan. Far from being “teacher's pet,” far from God discriminating against the others, He's giving us a harder job than He'll give the others. WE HAVE TO OVERCOME SATAN. And when God does call others, that can't understand the truth now, there won't be any Satan around.

And there won't be a world with television that is filled with smut, and with violence, and with rotten sex; and that is what your children are feeding on today. That'll all be gone. There won't be any of it. But **“the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Eternal God, as full as the waters cover the ocean beds;”** [Habakkuk 2:14], and you and I are the ones that are going to be teaching that knowledge and making the world full.

Now, it doesn't include just us here. We're just a little group in Pasadena, California. It doesn't [just] include all of us, just those in the Church all around the world. It includes those that were called in the early Church, back in the 1st century, 1900 and some years ago—53 or more ago, 54 years ago. They will all be resurrected. They are **“the dead in Christ.”** And the dead in Christ are those who have learned to be teachers and rulers. They have learned HOW, and they are qualified to teach and to rule.

The Church of God is the school of God. Now, we have something more than just a school; we have a college here at Pasadena. And we have a sister college over at Big Sandy, Texas. There we teach some to be ministers. Then they go out, and they teach others (week by week, on the Sabbath) that God

has called and that are in the Church—so that they come to grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Now I wonder if you get that? We have to GROW IN KNOWLEDGE! We have to learn God's program. We have to learn that God is calling us not just to be saved. He's calling us to learn to be rulers and teachers. Brethren, sometimes I get discouraged. Can I beat that into your heads and your minds?



They talk about so-and-so “had it made.” Are you sure he had it made? Is he going to be a teacher? Is he qualified to sit on that throne with Christ? Does he know about God's law? We're the Philadelphia Era of the Church, and we have to be lawyers—students of God's law, God's government, God's way of life. All that's wrong with this world is the way of life they're living. It's all that. And we are called out of the world to live a different way of life.

WE MUST GROW

Peter said we must grow. Not just in knowledge (the knowledge OF our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ) but in grace. What does that mean? Grace is unmerited favor, or gift.

But the Holy Spirit is God's gift. And growing in grace means growing in the character that comes through God's Spirit. Are you growing in character day by day? Are you growing in the knowledge that God has? In other words, are you a good student? Are you learning? Are you going to be able to teach others? Are you qualifying to be a teacher, and to go out and teach others? IF NOT, YOU ARE WASTING YOUR TIME! You don't BELONG in the Church. Maybe God hasn't called you yet. Or maybe you haven't opened your mind to understand? I don't know.

There's something else I want to say about Pentecost. I think if I'd keep talking here to one o'clock in the morning, some of you still wouldn't get it. Jesus called us "**sheep.**" And sometimes I think some of us are pretty dumb sheep. I wish we could understand it, and I'm trying to make it plain.

You are students. How much are you learning, and how much are you developing your life? To grow in grace is to grow in the character of God. That's not only the knowledge, but it is living that way—to grow in love. That means in how you

character of God in your own life?

Just knowledge alone isn't going to do any good. You can hear the Word of God. You can have the knowledge. But not the hearers, but **THE DOERS OF THE LAW** are justified before God. Are you **A DOER**? The only reason you need the knowledge is to learn what to do; and it does you no good until you put it to work, and do it!

Now the one thing I did want to say about Pentecost: On the day of Pentecost there were many who had followed Jesus, and who did believe; and they wanted to know what they should do. [Peter] said, "**Repent everyone of you, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.**"

And repent has to do with not only being sorry and remorseful for the past but changing your mind to the extent that you won't do it any more. You will change your way of life, and live God's way from on now. You'll try and not repeat the sins. And with God's help, you will succeed in overcoming. Now you won't overcome all the sins at once. That's why it is a gradual process. It's the over comers that are going to reign and rule with Christ. Not those who have made it, not those who are perfect all ready. It's a gradual process.



I just know, brethren, that I do want you to learn. God has revealed this truth to me. It isn't known in any church in the world that I know of. It's precious knowledge. It's so precious and so valuable! Don't trample it under feet, as if it was insignificant and didn't mean anything. It is the truth of God.

treat others in your own home. That means in how you treat neighbors, and how you treat people. How kind are you? How loving are you? How much do you encourage others, and try to help others? How much are you developing the

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SPEAKING IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES

But on the day of Pentecost there were many there from many different nations, speaking different languages. And something happened on that day. That was the day the Church was born, 1954 years ago today. This is the anniversary of that day. And the Holy Spirit came with a rushing sound, like a rushing mighty wind. Have you ever been in a hurricane? I have, right out in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. And let me tell you, when you hear the winds whistling and roaring like I did, it's a terrible roar.

They heard the sound of the Holy Spirit coming; and they saw it, like flames of fire (or, tongues of fire) sitting on each one of them—the 120. There were 120 there that received the Spirit of God. And people could see the Holy Spirit, like tongues of fire; and then they began to speak in other languages, in tongues. There were people gathered there from nation all over. Some from Parthia, some from that were Medes, and some from...well, some spoke Greek and some the Parthian language, and some the Median language and other languages. But EVERY ONE OF THEM, thousands of them, and every one of them heard them (*the 120*) speaking in his language.

They didn't speak in a lot of gibber. "La, la, la, blah, bla, ayre, waa, weer, blu, uuaaa, uuaaaa." I can do that. What did I say? You don't know. Neither do I! The tongues people that call themselves "Pentecostal" are NOT Pentecostal at all! They are poor DECEIVED people that don't know any better. They say that they are aping that same thing, and they are copying it. You don't see any tongues of fire on their head. You don't hear any roaring sound, like a rushing mighty wind. And they don't speak with the languages that other people from other nations understand every word they're saying while they're there.

Now, there's one other case where they spoke with tongues. That's when Peter had taken salvation to the first Gentiles at the house of Cornelius, up just north of where Tel Aviv is today. They were devout people, and they wanted to serve God; they just didn't know everything. God had Peter go to them, and that's when salvation first opened to Gentiles. God had to show Peter, in this vision of letting a sheet of unclean animals down—telling him to "go eat."

He didn't mean eat unclean animals. He was simply showing him that he should call



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no man unclean because the Jews wouldn't have anything to do with the Gentiles. So, Peter went to Cornelius' house. They were devout. They had repented. And when Peter told them the way of the gospel, then they believed. They'd already repented. And the Holy Spirit came on them—as on the Day of Pentecost—and they did speak . . . They were of different language, and they spoke the Hebrew and the Greek language.

But, in the 14th chapter of I Corinthians, Paul said he would rather speak five words with understanding than 10,000 words in an unknown tongue. This speaking in gibberish and an unknown tongue is a deception of Satan, the devil. **“The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of a sound mind”**—not of just a lot of gibberish and doing foolish things, nonsensical things. I think we understand that in the Church of God; but I just wanted to mention that, since this is the Day of Pentecost.

NOT YET SAVING THE WORLD

This is the day of firstfruits. We are the first. We are the ones who are being taught to become the teachers, to rule with Christ, and to be kings and priest. Now priests are the teachers. And that is when Christ is going to try to save the whole world, when He comes again. He didn't try to save anybody [when He came the first time]. At Jacob's well, a Gentile woman . . . John had said that she knew Who she was talking to. He could give her the living water, and she would never thirst. Well, she asked Him for those living waters. He's speaking of the Holy Spirit. And she said,

“Give me then of the Holy Spirit.” That's what it meant.

Wasn't that a wonderful opportunity for Him to try to convert her, right then and there? Instead, **He said, “Go call your husband.”** Well, she kind of gasped for breath. She said, **“I, I, I don't have a husband.”** And Jesus said, **“Well for once, young lady, you've told the truth. You've had five husbands, and the one you are living with now is not your husband.”** She was amazed that He knew that much.



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You can't find a place where Jesus went about and said, "Please accept Me as your Savior." And yet the churches think that is a whole thing that we should be doing. I guess they think—when I visit foreign kings, and presidents of nations, and prime ministers who rule nations—that I ask them, "Have you given your heart to the Lord?" Why they'd pitch me out of there so fast I wouldn't know what struck me." I even think some of our ministers, the way they talk from the pulpit, think that's what I'm doing.

I'm carrying the gospel into those nations, but I'm not trying to convert the heads of the nations. I try to speak to them as far as they can understand. But God isn't trying to convert them. NO MAN CAN COME TO CHRIST except God the Father draw them, and God hasn't drawn them. That's why you can't convert your own relatives that think you've gone crazy when you've accepted God's truth. You just can't. You see THEY'RE NOT BEING JUDGED! The Judgment Day is coming.

Judgment is ON THE CHURCH OF GOD. Judgment is on US. We're being judged, brethren. The world hasn't been called, and the world is not yet judged. And God isn't trying to save the world yet. Not yet. The way to help save the world, brethren, is to learn to be a good teacher—so that, when God's time comes, then you can be a real POWER in helping to save people when God's time has come. But God's time hasn't come for them yet. God's time has come for you to learn how to be a king or a priest. God help you, brethren, to understand.



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**Personal from
Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong,
Good News, January 1980**

The Time We Are In, Now

Just where are we now, in the prophesied panorama of events leading to the END of this age? Both world events and occurrences in the Church indicate we are in the time mentioned in Daniel 12. In verse 2, Daniel speaks of the resurrection of saints at the time of Christ's coming. Then he speaks of events leading up to that crowning event of history.

NEVER BEFORE IN HUMAN HISTORY has the world been in a perilous state like the one in which we now find ourselves. Man has created enough weapons of mass destruction to wipe all life off the earth, and the nations seem bent on doing just that. Both world events and occurrences

in the Church indicate we are in the time mentioned in Daniel 12. True Christians must be ready for the end of this age!

He says: "But thou, o Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased" (verse 4).

We have come to that time - the TIME OF THE END! Rapid travel, to and fro, at high speed! We are definitely in the END TIME! Knowledge has been increased on earth amazingly.

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We have been going with increasing momentum through the age of invention, the age of science and technology, the air age, the space age and now the NUCLEAR age.

Now, for the first time in human history, the weapons of mass destruction have been produced that can erase all humanity from the earth! In the one decade of the '60s, the fund of human knowledge DOUBLED. Also the world's troubles and evils DOUBLED! In verse 7 it is stated, "**And when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.**" It seems indefinite as to the antecedent of the

pronoun he, above. Other translations have the word they.

But surely Satan is now endeavoring to scatter and even totally nullify the power God has given to His Church [and he did -1986-1994]. There has been a falling away [1974, 1995], though compared to the total number, it has been minimal.

And the attack of the State of California was an action calculated to DESTROY the Church of the living GOD! Yet Jesus Christ OUR living HEAD has used it to draw us much closer to HIM and to one another. Our Work in the hands of Christ is NOT YET FINISHED, and He will not allow the Work to stop until it is finished!

And when will that be? It surely can't be much longer. We are certainly on the final lap, if not the homestretch - but no definite date can, of course, be set. But when Daniel writes, in **verse 7**, "**all these things shall be finished**," he refers back to the subject of this 12th chapter mentioned at the beginning - when the archangel Michael shall stand up (verse 1) (as also mentioned in Revelation. 12:7) and Satan shall be cast down - and the GREAT TRIBULATION (**verse 1** and **Matthew 24:21- 22**, **Mark 13 :19-20**, **Luke 21:22**) from the beginning will be 3 and 1/22 years.

Daniel did not understand, but the angel said, "**Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till**

the time of the end" (**Daniel 12:9**). And then what - in the TIME OF THE END, into which we have entered? "**Many shall be purified and made white, and tried . . . but the wise shall understand"** (**verse 10**).

WE ARE IN THAT TIME OF TRYING AND TESTING, TO BRING US CLOSER TO GOD -- TO PREPARE US FOR CHRIST'S COMING, NOW! Many of us are being tried and tested as NEVER BEFORE - and for our own good!

But, **verse 11**, from the time the daily sacrifice shall be taken away. Consider this a moment. This does NOT imply a material temple to be built in our time in Jerusalem [*He admitted to his personal aide before he died that he did not know whether a Temple would be built or not*]. It does seem to imply the Israelis may restore the daily (twice daily) sacrifice . . . The indication is the armies of the "beast" of Revelation 17, entering Jerusalem (**Daniel 11:41**, **Zechariah 14:2**) will stop this daily sacrifice. "**And the abomination that makes desolate set up.**"

What is this abomination? This refers to **Daniel 11:31** and **Matthew 24:15**. In **Daniel 11:31**, the armies of Antiochus Epiphanes were at Jerusalem, and some commentators have interpreted it as Antiochus placing a statue of

Jupiter in the Holy of Holies in the temple. Not only does **Matthew 24:15** also refer to this. But in a parallel New Testament Luke 21:20 speaks of the same thing as "**Jerusalem compassed with armies.**"



This is the correct meaning of this "**abomination.**" It is the armies - not a statue - that made Jerusalem desolate. From this time (**Daniel 12:11**) to Christ's coming will be 1,290 days. Now, verse 12, "**Blessed is he that waits, and comes to the 1,335 days.**"

Never before have we understood these periods of 1,260 days, 1,290 and 1,335 days. But it seems evident, now, a blessing is pronounced on us - GOD'S CHURCH - who wait and endure until the 1,335 days - approximately 1,335 days prior to Christ's coming.

But since no one can know the day or the hour of His coming, we probably shall not be able to know the exact day that this 1,335 days begins.

But apparently that is the time when OUR WORK SHALL END. That will be a time when the UNITED EUROPE shall appear - the revival of the medieval "Holy Roman Empire."

We shall then be warned, and readied to be taken to a place of refuge and safety from the Great Tribulation. Forty-five days later "the beast's" armies will surround Jerusalem. Thirty days later the great tribulation will probably start with a nuclear attack on London and Britain - and possibly the same day or immediately after, on United States and Canadian cities. The GREAT TRIBULATION, we shall then fully realize, is the time of "Jacob's trouble," spoken of in **Jeremiah 30:7**.

And Jacob's name was named on Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh (**Genesis 48:16**). At that time a third of the people in our nations will die, or shall have died, by famine and disease epidemics. Another third will die of the war - our cities being destroyed (**Ezekiel 6:6**), and the remaining third will be carried to the land of our enemies as slaves (**Ezekiel 5:12**) . . .

But while this most terrible TRIBULATION is happening to our people, shall we of God's Church be protected? Does **Revelation 3:10** mean what it says?

The Unger's Bible dictionary, under article on the Great Tribulation, refers to **Revelation 3:10**, showing the Great Tribulation covers the whole earth. No other such time of world-wide trial and trouble is prophesied. A Bible I formerly used had in the marginal reference of **Revelation 3:10** "or, the Great Tribulation."

Also **Revelation 12:14** shows the Church being FLOWN into a place of safety in the wilderness. After this (**Revelation 12:17**), Satan will make war with the remnant or - Laodicean Church. That leads up to Christ's coming.

So, where are we NOW, in the panorama of prophecy? We have reached the time just before a "United States of Europe" restores the "Holy Roman Empire," under the papacy, in a union of church and state. The present pope, John Paul II [now Pope Francis], could very well be the pope who will trigger this and bring it into reality.

Once that third great world power is formed, our work will soon be over. That could happen in a year, two years or five years. It could happen SUDDENLY, leaving the whole world aghast in WONDER!

The WHOLE WORLD is now ON FIRE! This is not the GREAT TRIBULATION, but is certainly preliminary to it. It's time for intensive FASTING AND PRAYER.



Comments by Don Billingsley: Though this article was written 36 years ago, it is more relevant today than it was at that time. Due to the passage of those years and the world dramatically changing for the worse leading to the end of the House of Ephraim as nations, Jesus Christ has begun revealing knowledge that was only to be made known in the very end-time to this Congregation (Daniel 12:8-10; John 16:13). Some edits and modifications were made by me in this writing by Mr. Armstrong.

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The Harvesting of the Firstfruits

“And you shall observe the Feast of Weeks, of the Firstfruits of your harvest. And you shall proclaim on the same day that it is a Holy Convocation. You shall do no customary work on it. It shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.” *Exodus 3:22; Leviticus 23:21*

By
Alton B. Don Billingsley

After having observed God's Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, we are now looking forward to the observance of a most meaningful Day in God's Master Plan for the true and faithful people of God, the Feast of Firstfruits. The first people of God to be harvested will take place upon the return of Jesus Christ back to this earth.

Though this Day is often called Pentecost in Scripture, it actually means "Count 50." The count that leads to the Feast of Firstfruits.

The Feast of Firstfruits

The wave sheaf offering in the following Scriptures pictures the Messiah, Jesus Christ, having been resurrected after His crucifixion then going to

heaven to appear before His Father to be accepted by Him (*John 20:1, 11-17* – and be approved as the wave sheaf offering):

Leviticus 23:9-11

vs.9-10 And the LORD said to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them, 'When you come into the land which I give to you, and you reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest.

v.10 'He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day AFTER

the (weekly) Sabbath the priest shall wave it." Please note the following writings from the Correspondence Course, Lesson 35:

Christ the Wave Sheaf

Almighty God knows man is best reminded by what he repeats YEAR AFTER YEAR! God established His Holy Days -- memorials of the PLAN of God -- in conjunction with the two ANNUAL HARVESTS. God uses the physical harvest seasons as a pattern of the two SPIRITUAL HARVESTS.

In Palestine there are two annual harvest seasons. The first one is a

small spring harvest following the winter rains. It begins on the day of the Wave-Sheaf offering, and ends at the Day of Pentecost. In the late summer and early autumn the second harvest season occurred. It followed the late spring or latter rains in Palestine. It ended with the Feast of INGATHERING, which is called in your Bible THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES. This fall harvest is the much greater harvest. You will learn all about it in future lessons of this Bible Course.

The Day of Pentecost pictures the VERY SMALL early harvest.

The Days of Unleavened Bread occur about THE BEGINNING OF THE SMALL SPRING HARVEST SEASON (*Lev. 23:10-11*). The shoots of grain, planted earlier, have grown to maturity. They are now fruit-bearing stalks -- ready to be harvested.

This first harvest began in the following manner:

On Sunday morning, following the weekly Sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread, a small handful of newly sickled stems and heads of barley was brought to the priest to be accepted by God. This was called the "Wave-Sheaf Offering," or the "first of the firstfruits."

1. Why did God instruct the Israelites to cut a small handful of grain and wave it to be accepted by Him during the Days of Unleavened Bread? *Lev. 23:10*. What does the Wave Sheaf symbolize? *I Cor. 15:20-23*. Who was the FIRST of the firstfruits of God's spiritual harvest? Same verses.



2. After Christ was crucified, buried and resurrected, did He need to be ACCEPTED as the firstfruits of the spiritual harvest? *John 20:17*. Were His disciples permitted to touch Him? Same verse.

COMMENT: Because Christ was a holy sacrifice, and was the FIRST human being to be resurrected, He fulfilled the symbolism of the Wave-Sheaf Offering. The morning after He was resurrected, He had to go before God the Father to be accepted, just as the High

Priest in the Old Testament had to wave the sheaf of barley to be accepted by God before the spring harvest could begin. When Mary met Christ in the garden, she couldn't touch Him because His sacrifice had not yet been accepted in Heaven.

3. After Christ's sacrifice had been accepted by God the Father, could His disciples touch Him? Compare *Mat. 28:9* with *John 20:20-28*.

4. What day was it when Mary saw Christ in the garden? *John 20:19*.

COMMENT: This was the day following the weekly Sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread. It was the VERY SAME DAY THAT THE WAVE SHEAF WAS OFFERED! It was on this very day that Jesus Christ, the first of the firstfruits of God's spiritual harvest, was accepted as the Wave Sheaf Offering in heaven!

5. After Christ was accepted in heaven and returned to earth, what day was it when the disciples were permitted to touch Him? *John 20:19*. Clearly, Christ went to heaven as the FIRST RESURRECTED Son of God -- the first harvested product of God's Master Plan -- and returned to His disciples ALL IN THE SAME DAY!

End of Quotes

The Feast of Weeks

This festival is also called the Feast of Weeks. It also has the meaning of counting seven weeks from the weekly Sabbath, normally inside the Days of Unleavened Bread, and the following Day would begin the count to the Feast of Firstfruits.

Leviticus 23:15-17

vs. 15-16 “And you shall (begin to) count for ourselves from the day (1st Day of the week, Sunday) after the (weekly) Sabbath, (beginning) from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven Sabbaths shall be completed. Count 50 days after the seventh Sabbath . . .

v.17 “You shall bring from your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour (the few gleaned and sifted from among the Tribes of Israel and the Gentile Nations), they shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits to the LORD.”

Notice there are TWO loaves, covering the two periods of the Old Testament and the New Testament Church. It would also appear to have the meaning of the few of Israel and Gentiles to be among the Firstfruits to be harvested upon the return of Jesus Christ back to this earth.

Please note further comments from the Correspondence

Course, Lesson 35:

Pentecost in the New Testament

Once the Wave Sheaf was offered, the spring harvest began. The spring harvest ended with the annual Sabbath of the Feast of Firstfruits, when all the people gathered to give thanks for the produce God had given them. Another name for the Feast of Firstfruits was the Feast of Weeks (Deut. 16:9-12). Among Greek-speaking peoples it was called "Pentecost."

The word "pentecost" refers specifically to counting the fifty days that elapsed from the day of the Wave-Sheaf Offering, up to and including the Feast of Firstfruits or Weeks. (Lev. 23:15-16.)

1. How long is the Feast of Firstfruits -- Pentecost -- to continue to be KEPT among God's people? Lev. 23:14, 21.

2. Should God's people still be KEEPING PENTECOST TODAY? Same verses.

3. Did Christ's disciples know they must appear before God on the Day of Firstfruits -- Pentecost?

Acts 2:1-4. Did they think that God's ANNUAL HOLY DAYS WERE DONE AWAY BY THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST? Same verses.

4. Did the apostles continue to KEEP Pentecost after the crucifixion? Acts 20:16 and I Corinthians 16:8.

What It Means to Be the Firstfruits in God's Plan!

Fifty days after Jesus Christ's sacrifice was accepted in heaven, the Holy Spirit came according to the promises Jesus had made (Acts 2:1).

1. What was the special offering made on the Day of Pentecost in the Old Testament? Lev. 23:17. What does the Bible say these loaves symbolized? Same verse. What are these firstfruits called in New Testament times? James 1:18.

COMMENT: Notice there are TWO loaves, covering the two periods of the Old Testament and the New Testament Church.

The word "church" has been translated from the Greek word, "ecclesia" which means the "called out ones."

Pentecost, or Firstfruits pictures to us the first part of the spiritual harvest,

the calling out of God's True Church -- a FEW PEOPLE and a SMALL FIRST HARVEST. God is not dealing with the vast majority of the world today, but He has made these wonderful truths plain to the few that He is calling.

COMMENT: After Christ was accepted as the Wave Sheaf, the general harvest of firstfruits could begin. Still only a SMALL HARVEST OF PEOPLE DURING THIS AGE IS TO BE REAPED at the second coming of Christ!



2. Why do we find leaven put into these loaves of the firstfruit offering? *I Cor. 5:7*. Since the Bible uses leaven as a type of sin, does this mean that there is still sin in the Church? *I John 1:8*. Does this mean that sin SHOULD REMAIN in the New Testament Church? *I John 1:9*. Of course not! Sin is to be put out whenever found. But only Jesus was without sin.

3. Does the Bible plainly state that converted Christians in this age are considered "firstfruits" in God's plan? *James 1:18*.

4. Is the term "firstfruits" applied to specific living Christians after the coming of the Holy Spirit in 31 A.D.? *Romans 16:5*.

5. What are those who stand before Christ called at His second coming? *Rev. 14:1-4*. How are they described?

Same verse. Did they have to come out of the world and separate themselves from the God-rejecting majority of mankind? *Verse 4*. What is the outstanding characteristic of those who are called the "firstfruits" of God's people? *Rev. 14:12*.

6. Are these "firstfruits" mentioned in the plan of resurrections? *I Cor. 15:20-23* and *I Thess. 4:13-18*.

COMMENT: First Jesus Christ, the Wave Sheaf, was resurrected, and became the first of the firstfruits of God's Master Plan (*Col. 1:18*). After a

period of time symbolized by the fifty-day period ending with Pentecost, those who are Christ's and have the Holy Spirit are to be resurrected as the completed first harvest in God's plan.



7. Notice what Christ wants us to learn about the spiritual harvests. It is found in *Mat. 13:24-30* and *37-43*. What happens when Christ sows the seed of truth among the people of the earth? *Verses 24-25* explained by *verses 37-38*.

8. How did Christ know the wheat, the good grain, from the tares, or worthless weeds? Verse 26. Although some people try to hide their wicked works, is the fruit of their disobedience easily recognizable to God? Verses 26 and 38. What is the final end of those who do not produce the fruit of God's Holy Spirit in their lives? Verses 30 and 41-42.

9. What happens to those who produce righteousness, obedience and the other fruits of God's Spirit? Verse 30 and 41, 43.

10. When is the harvest? Verses 30 and 39.

COMMENT: The phrase "end of the world" should be translated "END OF THE AGE" indicating the final days of man's rule over the earth and the time of the second coming of Jesus Christ. This is the time of the harvest of firstfruits. The fifty-day period between the Wave-Sheaf offering and Pentecost symbolizes what has been going on since Jesus Christ sent His Holy Spirit in 31 A.D. During this time God has been calling out an "elect" or chosen people as "firstfruits" of His Master Plan. These "firstfruits" will be reaped at the second coming of Jesus Christ -- **ONLY A VERY FEW SHORT YEARS FROM NOW!**

11. Who is it that does the reaping of God's firstfruit harvest? Verses 30 and 39. Compare I Thess. 4:16-17 and Matt. 24:31.

COMMENT: When Jesus Christ returns to this earth, He will send forth His angels to gather those who are the elect and chosen -- the good grain -- into His Kingdom.

End of Quotes

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ and His Chosen Elect

With the resurrection of Jesus Christ in mind, the Apostle Paul wrote words of encouragement to the people of God regarding the meaning of this very special Day in God's Master Plan:



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I Corinthians 15:20,42-44, 49 v.20 “Christ is **RISEN** from the dead and has become the **FIRST-FRUIT**s of those who have fallen asleep afterwards those who are Christ’s at His coming.

Many of the chosen firstfruits have been sleeping since almost the beginning of the creation of mankind (***Hebrews 11:1***), along with those from the beginning of the New Testament Church, others will also fall asleep while some will yet be alive at the coming of Jesus Christ back to this earth.

The Apostle Paul continues to write words of encouragement that speaks of the awesome glory that awaits the true and faithful people of God at His coming:

vs.42-45 “The body is **SOWN in corruption** (*like a seed, I Corinthians 15:35-38*), it is (*or will be*) **RAISED in Incorruption**, it is **SOWN** (**buried in the graves, Isaiah 57:1-2**) in dishonor, it is **RAISED in Glory**. It is **SOWN in weakness**, it is **RAISED in Power**. It is **SOWN a natural body**, it is **RAISED a**

Spiritual Body. And as we have borne the **IMAGE** of the man of dust (***Genesis 1:26-27***), we shall also bear the **IMAGE OF THE HEAVENLY** (*via of a new birth*).

Time is running out not only with those in older years, but also with the very few short years that remain before the close of this age and the descent of Jesus Christ. With our whole heart we should be doing all that God expects of us so upon Christ’s descent from heaven that we might be graced with a new birth into His Spirit Family.

A New Birth

Very soon—God’s Elect people – like a woman beginning her painful contractions to bring forth a new baby to birth, so will the faithful and obedient **ELECT** who are destined to be born into God’s **FAMILY** during very troubling times.

What does it mean to be **BORN AGAIN**? Most if not all of the former evangelists, other ministers and members of the Worldwide Church of God erroneously believe they are already born again.

A major point of their error is forgetting the teaching of **DUALITY** throughout the Holy Bible! Understanding the duality found in Scripture along with the connecting Scriptures reveals and proves their belief is false. The new birth is yet future so said Jesus Christ in the Holy Scriptures.



During this human life those who are the CALLED by our heavenly Father (*John 6:44*), have been begotten by HIM by His Holy Spirit of Promise (*Ephesians 1:13-14*). The Apostle Peter wrote about these begotten children of God:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant MERCY has BEGOTTEN US AGAIN (could this possibly mean God saw to it that His Elect were impregnated by our mothers at a particular time, *Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4-5; 2:4-5*) to a living HOPE through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance INCORRUPTIBLE and UNDEFILED and that does NOT fade away, RESERVED in heaven for you” (*I Peter 1:3-4*).

The Apostle Peter continues to prove the human birth process is to typify the spiritual birth process – and the life that follows:

“Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of perishable seed but imperishable through the word of God which lives and abides forever . . .” (*I Peter 1:22-23*).

The translator erred by using the word *BORN* instead of *BEGOTTEN* as the following makes known:

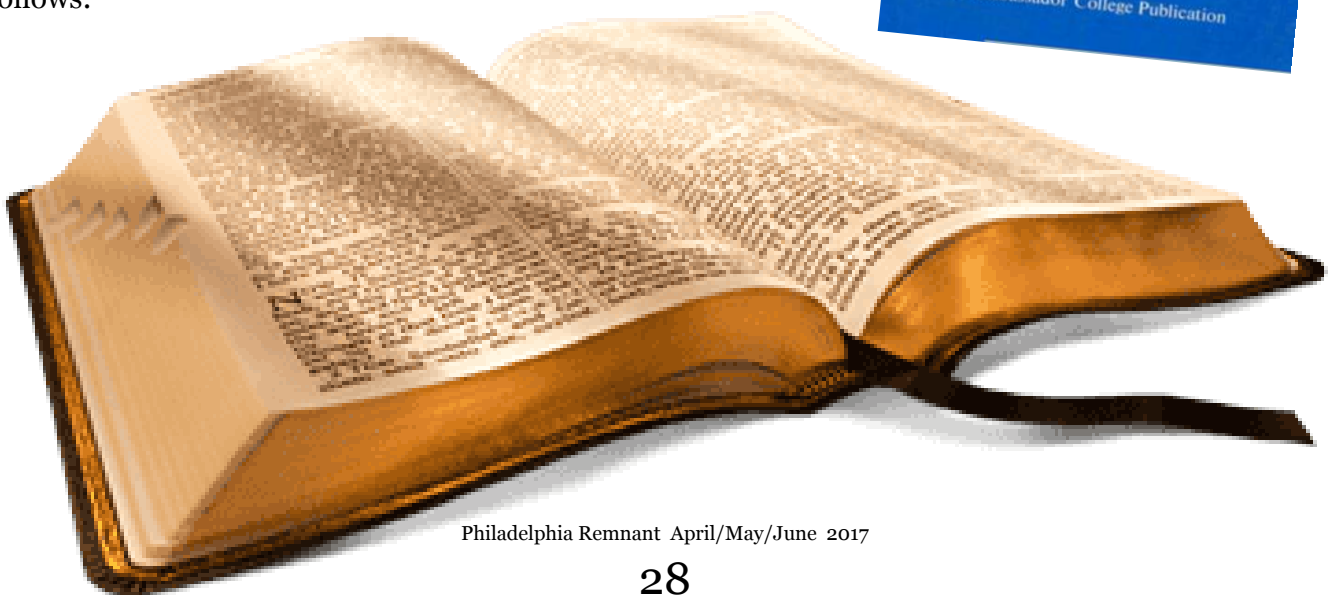
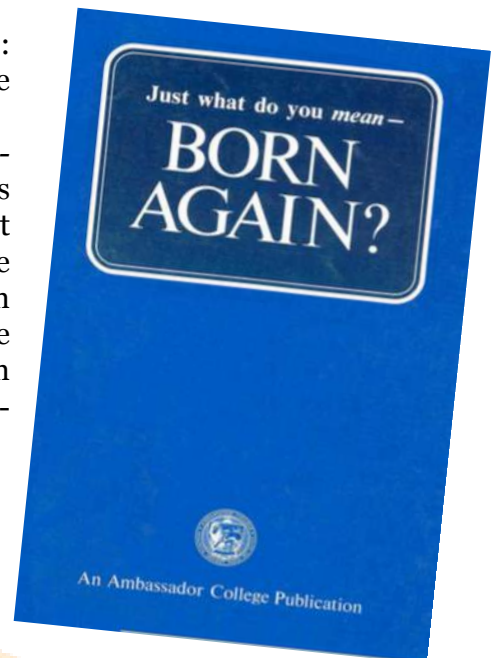
Companion Bible:

“*I Peter 1:23*, begotten: Greek> *anagennao* only here and in verse 23.”

The Greek word means *begotten or born upwards*. This verse proves categorically that an upward birth must be preceded by the sowing of an incorruptible seed. This verse is a reference to being begotten as in verse three. Young’s Concordance = to beget anew.

Booklet: ***Just what do you mean—BORN AGAIN?*** Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, Page 26:

“Peter is here referring to the process having started within us by the incorruptible Spirit of God—not as our human life was begotten by human physical sperm. Peter here shows that the Spirit of God is the incorruptible “seed” that imparted the presence of eternal life within us. Continue: by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.



“Peter continues, chapter 2: **“Wherefore . . . as newborn babes . . .”** Not that we are already born perfect divine spirit persons having entered into and inherited God’s Kingdom. He is comparing the Christian’s spiritual gestation period to that of a newborn human physical baby simply because it would be awkward indeed to compare it to a physical embryo or fetus. He is not saying we are already born babes in God’s Kingdom—but as—or like newborn babes. It is an analogy, which Webster says is a comparison or “likeness between two things . . . consisting in the resemblance not *of the things themselves*, but of two or more attributes, circumstances or effects.

Peter is simply showing that as a newborn human babe must be nourished and GROW physically (even for that matter, so must the unborn fetus) so Christians must grow spiritually . . . unto the perfect man (***Ephesians 4:13***) . . .”
End of Quotes

Jesus Christ made reference to the imperative need of being BORN ONCE AGAIN to Nicodemus a ruler of the Jews. Mr. Armstrong, same booklet, page 32: “The Greek word used in ***John 3:3-8*** for born is *gennao*. Here are the English definitions of the Greek *gennao* from leading lexicons – Greek-English Dictionaries. Thayer: “*gennao*: 1. properly of men begetting children . . . Liddel and Scott: “*gennao*: to beget of the father; to bear, bring forth, of the mother . . .”



One Must be Born from Above

Jesus Christ made reference to the imperative need of a new birth to Nicodemus a ruler of the Jews: **John 3:1-8**

vs. 1-3 "... Jesus ... said to him, "Most assuredly I say to you **UNLESS ONE IS BORN AGAIN** (*Margin: from above*), he **CANNOT SEE the Kingdom of God** (*invisible to the human eye; consider: "If we are BORN AGAIN NOW, as the former ministers and members believe, then we should be able to SEE the Kingdom of God!"*). Nicodemus was perplexed:

v. 4 Nicodemus asked: "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a 2nd Time into his mother's womb and be born?"

Jesus Christ was emphasizing to him the vital need of a new birth—a Spirit Birth—that will come from above. That is why the Greek reveals the birth will come from above as Christ descends into this earth's atmosphere. From there He will then call forth His people from their graves and gather them to Him (**Matthew 24:30-31; I Thessalonians 4:13-18**).

Nicodemus knew that a birth has to come from a mother's womb—therefore he could only understand the physical birth. In response, Jesus said to him:

vs. 5-6 "That which is **BORN OUT** (*Greek*) of the **Flesh** (*out of the human womb of the mother*) is **FLESH**. And that which is **BORN OUT of the SPIRIT** [*s y m b o l i c - W O M B*] is **SPIRIT**.

To make known what this new birth will be like to Nicodemus, Jesus Christ described what it will be like after the new birth takes place:

"Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' "The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from or where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit" (**John 3:7-8**).

To further prove the birth process has not yet been completed, Jesus Christ said:

John 3:13 "No one has ascended to heaven, but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man ..."

None of the patriarchs, prophets, or anyone else has been born again and ascended into heaven. The Apostle Paul wrote all are waiting for Christ to descend from heaven and then they will receive their spirit bodies and rewards (**Hebrews 11; II Corinthians 5:1-5; I Thessalonians 4:13-18**).



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Humanity was designed by the Creator God to be born into this world from their human mother's womb. Considering the duality of Scripture: Will God's Elect be born from a Spiritual Mother's womb while experiencing similar contractions (*Hebrews 11*)? To put this in perspective, Jesus Christ likens the physical birth to the Spiritual birth:

“A woman, when she is in LABOR, has SORROW because her HOUR has come, but as SOON as she has GIVEN BIRTH to her child, she no longer remembers the ANGUISH, for JOY that a human being has been BORN into the world” (*John 16:21*).

The Spirit Womb of the Mother — An Allegory

Allegory = A story, poem, or picture that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning, typically a moral or political one.

- As a **literary device**, an allegory is a **metaphor** whose vehicle may be a character, place or event, representing real-world issues and occurrences. A **metaphor** makes a comparison.

An Allegory a Veiled Meaning Revealed

Who is the MOTHER from whose womb the Elect people of God are to be born out of her womb into God's Spirit Family? The Apostle Paul answers the question:

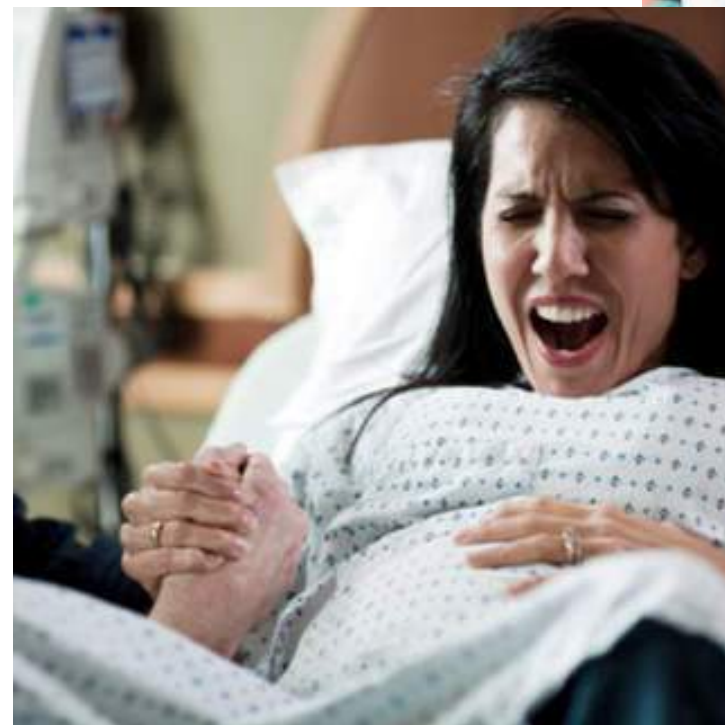
“... But the Jerusalem ABOVE is Free (Sarah in comparison to Hagar the bondwoman), which is the MOTHER of us all (*Jerusalem –symbolic of God's Church –which is to be the BRIDE*



*of Jesus Christ; – for now the affianced human bride of Jesus Christ). . . .” (*Galatians 4:21-31*).*

Same Booklet:

**Mr. Armstrong, Page 19,
The Church Our Mother:**



The same will come to pass when the Elect experiences their Spiritual Birth.

“Again, the Church is called “Jerusalem above,” or “The heavenly Jerusalem” (**Hebrews 12:22-23**). Now notice, in **Galatians 4:26**: “But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.”

The analogy is this: When begotten by God the Father by receiving His Holy Spirit, we are put into the Church, which during this gestation period is out MOTHER. The human mother of the fetus within her womb serves the function of feeding her unborn child with physical food, so that it may develop and grow physically . . . the spiritual mother—the Church—is commissioned to “feed the flock” (**I Peter 5:2**) through the ministry which God has set in the Church for the perfecting of the saints . . . for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man (**Ephesians 4:11-13**) . . .”

End of Comments

The earthly Jerusalem typifies the heavenly Jerusalem:

“But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the Firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect” (**Hebrews 12:22-23**).

This is a reference to those now sleeping in Christ who have already been approved by God and Jesus Christ then to be accepted by Him upon His return to this earth (as in **Hebrews 11**).

The Bride of Jesus Christ

The purifying of the Bride is now taking place (**I Peter 1:22**). This can be compared to Esther who had to be purified and prepared for a year before her time came to be with the King (**Esther 2:1-18**).

So it is with each one of God’s true ELECT as the affianced Bride of Jesus Christ. And our time continues with each year upon the remembrance and preparation for the Passover. And at the completion of the preparation, the Bride will have made herself ready to be accepted by the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, as did Queen Esther. This is made known from the following Scriptures:

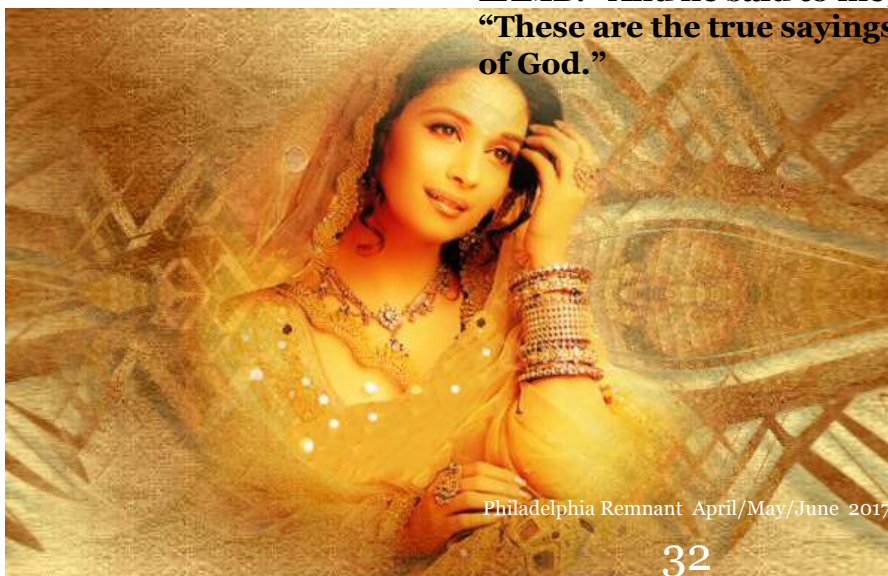
Revelation 19:5-9

v.5 Then a voice came from the throne, saying, “Praise our God, all you His servants and those who FEAR Him, both small and great!”

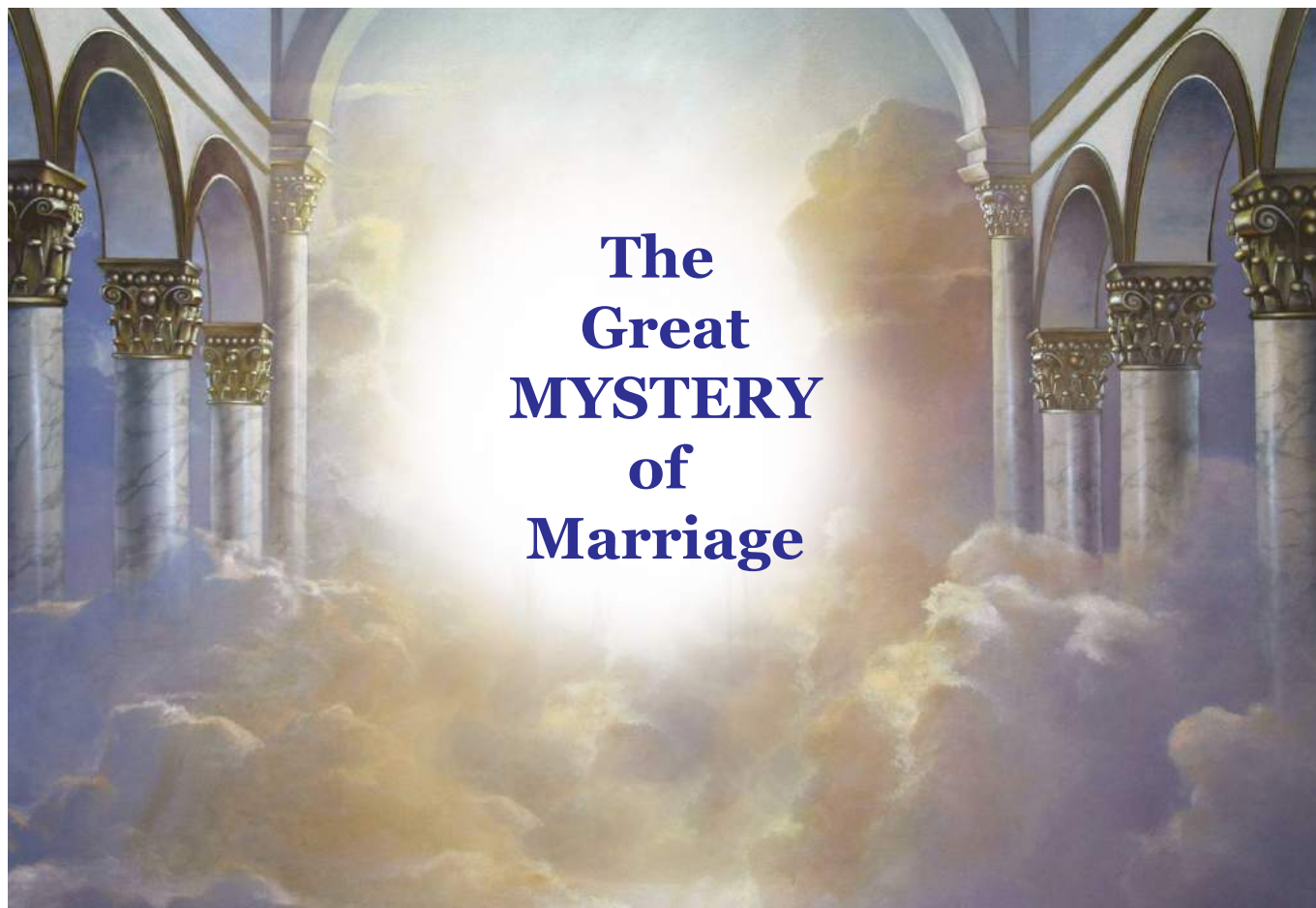
v.6 And I heard, as it were the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, “Alleluia! For the LORD GOD OMNIPOTENT REIGNS!”

v.7 ‘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.’

vs.8-9 And to her it was granted to be ARRAYED in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, “Write: “Blessed are those who are called to the MARRIAGE SUPPER of the LAMB.” And he said to me, “These are the true sayings of God.”



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The Great MYSTERY of Marriage

The God-ordained Marriages among His true Elect in human life are a TYPE of the Spiritual Marriage yet to take place between Jesus Christ and His Church along with the obvious parallels that are to be carried over into the Spiritual when BORN AGAIN.

Consider the parallel of the physical marriage to the Spiritual marriage that will come to be between Jesus Christ and His Bride in the following Scriptures:

***Ephesians 5:22-33* Marriage—Christ and the Church**

vs.22-24 “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the LORD. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is HEAD of the Church, and is the SAVIOR of the Body. Therefore, just as the Church is SUBJECT to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

vs.25-27 “Husbands LOVE your lives, just as Christ also LOVED the Church and gave Himself for her, that He might SANCTIFY and CLEANSE her with the WASHING of the WORD, that He might PRESENT to HIMSELF a Glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be HOLY and without Blemish.

vs.28-29 “So husbands ought to LOVE their own WIVES as their own bodies; he who LOVES his Wife LOVES Himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but NOURISHES and CHERISHES it just as the LORD does the CHURCH (*cf. I Peter 3:7*).

vs.30-31 “For we are MEMBERS of HIS BODY, of His Flesh, and of HIS Bones. For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother and be JOINED to his wife, and the TWO shall become ONE FLESH.”

EXPERIMENTAL Commentary (**Matthew 19:5**): The natural marriage, husband and wife, combine to form one perfect human being; the one is the compliment of the other.”

The Apostle Paul concludes this writing by saying:

vs.32-33 “**This is a great MYSTERY, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. Nevertheless, let each one of you in particular so LOVE his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband** (cf. *1 Peter 3:1-6*).”

Preparation for the Near Future

This writing so far should enable one to see the vital need of preparing for the future, having covered areas, such as—marriages, being born again, etc.

They all tie together for the needed understanding to be preparing, with God’s grace and mercy, to be BORN into God’s Family. And this Spirit Birth will take place upon the return of Jesus Christ to this earth. Then Christ, the Bridegroom, and His Bride, will begin bringing to an end the evil of this world by isolating Satan the devil and all of his demons for a 1000 years (**Revelation 20:1-3**).

The Feast of Firstfruits

If we will notice, this says—the ‘FEAST’ of Firstfruits. This has the meaning of the resurrected saints enjoying a sumptuous and delightful feast, a feast of the finest quality: “of choice pieces, wine on the lees of fat things full of marrow, of well refined wine on the lees (**Isaiah 25:6**). Remember, Christ said He would “no longer drink wine with His disciples until He would drink it new in My Father’s Kingdom (**Matthew 26:29**).

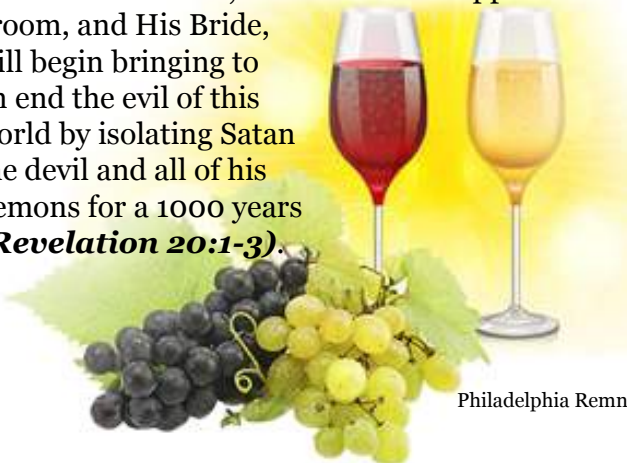
After meeting Jesus Christ in the clouds (**Revelation 15:2; 14:1-3**), and being judged by Him, each one having received his or her reward (**Matthew 16:27**), then will be the Feast—meaning the Marriage Supper.

After meeting Jesus Christ in the clouds (**Revelation 15:2; 14:1-3**), and being judged by Him, each one having received his or her reward (**Matthew 16:27**), then will be the Feast—meaning the Marriage Supper. For understanding, Jesus Christ, in a parable, likens Himself to a human master over his servants that typifies the coming marriage supper:

“Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching (Luke 21:36**), assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them” (**Luke 12:37**).**

In type, the same took place after Jesus Christ married Israel and the marriage supper almost immediately followed as Scripture makes known:

For understanding, Jesus Christ, in a parable, likens Himself to a human master over his servants that typifies the coming marriage supper:



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Then Moses went up (*into the mountain- type of the resurrected saints rising to meet Christ in the air, Matthew 24:31; I Thessalonians 4:13-18*), also Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders

of Israel (*the chosen few – a type of the Elect Bride*) and they **SAW the God of Israel**. And there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone (*Revelation 15:2*), and it was like the very

heavens in its clarity. But on the nobles of the children of Israel (*in type: the chosen resurrected saints*) **He did not lay His hand** (*In type: His Spirit Bride*). **So they ATE AND DRANK** (*in type: the coming marriage supper*)” (*Exodus 24:9-11*).



A Few Short Years Remaining

Considering the few years before the coming of Jesus Christ, God's people should be trying very hard to make the most of them for our eternity is at stake. And it begins with the Passover, then to be followed by the Feast of Firstfruits—the Passover makes known the needed purification from sin, then followed by the glorious resurrection as Firstfruits into God's Spirit Family.

This should excite us with great anticipation to know that very soon our human bodies will be absorbed by our Spirit bodies (*II Corinthians 5:1-8*), and then be able to see and worship our heavenly Father as the Bride of Jesus Christ, as made know by the Apostle Paul:

“Behold, I tell you A MYSTERY; we shall not all sleep, but we shall be CHANGED—in a moment, IN THE TWINKLING OF AN EYE, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be RAISED INCORRUPTIBLE, AND WE SHALL BE CHANGED. For this corruptible MUST put on immortality” (*I Corinthians 15:51-53*).

Thy Kingdom Come.

The End

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Biblical Historical Duality



and America

“That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything of which it may be said, “See, this is new”? It has already been done in ancient times before us.” Ecclesiastes 1:9-10

Alton B. Don Billingsley

The Few Remaining Years

While considering Prophecy together with the current state of America makes very clear it has very little time left as a nation before its demise (***Jeremiah 30:4-7***). Though it has always had its flaws, never has it come to be as bad as it now has come to be! Its recent leadership has completely destroyed everything in it of moral value while destroying its constituted freedom and practice of religion.

Very soon prophecy reveals Jesus Christ is going to severely chastise the leadership and people of this nation for their abominable sins—possibly in about 14 years! Why this number? It connects to the year 2026 that would possibly be the time of the demise of this country—to be conquered by the Revived Roman Empire, enormous numbers of its people slaughtered, and the

remainder carried away into slavery (***cf. II Kings 17:5-18***). Consider this number once again from another view.

The Nation’s 250th Birth Year

In his address to Congress, Tuesday night February 28, 2017, President Trump mentioned this nation would soon be observing its 250th Birthday – and the following are his words.

INTERNET (QUOTES) “Our allies will find once again

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America is ready to lead. All the nations of the world, friend or foe, will find that America is strong, America is proud, and America is free.

In nine years, the United States will celebrate the 250th anniversary of our founding — 250 years since the day we declared our independence. It will be one of the great milestones in the history of the world. But what will America look like as we reach our 250th year? What kind of country will we leave for our children?

End of Quotes

Nine Years - 2026

When considering the prophecies to take place in the very near future (**Ezekiel 7:1-12**), this nation will not have cause to joyfully celebrate this Anniversary in 2026 for very obvious reasons as this writing will make known.

Think about the numbers connecting with the year 2026: Nine years from this year, 2017, will be year 2026; the 250th birthday of America, that had its beginning in 1776. Instead of joyful festivities in celebration—it will come to a most terrible and tragic end as God makes known in many prophecies (*cf. Isaiah 30:4-7*).

While considering this present year of 2017 that connects with the beginning year of President Trump, it appears his term in office will last no

more than four years for obvious reasons. Moving forward to 2021, the next president will very likely be Hillary Clinton (*74 years of age; or another woman*). Whoever, her term in office will very probably end in 2026 if not before (*cf. Isaiah 3:11-12*). This would connect with the 250th birthday of America.

Prophecy and Historical Dualities

When we consider all the factors connected with Donald Trump to become the President of this country (**Daniel 4:25, 32**), there is no question but that God raised up this man for this particular time, just as He did with King Josiah the last righteous king to reign over the nation of Judah. And when considering the factors with both men during their use by God there appears to be almost perfect duality with them.

While realizing further prophecies are yet to be fulfilled before the demise of this country, and considering the conditions in Europe and in the Middle East, it appears God chose Donald Trump as president to use him to enable the fulfillment of them with the powers of his office:

- To bring about the revival of the Roman Empire with his effort to make America great again at the expense of Europe.

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- To also make possible the rebuilding of the third Temple in Jerusalem.



Considering further the duality of Biblical History, it becomes easy to see the parallel of King Josiah of Judah with President Trump of America. King Josiah was a reformer who made the effort of turning the nation of Judah back to God from its enormous ungodly lawlessness during the reign of King Manasseh, the evilest king to ever rule over Judah, who had preceded Josiah as king over Judah.

Now before him there was no king like him who turned to the LORD with all his might, according to the law of Moses, NOR after him did anyone arise (II Chronicles 34:25).

The same has been said about President Trump: No president ever before like him in the history of this nation, and will never be again. Like Josiah, he is also a reformer trying to change the status quo in Washington D. C. from its ungodly evil ways by making America great again. This is a major reason why he is hated.

The majority of society loves their free-wheeling life-style of evil and will fight against anyone seeking to change it.

King Josiah's reigning years also gave the needed time to fit within God's perfect Time Table before sending the nation into Babylonian captivity. The presidential years of Donald Trump is also giving this nation the needed time before the last president comes into office and bring it to its end by the Revived Roman Empire in Europe.

The Historical Duality with King Josiah and President Trump

God intended His true and faithful people to learn from Biblical history and connect it with the present where they would fit into the correct pattern with all of the related Scriptures. And they do as will be illustrated by further comparing the reign of King Josiah to that of President Trump:

Josiah was 8 years old when he became king, and he reigned 31 years in Jerusalem. And he did what was right in the sight of the LORD (*II Chronicles 34:1-28*; cf. *II Kings 22:1-20*).

In the 18th year of King Josiah the Book of the Law was found in the House of God. After listening to the reading of God's great wrath to befall Judah for its abominable practices (*Deuteronomy 28*), King Josiah was then moved to

make great reforms in Judah due to realizing God's great wrath was to befall the Kingdom of Judah.

However reading other Scriptures that connect with that time it becomes evident the people of Judah were divided in belief and practices. Possibly half or more of the people loved the evil ways of the previous king, Manasseh! They continued practicing their evil in idolatrous practices and felt no remorse due to the name of God having been removed by King Manasseh.

This brought about great division in their society between those who wanted to do right and those who continued their evil practices.

To understand the division, consider the prophet of God, Jeremiah, who began prophesying to Judah during the reign of King Josiah:

The words of Jeremiah . . . to whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah . . . king of Judah in the 13th year of his reign (*II Kings 22:1*), (*Jeremiah 1:1-2*).

It was in King Josiah's 18th year that he began making great reforms in Judah upon hearing the reading of the 28th chapter of the Book of Deuteronomy from the Book of the Law that had been found in *the Temple* (*II Kings 22:3-17*, *Jeremiah had been prophesying for 5 years in Judah at this time*).



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The Duality and Comparison with King Josiah and President Trump

Like Judah at that time, America is not only deeply divided but also a broken nation. Every effort by President Trump to turn the nation around from its evil and make America great again is met with hostility by the embittered Democratic Party who is fighting against him on every issue along with many in the Republican Party. He is hated by all of them for upsetting their status quo. They are blinded to the fact they are bringing about its demise and with it the probable end of their lives as well! It is so broken and bitterly divided there is no fixing it. Internet: "A [Gallup survey](#) that was conducted after the election in November found that

an all-time record high 77 percent of all Americans believe that "the nation is divided on the most important values"... Nobody can force half the population to suddenly change their views on the most important issues of the day.

"There really is no compromising with the forces of political correctness. Either you get in line or you are the enemy. Once upon a time the values enshrined in the U.S. Constitution by our founders united us,

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but today about half the country has completely rejected those values." End of Quotes

Division is a Destroyer

Jesus Christ spoke about the critical problem of division: **"Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand (Matthew 12:25)."** Unless corrected, this division will soon bring about the demise of this *dis-United States of America!* (cf. Isaiah 6:9-13)!

The Worst of the Evil Rulers in America

It was during the eight years of the presidency of Bill Clinton who began the toboggan slide into the depths of immorality while refusing to halt the murder of the unborn babies.

President Clinton— Presidential term: January 20, 1993 – January 20, 2001

Clinton Vetoes Ban on Procedure in Late Abortions

April 11, 1996|MELISSA HEALY | TIMES STAFF WRITER

• WASHINGTON — President Clinton on Wednesday vetoed a bill that would outlaw a controversial late-term abortion procedure, taking pains to minimize the political cost of a potentially unpopular decision [*depicting the evils of society with no regard or remorse for the unborn babies*]. Symbolically, Rachel weeping for her children (**Jeremiah 31:15**).

• **President Obama—
Presidential term:** January 20, 2009 – January 20, 2017, 9:00 AM PST

President Obama brought this nation to its lowest level by destroying the remains of its social values during his eight years in that office— far lower than President Clinton. Society was given legal license from Congress and the Supreme Court to free them from the social stigma that would have once affected those who had left the boundaries of normal use of sex between men and women! He has made possible the transgender to enter the bathroom of choice (*There are too many evils he made possible in this limited writing*).

And to remove any guilt of conscience he eliminated the outward show of the worship of God in America. Using political correctness, the Chaplains in the military, in the governmental offices and in the school system on all levels, were no longer permitted to use the name of God and Jesus Christ in their prayers or speeches. Presently before the supreme court is the question whether a person or company has freedom of religion. This speaks of the sway of the use of Satan the devil on the former president, Barak Obama.

Though President Trump is not righteous in the context of what God expects with His people as was King Josiah,

but when considering the evil of this age, he could be considered a righteous man by the efforts he is making to undo many of the evils brought about by President Obama.

He is also trying to restore this nation to its former greatness while making the effort of keeping his promise to the people who God used to vote him into office. Further, he used God's name in his inaugural address to the nation. His wife read the Lord's Prayer in a recent meeting. This brought the religious people out of hiding for fear of using God's name or the name of Jesus Christ during the presidency of Barak Obama.



King Manasseh the Most Evil King of Judah

The parallel with King Josiah was the king who preceded him, the vilest king of all Judah, King Manasseh, who reigned over Judah—

Manasseh was 12 year old when he became king, and he reigned 55 years in Jerusalem. But he did evil in the sight of the LORD according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel (II Chronicles 33:1-11; cf. II Kings 21:1-16).

The parallel with President Trump is President Obama. The former president is almost an exact replica of King Manasseh! And though he is no longer president, the news media is making known he is still involved in trying to destroy President Trump along with his effort of bringing this nation back to where he left it.

Further, it is believed by many his intention is to bring it all the way down into socialism and make it a totally defenseless and an ungodly nation. The news media further revealed no nation really had respect for him in his travels abroad. As God said about King Manasseh during the reign of King Josiah of Judah, the same applies to President Obama, during this present reign of President Trump in America.

II Kings 23:26-27

v.26 “Nevertheless the LORD did not turn from the fierceness of His great WRATH, with which His ANGER was aroused against Judah, BECAUSE of all the provocations with which Manasseh (In type: Presidents’ Clinton and Obama) had PROVOKED Him.

v.27 And the LORD said, “I will also REMOVE Judah (America) from My sight, as I have REMOVED Israel, and will CAST off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the House of which I said, ‘My Name shall be there.’”

The Historical Duality of King Manasseh with the Present Time

For obvious reasons, God’s use of Donald Trump will end after serving 4 years as president. All the prophecies and numbers point to this being a fact. Afterwards, God will permit the Democratic Party to dominate and elect a woman who will break the glass ceiling. This will then bring about the end of America as a nation.

God’s faithful Elect will flee to the place of protection that will have been provided for them just a few short months before this takes place (**Revelation 9: 5, 10; 12:14**).

Will YOU be among them?



Church of God - Faithful Flock
P.O. Box 130
Valley Springs, CA 95252



Below are web Sites made available by the Church of God - Faithful Flock as Bible resouce tools.

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

Free Online Bible Study
www.cog-ff/biblestudytools

The Ten Commandments
www.10commandments.ws

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

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

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

Herbert Armstrong-His Life & Work
www.herbertarmstrong.info

Lost Ten Tribes of Israel
www.losttentribes.org

Prophetic Events
www.propheticevents.com

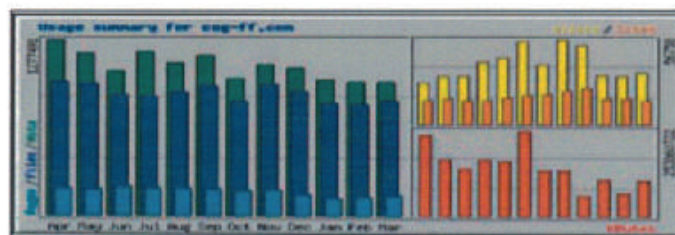
Restored Truths of God
www.restoredtruths.net

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

COGFF-Home School Association
www.coghomeschool.org

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

Watchman for the House of Israel
www.ezekielwatchman.org



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