

# The Philadelphia Remnant

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January/February/March 2024

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





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January/February/March 2024

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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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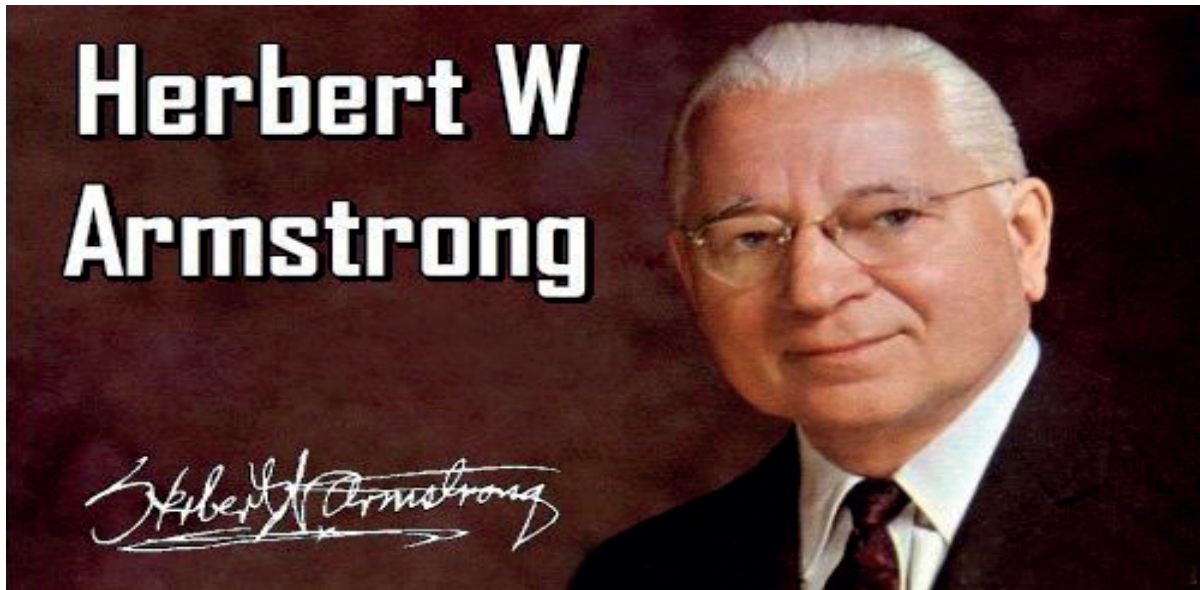
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## ***HEALING IN OUR TIME?***

You live in a world that relies primarily on medical doctors to treat illness. Most professing Christians today say: "God raised up medical science for our day. Jesus healed to prove He was the Messiah. But the day of miracles is now past." Some, who think God heals through self-professed faith healers, attend public healing shows. Some believe in healing by one of the forms of "mental science"—the power of mind over matter. Others say: "Well, I think God can heal—IF it's His will. But how can we know whether it's His will?"

Yes, people say! But what does God say?

Does He reveal whether He still heals, why He heals, how He heals, whether and when it is His will? For the answers, we go to the Bible.

### ***Christ's Ministry Was Dual***

Let's begin at the beginning. Actually, there are two beginnings, so far as the subject of healing is concerned—one is in the New Testament, with Christ; the other in the Old Testament, with the people of ancient Israel. We shall begin with the ministry of Jesus. Later, many readers will be surprised to learn how much is recorded on the

subject throughout the Old Testament.

More than 1,900 years ago—in A.D. 27-31—Jesus Christ appeared on earth as a messenger bearing history's most important message from God to mankind. His mission was prophesied in ***Malachi 3:1***.

That message actually was a stupendous NEWS ANNOUNCEMENT. The news was the most transcendent GOOD NEWS! It was the GOSPEL (*which means "good news"*) of Jesus Christ.

Jesus' ministry was a dual ministry and a miraculous ministry. Jesus came also healing the sick by the divine POWER of God. It was not the power of human mind over matter. Few realize the extent to which healing and casting out demons were an integral part of Jesus' ministry. Later, the apostles proclaimed His same message and healed the sick.

### ***Ministry of Healing Ceases***

It comes as an astounding shock to learn that long before the end of the first century, the proclamation of Christ's gospel to the world



and the ministry of physical healing ceased!

But WHY?

Christ's gospel was the glorious messianic announcement of the coming world-ruling KINGDOM OF GOD. It was the announcement of the wonderful WORLD TOMORROW! It was not a message of doom!—except for explaining the causes of the doom of this world's evils, sufferings, and unhappiness. It was a joyous announcement of coming world peace, universal happiness, and well-being!

But the leaders of the people in Judea misunderstood and resented both that good NEWS and Jesus' MIRACLES.

Jesus' miracles were public, but they weren't healing shows. He simply healed the sick wherever He came to them, or they came to Him. But of course, the miracles attracted enormous crowds. Many began to believe on Him.

This alarmed the chief priests and the ruling Pharisees. It stirred them to violent persecution. They totally misunderstood Jesus' message! His news announcement was that of the yet-to-come Kingdom of God, not—as they supposed—of the overthrow of the Roman government of *their* day.

The Romans, then ruling the Western world, avoided most of the details of government administration in Judea by allowing the Jews to rule themselves at the lower levels.

The Pharisaic rulers loved their position of authority. They viewed Jesus as an anti-Roman agitator proposing to overthrow the Roman rule. They feared being imprisoned as seditionists if they sided in any way with Jesus. They plotted to kill Him, and at God's set time Jesus was crucified, making possible man's reconciliation with God.

## ***Power of the Holy Spirit Given***

God miraculously raised Jesus from the dead, making possible eternal life for humanity. On the 50th day (*called Pentecost*) after His resurrection, the 120 converts of Jesus, including the apostles, received the POWER of the Holy Spirit of God. In that power they proclaimed the good news of the Kingdom of God. In the same divine power from God by which Christ healed, they healed the sick wherever they went.

But, as with Jesus, so now with the apostles:

The miracles drew tremendous crowds. Without any pressured solicitations, thousands were converted and baptized. But soon the persecution against them multiplied.

Two years after Jesus' resurrection, A.D. 33, Simon the Sorcerer (***Acts 8***), the Pater

(*father or Peter*) of the Babylonian mystery religion in Samaria, after being rejected by Peter, appropriated the name of Christ and applied it to his Babylonian mystery religion, calling it "Christianity." Simon and his followers began systematic opposition and persecution against the true Church of God, founded in A.D. 31 by Jesus Christ. (*How the Babylonian mystery religion was moved into Samaria in 718 B.C. is explained in II Kings 17:18-24.*)

## ***Gentile and Jewish Opposition***

The earliest opposition against Christ's Church was Jewish, opposing the acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah. Judaizers insisted on observing the temporary rituals of Mosaic law. For this reason the early ministry of the apostles put prime emphasis on the replacement of rituals by the Holy Spirit, and on the resurrec-





tion, infallible proof of Christ's messiahship. The apostles were personally with Jesus for 3 1/2 years before His crucifixion and for 40 days after His resurrection—so they were eyewitnesses to the resurrection.

After A.D. 33, as the work of this Simon the Sorcerer spread, the opposition to the true Church became Gentile. The writings of Paul, as well as ***I and II Peter, of James, of I, II and III John and Jude***, show the Gentile opposition was primarily aimed against the law of God. Simon appropriated the doctrine of grace from the teaching of the apostles, but it was grace turned into the license to disobey (***Jude 4***).

They preached a false Jesus who, they said, did away with the basic spiritual law of God. Simon and his followers preached a totally different gospel than the apostles—primarily that of their own Babylonian mystery religion with grace and Christ's name added. Of course, they got it to the Galatians.

To the Galatians, Paul wrote: **"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel" (*Galatians 1:6*)**.

To the Corinthians, Paul wrote: **"For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus ... or another gospel ... " (*II Corinthians 11:4*)**. Of these Simon Magus-type preachers, Paul wrote: **"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness" (*verses 13-15*)**.

It was Satan—the former cherub Lucifer (***Isaiah 14: 12-15; Ezekiel 28: 12-17***)—who originally rebelled against the GOVERNMENT OF GOD and caused its removal from the earth. Satan is the god of this world (***II Corinthians***

***4:4***). He has his churches and his ministers. They oppose the law of God. Therefore, they oppose the KINGDOM of God, since it is governed by the laws of God. These apostles of Satan offered the world an easier religion. Obedience was unnecessary.

## ***Dark Age Begins***



The opposition of Simon's false church finally snuffed out the proclaiming of the MESSAGE of the KINGDOM OF GOD. Before the end of the first century, the curtain was systematically brought down on all the records of the true Church history.

When the curtain lifted, late in the second century, we beheld a "Christianity" utterly unlike that of Christ and His original apostles. Its doctrines, sacraments and customs were those of the Babylonian mystery religion. It persecuted and martyred those true Christians still holding to the teachings and customs of Christ and His apostles. Christ's doctrines and customs were branded as "Jewish." The term "Jewish" became a dirty word—an epithet.

The message God sent to mankind by Jesus Christ—the true gospel Christ preached, the announcement of the coming KINGDOM OF GOD—was done away by expediently calling THE CHURCH (*Simon's*). Some, later, reduced the KINGDOM OF GOD to an ethereal indescribable something "set up in men's hearts". Thus, through manipulations of "the god of this world," Satan, by whom ALL NAT-



TIONS HAVE BEEN DECEIVED (**Revelation 12:9**), the true GOSPEL MESSAGE CHRIST BROUGHT was suppressed and not proclaimed to the world after the first century!

Healing the sick as a regular practice had ceased also. Thus, the DUAL ministry of Christ and the apostles was no part of what the world has accepted as traditional Christianity. But, persecuted over the centuries, mostly unrecognized by the world, the true and original Church of God has continued through all generations to the present.

In the Book of Revelation, two churches are described. One, in the 12th chapter, the true and original Church of God, small and persecuted, having to endure hardship, persecution and martyrdom for survival; the other, in the 17th chapter, the great politically popular church, ruling over kings and nations of this world, drunk with the blood of saints and martyrs of Jesus.

For 18 1/2 centuries Christ's true gospel—HIS MESSAGE from God of the coming KINGDOM OF GOD—had not been proclaimed to the world. It was only taught to the comparative few—secretly—who kept the Church of God alive through the centuries.

### ***Gospel Restored***

The original one and only true Church of God still lives! And still persecuted, maligned, misrepresented, it is restoring the true gospel of Jesus Christ today! It is sending out that good news worldwide—as a witness for all nations, in real POWER!

Christ's doctrine of healing the sick is also being restored. There have been multiple thousands of miraculous healings. But not, in our time, spectacular public displays of sensational miracles to attract both crowds and added persecutions. The REASONS for this and the truth about the whole subject of healing will be made plain in this writing.

There have been "gospel" programs—scores of them—all over the world. But, as Paul described, they have each been another gospel. Christ's MESSAGE was suppressed. Christ has been preached to the world—but a *different Jesus*.

*But, what about healing the sick today?*

*How is it being restored in God's Church?*  
Yes, there are answers to these questions that deal with *healing the sick today*.

*Yes, there is an answer to these questions that deal with healing the sick today.*





## WHAT THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS REVEAL

Many believe today that Jesus healed and performed miracles only to demonstrate He was the Christ, but we read of miraculous healings all through the Old Testament.

The Israelites, on their trek out of Egyptian slavery, came to Marah. The water was too bitter to drink. Of course, the people griped and blamed Moses. Moses cried out to God, who performed a miracle, making the waters sweet. Then God said: **"If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Eternal thy God and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Eternal that healeth thee" (Exodus 15:26).**

### The God Who Heals

Those last five words are translated from the Hebrew name Yahweh-Rapha, one of God's names, meaning the "healing God" or the "God who heals."

In **Exodus 23:25**, God is quoted speaking to the children of Israel: **"... I will take sickness away from the midst of thee."**

Again, in **Deuteronomy 7:15**, **"And the Eternal will take away from thee all sickness. ..."** and in **Deuteronomy 32:39**, God is quoted: **"... I heal. ..."**

David prayed: **Psalms 30:2: "O Eternal my God, I cried unto Thee, and Thou hast healed me." Psalm 41:4: "Lord, be merciful unto me: heal my soul. ..." Psalm 6:2: "Have mercy upon me, O Eternal; for I am weak: O Lord, heal me ..." Psalm 103:3 "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases."**

Is it God's will to heal? some ask. Others say, "I know He could heal me IF it's His will." Is it His will to forgive? Then, He says, it is also His will to HEAL—all our diseases.

**Psalms 107:17-20 "Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted. Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat [food], and they draw near unto the gates of death. Then they cry unto the Eternal in their trouble, and He saveth them out of their distresses. "He sendeth His word, and healeth them, and delivereth them from their destructions."**

The original Hebrew signifies the present tense. This is a case of one who has been very foolish and brought the sickness upon himself. But, on repentance, God forgives, and has mercy, and heals.

### Specific Case History

God had said to ancient Israel, **"I am Yahweh-Rapha" that is, "I am the Eternal who heals you," or "I am your healing God," or "I am your God-healer."** He also said in the Ten Commandments: **"Thou shalt have no other gods before Me."**

Healing is the forgiveness of physical sin. None but God can forgive sin. None but God heals! God is a jealous God. He is not going to allow anyone else to heal. Medicines and drugs do not, cannot HEAL!

Notice the case of King Asa of Judah. He turned to the king of Syria for help and paid him money to become an ally. God had said He would fight Judah's battles for them. This hiring of allies God calls harlotry, in which the harlot pays instead of being paid.

King Asa forsook God—like a wife forsaking her husband and hiring lovers—and this, after having previously relied on God for victories! God sent a prophet to remind Asa of what he



was doing. But Asa, in hot anger, had the prophet imprisoned. Later, Asa was stricken with a serious disease. ***II Chronicles 16:12-13.***

God wants His people to rely on Him, to TRUST Him. He wants to do things for us that we cannot do for ourselves. He wants us to learn the lesson of faith!

Notice another case history, recorded in ***II Kings 1:2-4.*** King Ahaziah, king of Israel at Samaria, was the son of the evil Ahab and sought Baalzebub, the god of Ekron, who was the patron deity of medicine—the medicine god of Ekron. The manner in which people inquired of this god was through the medical doctors.

Is it because some of us do not know and rely on the true God that we rely instead on medical doctors? God has said, **"I am the God who heals you."**

You can read another case history from the Old Testament. It's the example of King Hezekiah. It is recorded in ***II Kings 20:1-7.*** He put his heart into his prayer. He OBEYED God. He had the right attitude. He did not now turn to seek human help but trusted God alone.

### ***New Testament Teaching***

Earlier, we saw that proclaiming the ANNOUNCEMENT of the Kingdom of God and healing went hand in hand in Jesus' ministry. One passage in Matthew summarizes it: **"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people" (Matthew 4:23).**

Beginning in chapter 8: **"When He was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. And behold, there came a leper and worshipped Him, saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make**

**me clean" (verses 1-2).**

Here again comes the answer to the frequently expressed doubt, "Well, I know God could heal me if it's His will—but how can we know His will?" Here is the answer: **"And Jesus put forth His hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed" (verse 3).**

The Gentiles were not excluded, and you can read about this in the Book of ***Matthew 8:5-13.***

### ***How God Heals***

Next, we need to UNDERSTAND how God heals. And we need to see, further how both the gospel and healing tie together. Both operate on the same principle—one being spiritual, the other physical.

God is the CREATOR. But also He is the Great Designer, Educator, and Lawgiver. Whatever God does He does with purpose and with order, according to the principles of His law. There can be no law without a penalty for its transgression.

God never compromises with His laws or their penalties. Once a law is transgressed, a penalty is incurred. Once a penalty is incurred, it must be paid. God never suspends the penalty.

The biblical definition of SIN is the transgression of LAW (***I John 3:4***). In the spiritual sense, in connection with the gospel, the basic law of the Kingdom of God is the spiritual law (***Romans 7:14***) set in inexorable, relentless motion—the law of LOVE, the "GIVE" way of life—the principle of the Ten Commandments.

The penalty for transgression is DEATH (***Romans 6:23***)—eternal death, the absence of eternal life. All have sinned. Sin sets up an impassable barrier between the sinner and God. The penalty—death—must be paid! God will not compromise a thousandth of an inch on that!

Then how do we get FREE from that penalty? How may we avoid paying it? By the fact that Christ paid it for us. Christ never committed sin. He never brought that penalty on Himself. Being the actual Maker of all mankind (***Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:13-16***), His life was greater than the sum total of ALL other human lives. When He died on the stake, He took our penalty on Himself. He paid the death penalty for all mankind—conditioned on our repentance and faith. He paid the penalty FOR us, *in our stead. We may be healed by the same principle.*

God made man of the dust of the ground (***Genesis 2:7***). We are composed of matter. He designed our bodies so that they function according to definite physical laws.

In the human body, there are a number of systems—for example, the digestive system, the respiratory system, the circulatory system, the reproductive system, etc. Each function separately, yet all work in perfect harmony with each other. They function according to definite physical LAWS. Those laws, when transgressed, exact a PENALTY.

When a person is sick or has contracted a disease, he is simply paying the PENALTY of a transgressed physical law in his body. One may not himself have broken a physical law. It could have been an accident. It could have been from a contagious disease contracted without his knowledge.

In the case of Job (***Job 2:6-7***), Satan was the cause of Job's ailments for a special purpose, by God's permission. Nevertheless, sickness and disease are the penalty being paid for broken physical law.

God, the great Lawgiver, demands that the penalty must be paid! God never compromises that principle! No HEALING without the penalty having been PAID!

### ***Jesus Paid the Penalty***

So now let's continue in the eighth chapter of Matthew: **"When the even was come [sunset, ending that Sabbath day], they brought unto Him many that were possessed with devils [demons]: and he cast out the spirits with His Word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias [Isaiah] the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Matthew 8:16-17).**

Jesus paid the penalty in our stead. Like the forgiveness of spiritual sin, God has paid the penalty for us by sending His Son Jesus to suffer the penalty in our stead. The penalty for physical transgression is physical punishment—sickness or disease, physical impairment, pain and suffering, or physical death.

Healing does not mean that God suspends the penalty so that no penalty is paid. Instead, Jesus has already paid it for us. Therefore, God may legally remove the penalty from the human sufferer. But it is nonetheless a MIRACLE!

The Scripture above quoted says Jesus Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses—but NOT ON THE STAKE. They scourged Jesus, beat Him, breaking open the flesh of His body, before taking Him to Golgotha to be nailed to the stake.

### ***The Scourging***

***Matthew 27:24-26*** "When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude ... Then released he Barabbas unto them, and when he had scourge Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified."

***Mark 15:15***: "And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus when



**he had scourged Him, to be crucified."**

**John 19:1: "Then Pilate therefore took Jesus and scourged Him."** This was prior to turning Jesus over to be crucified, which is not recorded until verse 16 of the same chapter: **"Then delivered he [Pilate] Him [Jesus] therefore unto them to be crucified."**

I think it vitally important that we realize, at this point, two things:

**1)** What a TREMENDOUS price God Himself, through Christ, paid so that He might perform for us this MIRACLE OF HEALING. This shows God's will. He is so willing, indeed so anxious, to relieve us from the pain, suffering, or affliction that He gave His only begotten Son—the One who is our very Maker—to be beaten, to suffer in our stead, so that, without violating any principle of His LAW, we may be healed. **Psalms 103:8-13.**

We need to realize God's LOVE and compassion. Healing must not be taken for granted or treated cheaply. THINK of Him who is the Maker of all mankind—One so GREAT—submitting Himself to be beaten as no man ever was so that He might perform this MIRACLE for us!

**2)** How IMPORTANT it is to God NEVER to compromise His law. We might reason that it would be easier for God, in each case of healing, to simply prevent the penalty from taking effect, but that would VIOLATE HIS LAW! That is what Satan is trying to do—make God's laws inoperable, abolish the penalty, deal with the EFFECT, ignoring the CAUSE.

Medical "science" operates primarily on that method—trying, with medicines, to prevent God's law from exacting its penalty. That theory says, in effect, we can transgress God's law and then prevent God's law from exacting its penalty.

The theory is: The sufferer has in his body one poison, so we add another poison in the form of medicine. And one poison plus one more poison equals NO poison!

God has gone to great lengths a) to bestow upon us His love and mercy and b) to be consistent with His law. God's arithmetic is One poison minus that one poison equals NO poison.

Now, notice just how severely Jesus was beaten. In Isaiah 52 and 53, it was foretold. In the Revised Standard Version, this passage reads: **"As many were astonished at Him—His appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and His form beyond that of the sons of men—so shall He startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of Him; for that which has not been told them they shall see, and that which they have not heard they shall understand (verse 14-15)."**

Notice the tenses. Many were (*when He was beaten with stripes*) astonished—His body beaten and marred more than any man. So shall (*at His coming in supreme POWER and GLORY*) many nations be startled at Him.

This is affirmed in the New Testament: **"Who did not sin ... by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Peter 2:22, 24).**

### ***At the Passover Service***

There is a very clear teaching regarding Christ having paid the physical penalty, as well as the spiritual penalty of death, in connection with Passover service instruction.

It is in the Apostle Paul's instruction to the Corinthians, which represents the annual memorial of His death, on the actual anniversary of His crucifixion in **1 Corinthians 11:23-30.**

The Revised Standard Version translates that last sentence: "That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died"—not realizing Jesus Himself paid the penalty for physical transgressions of the laws of the human body, by allowing His body to be broken open by many stripes, and not relying on the living Christ for their HEALING!

Is it His WILL to heal us? This passage, especially as emphasized in the RSV, says we shall be judged if we NEGLECT (see **Hebrews 2:3**) so great a price paid so that we might be kept WELL!

### ***Forgiveness of Physical Sin***

Now back to Matthew's account of Jesus' ministry. We had last covered the eighth chapter and 17th verse. We come now to the ninth chapter.

Jesus came again to His own city, where He then resided in Capernaum. **“And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed ...** Notice Mark's account of the same incident in **Mark 2:1**. Luke gives more details of this same incident in **Luke 5:17-26**.

This incident, reported in all three Books of **Matthew, Mark, and Luke**, confirms, in the words of Jesus Christ Himself, that physical healing is indeed "the forgiveness of sin." Sin is defined (**I John 3:4**) as "the transgression of LAW," as correctly translated.

Physical sin is the transgression of physical law operating in the human body. To pay this penalty in our stead, Jesus was scourged, chastised, beaten with stripes.

On the other hand, spiritual sin, which imposes the penalty of the second death eternal death is the transgression of the spiritual law (**Romans 7:13-14**), the law summed up by the Ten Commandments. Jesus paid the penalty for both. Doctors, medicines, and drugs can no more forgive physical sins than spiritual sins.

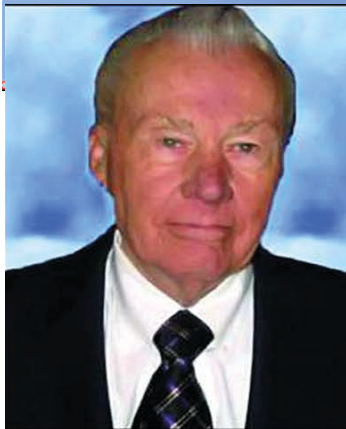
### *Divine Healing*



*They cannot heal!*







Though I am yet unable to be there with you, I can still make known my presence to the times we have yet to live that are bringing us up to the times of the Great Tribulation and the sign of the coming of Jesus Christ.

Soon we'll be entering a new month and a new year—2024. This will be the year of the next coming eclipse. The final warning Jesus had made this known to His true people in ***Luke 21:34***.

**v. 34 Take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts not to be weighed down with the cares of this life**” in view of the warning signs that are coming to pass whenever that will be—year 2024, only two years away from terrible times in between.

So don't lose sight and keep in mind the close of this coming age and the coming of Christ. Remember Lot's wife.

Love you all and hope to be with you before much longer.

Love always,

***Don Billingsley***

# **“Keeping Our Eyes on Jerusalem!”**

**“So when you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing WHERE IT OUGHT NOT” (let the reader understand), “then let those who are in Judea FLEE to the mountains.”**

## ***Personal*** ***from the Editor*** ***Alton B. (Don) Billingsley***

### ***Dear Brethren***

A recent study into Scripture has revealed some astonishing discoveries of how and when the building of the Third Temple will make possible the abomination of desolation standing where it ought not, and the beginning of the Sacrificial Offerings.

Scripture makes known history will soon repeat itself in ways that will astonish the world regarding the fulfillment of these and other end-time prophecies that must come to pass before Jesus Christ returns to this earth. Historians have also recognized this over time as well and made their thoughts known in what has become famous quotes. The saying most often quoted is by the

great Spanish philosopher George Santayana (1863-1952), who said in *The Life of Reason* (5 volumes, 1905-6): ***“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”***

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia: **“Historic recurrence** is the repetition of similar events in history. The concept of historic recurrence has variously been applied to the overall history of the world (*e.g., to the rises and falls of empires*), to repetitive patterns in the history of a given polity, and to any two specific events which bear a striking similarity.”



## ***Two Prophecies Sets the Stage for other Prophecies***

In view of the end-time prophecies yet to be fulfilled two of them must begin first before the others. And almost immediately thereafter others will begin their fulfillment:

- The Temple must be rebuilt before the return of Jesus Christ to this earth to fulfill the prophecy of the false prophet who is yet to sit in the Temple of God showing himself that he is God (***II Thessalonians 2:1-4***).
- Sacrificial offerings also have to begin being offered on the altar in Jerusalem by the Priesthood to fulfill ***Daniel 12:11***.

## ***The Rebuilding of the Second Temple***

When looking back in history to the time of the rebuilding of the second Temple it can readily be understood its history will repeat itself in the near future for basically the same conditions are today as it was at that time.

To understand this more fully it will be necessary to review, in brief, the Books of Ezra, Haggai, and Zechariah.

The history of that time began after the Jews had completed their exile of 70 years to the Babylonians. This was brought about exactly on time as prophesied by Isaiah the prophet who had named King Cyrus of the Persian Empire 150 years before he was born, saying he would make possible the rebuilding of the second Temple after having

conquered the Babylonian Empire (***Isaiah 44:28; Ezra 1:2; Daniel 5:30-31***).

The Creator God in heaven above made all this possible to fulfill His ongoing Master Plan and will yet again.



## ***The Hostility toward the Nation of Judah (Israel)***

The Book of Ezra reveals the hatred and hostility for the Jews by their enemies toward the building of the second Temple at that

time; the same is true today due to a very hostile world against the small nation of Judah (*called Israel*).

And for the Jewish people to begin the rebuilding of it under such hostile circumstances is totally unbelievable knowing any effort to that end could trigger an all-out war by the Arab nations against Israel!!!

But to say this is impossible is to leave God out of the picture for prophecy makes known the Temple will be rebuilt! And it will! Scripture reveals the ever-living God in heaven above rules in the kingdoms of men and with Him all things are possible. He can affect the change of minds to make possible whatever He chooses:

**"The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever he wishes" (*Proverbs 21:1*).**

***The Most Sovereign  
Almighty God  
is Supreme Ruler  
in heaven and on  
Earth***

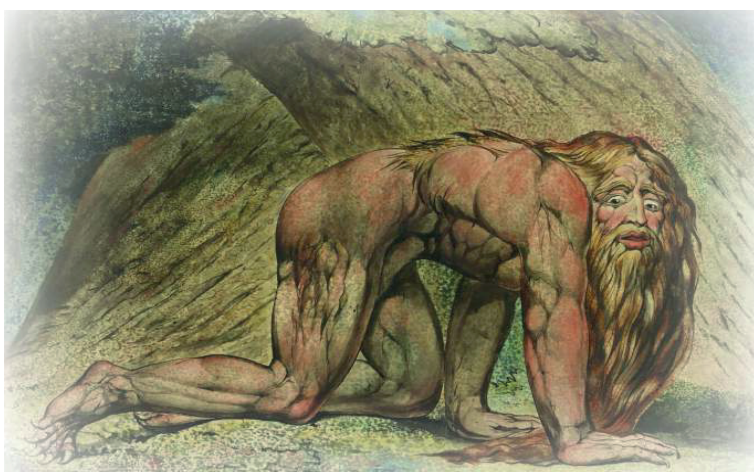


To ensure His Timetable for the ultimate salvation of mankind is always precisely on time. Jesus Christ sets up and removes the leaders of nations and kingdoms of mankind by either directly intervening, or permitting the appointing by others, or by enabling the people to vote them into their high offices to fulfill His ongoing purpose.

This is made clear by the Prophet Daniel who was used by God to write of His dealing with the haughty and arrogant King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar:

**"Bear in mind what happened of old (His involvement in man's history from his creation, *Genesis 1:26-28*) for I am God (Elohim), and there is none else (no other gods), I am Divine, and there is NONE like Me. I foretell the END (Book of Revelation) from the beginning (*Genesis 1:1; John 1:1-5*), and from the start, things that had NOT yet occurred. I say: My (Master) Plan shall be fulfilled; I will do ALL I have purposed ' " (*Isaiah 46:9-10*, NJPS Translation).**

To ensure His Master Plan remains on schedule, God has ruled in the kingdoms of men even setting up leaders and removing them from their exalted positions as was made known to Nebuchadnezzar supreme ruler of the Babylonian Empire.



**" ... the Most High is sovereign over the realm of men, and He gives it to whom He wishes and He sets over it even the lowest of men" (*Daniel 4:14, 21-23, 29*, NJPS Translation)**

## ***The Divine Intervention of God in Man's Affairs***

Jesus Christ has sent His angels throughout man's history, and continues in this end-time, to accomplish His will in the nations of this world, especially those who come into contact with the House of Israel, which also includes the nation of Judah, while making whatever interventions that are necessary with precise timing toward the fulfillment of His prophecies. And to that end, Jesus Christ said to the Jews:

**"My Father has been working until now, and I have been working" (*John 5:17*).**

The focus of Jesus Christ is to complete the Work of fulfilling these prophecies that will bring to a close the end of this evil age, and the beginning of His millennial reign upon His return to this earth.

And the triggering prophecy for this to take place is the rebuilding of the Temple, and the beginning of the Sacrificial Offerings. After they have ended will begin the countdown to the return of Jesus Christ to this earth as made known by the Prophet Daniel:

**"And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be 1290 days. Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the 1335 days" (*Daniel 12:11-12*).**

The GN (*Good News Magazine* August 8, 1987) is correct in its writing about them: "Both the 1290 and 1335 day periods end with



the return of Jesus Christ. And each period begins with a significant event."

### ***Excitement Building among the Jews for the Third Temple***

Considering the prophecies concerning the rebuilding of the third Temple, it seems without question that God has been stirring the spirits of the Jews over recent years toward the rebuilding of it as He did with the Jewish people to rebuild the second Temple (***Ezra 1:1, 5***). There is a very striking similarity between the two of them.

Recent writings from Jerusalem reveal God is currently stirring their spirits to a greater level toward the rebuilding of it. And at the exact time deemed by God this excitement and fervor for its rebuilding will be stirred by Him to such a high level it will overwhelm the Jews who are opposed to it. Recent postings from Jerusalem make this known:

JTA - As Egypt, Qatar, the US and the UN write proposals for Israel-Hamas ceasefires, one organization based in Jerusalem's Old City hopes to compose a peace plan of a different kind: a detailed architectural blueprint for the Third Jewish Temple on Jerusalem's Temple Mount ... "It is not enough to wait and pray for the Third Temple," the statement added. "It is a Biblical obligation to build it."

According to Rabbi Chaim Richman, the institute's international director, the temple would stand in the present location of the Dome of the Rock, a Muslim shrine. Muslims revere the mount as the Haram al-Sharif, or Noble Sanctuary.

But Richman did not set a target date for breaking ground for the construction project ...

He said rebuilding the temple is the next step to Israel's current military operation in the Gaza Strip. "We cannot be the people we're supposed to be without the Holy Temple," he said. "So what if we root out the [Gaza] tunnels and missiles? Then what are we doing with our lives? The redemption of humanity is dependent on the Jewish people."

NOTE: Of all of the 12 tribes of Israel, only Judah has retained their identity and heritage. One might ask for a proof of creation?



A simple answer would be "The Jew." One could also ask for the proof of the true Sabbath Day and Holy Days; the answer would be "The Jew."

This accounts for much of the hostility and persecution of them.

**Temple Institute to Build Sacrificial Altar on Tisha B'av by Yehudah Lev Kay**  
**First Publish: 7/29/09, 10:09 AM.**

The Temple Institute, which has already built many of the vessels for the Holy Temple, such as the ark and the menorah, has now embarked on a project to build the altar. Construction begins Thursday in Mitzpe Yericho (*east of Jerusalem*) at 5:30 p.m.

"Unfortunately, we cannot currently build the altar in its proper place, on the Temple Mount," Temple Institute director Yehuda Glick said. "We are building an altar of the minimum possible size so that we will be able to transport it to the Temple when it is rebuilt." ...

Glick said that Tisha B'av, a day associated with mourning, is really the ideal time to begin to build the Temple. "People mistakenly think Tisha B'av is only a day to cry," he explained. "It also has to be a day of action. We have the ability in our era to begin the construction of the Temple." ...

*From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia:*

*This fast day commemorates the destruction of the **First and Second Temples in Jerusalem** and the subsequent exile of the Jews from the **Land of Israel**. It falls either in July or August by the Western Calendar [2014 the 5th of August; 2015 July 26; 2016 the 14th of August].*

**The Temple Institute in Jerusalem has spent approximately 27 million dollars on preparations for the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple.**

Written by Admin posted November 27, 2009 at 5:41 pm:

"We live at a time when the signs of the last days are literally being fulfilled right in front of our eyes. One of the most exciting signs on Bible prophecy that students love to keep an eye on, are the preparations for the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple.

In a previous *article*, we discussed how the Temple Institute in Jerusalem took a giant step towards the rebuilding of the Temple **by beginning to rebuild the sacrificial altar. ...**

But could the Antichrist someday pose as the Jewish Messiah and use such expectations to promote the use of the rebuilt Temple for his one world religion? It is something to think about. [*The Pope will indeed use this Temple for his one world religion while proclaiming himself God, **Matthew 24:15; II Thessalonians 2:1-4; Revelation 13:11-18***]

In any event, preparations for the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple are heating up as never before, and as students of the prophecies of the last days this is something that we need to continually keep an eye on."

***Long-range Planning by God***



1948





Jerusalem became a nation in 1948. This was the doing of Jesus Christ who made this possible by numerous miracles to make possible the final fulfillment of the end-time prophecies. And a major prophecy is for the Jewish people to rebuild the Temple and begin the sacrificial offerings once again.

The many conflicts now taking place in the Middle East are the prelude to the building of it. It seems likely Jesus Christ will use the outcome of those wars in the Middle East, the ongoing revolution in Syria, amidst the rising and falling of rulers in Arab nations and Egypt, for this to become possible.

### ***God's Plans are for His Return to this Earth***

Many Scriptures make known God is directly involved in the kingdoms of men to oversee and make sure His Master Plan continues on time. Through all of His end-time prophecies. His purpose for all of them is to pave the way for the coming of Jesus Christ back to this earth and begin His millennial reign on it (***Matthew 24:14***).

Before His return other prophecies have to soon come to pass concerning not only Jerusalem, but they also include the House of Joseph and their demise as nations. At the right time all will dovetail together to begin the count-down to the time Jesus Christ will actually return to this

earth and then restore the 12 Tribes of Israel to their heritage. And to reveal the approximate timing of the return of Jesus Christ can be found in the writings of God's Prophet Daniel:

**And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up (standing in the holy place, *Matthew 24:15*), there shall be 1290 days" (*Daniel 12:11*).**

This prophetic Scripture concerning the daily sacrificial offerings make abundantly clear they will commence once again after having ceased in 70 A.D. (*History reveals they ceased to be offered at that time when the Roman General Titus and his enormous Roman armies overwhelmed the Jewish people and conquered the City of Jerusalem.*)

There is a parallel example of the sacrificial offerings taking place in perilous times after the Jewish people returned from Babylon to the City of Jerusalem with the objective of rebuilding the second Temple. This is made known in the Book of Ezra.



## ***The Book of Ezra***

Undoubtedly history will again repeat itself from that time in the near future almost word for word! For there appears to be a definite parallel with the nation of Israel (*Tribe of Judah*) today from the ancient history recorded in the Book of Ezra.

Ezra shows how God fulfilled His promise to return the Jewish people back to Jerusalem in 536 B.C. after 70 years of exile in Babylon. (*Their return could be compared to many of the Jewish people returning to their ancient heritage in the Promised Land and becoming a nation in 1948*).

Having returned from Babylon to Jerusalem, Ezra and Nehemiah began restoring the worship of God by observing the Holy Days and beginning the sacrificial offerings to seek favor from God for they were living in fear of the countries around them. This is evident from the following Scriptures.

And when the 7th month had come, and the children of Israel were in their cities, the people gathered together as one man to Jerusalem. Then Joshua ... and his brethren the priests and Zerubbabel ... arose and **BUILT THE ALTAR** of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings on it, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God (***Ezra 3:1-2; Deuteronomy 12:5-6***).

Consider the following Scripture in view of the present day circumstances of the Jewish nation called Israel today of that time (*they are only one Tribe of the 12 Tribes of Israel*):

**Though FEAR had come upon them because of the people of those countries, they SET THE ALTAR on its bases; and they OFFERED burnt offerings on it to the LORD, both the morning and evening burnt offerings (*Ezra 3 :3*)** Scripture reveals when they began these burnt offerings:

**From the 1st Day of the 7th month (*Feast of Trumpets*) they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD, **ALTHOUGH the foundation of the Temple of the LORD had NOT been laid**" (*Ezra 3:6*).**

The Jewish priests will follow precedent and Scripture, and will begin offering burnt offerings on the Feast of Trumpets. History will again repeat itself. However it appears too soon for this to take place in 2014, but could take place any year there after. History also records where the foundation of the Temple was to be laid and undoubtedly it will once again:

The proclamation of Cyrus was that the House be rebuilt on its original site (***Ezra 5:15***).



## ***Historical Duality***

Similar to the Jewish people of that ancient time, the Jewish people have made all of the needed preparations for the sacrificial offerings. Some time ago they built the Altar and have it ready to be moved to its rightful location when the time is right.

With the altar set in place it will make possible the fulfilment of the prophecy to begin the sacrificial offerings; this will also make possible the building of the 3rd Temple.



## ***Israel will ally with the Beast of the Holy Roman Empire***

Another prophecy will then begin being fulfilled: After having their relationship broken with America and Britain (***Zechariah 11:14***), and with the hostility of the world confronting them, the small nation of Israel will feel they have no choice but to turn to their former enemy Germany for the help they will need to hold off the Arab forces threatening them as did the Jews in that ancient time. At the same time the construction of the Temple will continue as it did at that time:

**So the elders of the Jews progressed in the building, URGED on by prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah (preaching, Zechariah 8:9-10) and they brought the House to completion (Ezra 6:14).**

The House was finished on the 3rd of the month of Adar in the 6th year of the reign of Darius and King Artaxerxes (*Artaxerxes is a regal title*) of Persia. 516 B.C. (***Ezra 6:15***).

### **Soncino Commentary:**

Sixth year i.e. 516-15 B.C.E. Since the work was resumed in the sixth month of Darius' second year (***Haggai 1:15***) it occupied nearly four and a half years. The foundations were laid twenty years earlier, in 536."

**... They joyfully celebrated the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread for 7 days, for the LORD had given them cause for joy by *INCLINING the heart of the Assyrian King* (*Darius-Beast-today*) toward them so as to give them SUPPORT in the work of the House of God, the God of Israel (*Ezra 6:19-32 NJPS*).**

This will be shortly after the full revival of the prophesied Holy Roman Empire having taken

place. The Beast will then make a pact with Israel and send in a small contingent of soldiers as an added protection for them.

## ***The Pope to Move His headquarters to Jerusalem***

About the same time prophecy reveals the Pope will move from the Vatican in Rome and



establish his headquarters in Jerusalem (***II Thessalonians 2:1-4***). This move will take place after he will have been given the power of miracles. The Christian world will swoon at his feet in worship.

This will make possible for him to bring back to life the Holy Roman Empire of old by consolidating 10 nations in Europe together (***Revelation 17:12-13; Daniel 7:23-24***). He will then choose a particular man to reign over these nations who will be referred to as the Beast. The following prophecy makes this known about the future Pope:

**"Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth (*Europe*), and he had two horns like a lamb (*religion*) and spoke like a dragon (*The Vatican is a State as well as a nation within the city of Rome*) ... (*Revelation 13:11*).**

"He performs **Great Signs**, so that he even makes **FIRE** come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And he **DECEIVES** those who dwell on the earth **BY** those **Signs** which he was granted to do in the sight of the Beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make **AN IMAGE** (a replica of the old Holy Roman Empire) to the Beast who was wounded by the sword and (once again revived) lived (**Revelation 13:13-14**).



He was granted **POWER** (authority) to give **BREATH** to the image of the Beast, that the image of the Beast should both **Speak** and **Cause** as many as would **NOT** worship the Beast to be killed" (**Revelation 13:15**).

## ***A Picture of the Near Future for the Nation of Israel (Judah)***

During His overview of the major events that are to take place at this end-time (**Matthew 24**), Jesus Christ spoke of the need for the Gospel to go forth to this world as a witness into all nations before the end of this age (**Matthew 24:14**). He then connects it with the third Temple that is to be built and what will take place shortly after its completion.

**"Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, **STANDING** in the Holy Place (whoever reads let him understand) **THEN** let those who are in Judea **FLEE** to the mountains (God's faithful Church will then flee to the place of safety for their protection, **Revelation 12:14** (**Matthew 24:15**)."**

## ***The Writings of Daniel the Prophet of God—604 B.C.***

Jesus Christ said this is what His Elect people are to be looking for within the newly constructed Temple. For understanding He said the reader must review the history of the former **abomination of desolation** in the writings of the Prophet Daniel that will have its dual fulfillment with the future sacrificial offerings (**Daniel 12:11**).

Daniel makes known this was initially fulfilled by Antiochus Epiphanes IV, 175-164 B.C. with the aid of the apostate Jews. However it reaches beyond that time to the antitype, the Beast and the False Prophet of the End-time; "the emergence of it is already being witnessed.





## ***Jerusalem to be Overwhelmed by the Beast's Armies"***

In addition to the small contingent of the Beast's Roman Army to be placed inside Jerusalem with the pretext of protecting the Jewish people from the Arab armies (*as did Hitler promise peace while lying to Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, 1938*), he will have a much larger force just outside Jerusalem to be used at the right time to overpower the Jewish military and end the sacrificial offerings. The Pope will then move into the Temple.



**"And forces shall be mustered by him (armies by the Beast), and they shall defile the Sanctuary fortress (overpower the heavily fortified defense system protecting the Temple); **they** (the Beast-at the behest of the False Prophet) **shall take away the daily sacrifices and place there the abomination of desolation**" (Daniel 11:31).**

History will repeat itself once again but in a different form. After having the Beast to take away the sacrifices the Pope will seat himself in the Holy Place within the Temple with the seated statue of Jupiter next to himself (*Meaning of Jupiter: dies pater, which means "shining father"*). He proclaims Jupiter to be the Apostle Peter to give him needed stature.



# *The Man of Sin to Sit in the Temple of God*

The Apostle Paul wrote of this coming time when this Man of Sin will seat himself in the Holy of Holies in the newly built Temple showing that he himself is God.

**"Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day (verses 1-2 the coming of Jesus Christ and gathering His saints to Him) will NOT come UNLESS the falling away comes first (this fulfillment occurred in 1995), and the Man of SIN is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself ABOVE ALL that is called God or that is worshiped, so that HE SITS as God in the Temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (II Thessalonians 2:3-4).**



**The Falling Away** took place in 1995 when the apostate pastor general devastated the Worldwide Church of God by rejecting all of the restored teachings Jesus Christ used Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong to restore within His Church and replaced them with Protestant teachings. Over 100,000 members accepted the pagan teachings while rejecting the Truth they had formerly believed.



The abomination of desolation that was brought into the Temple by Antiochus Epiphanes IV was sprinkling the broth from a boiled swine's flesh in the Temple and on the Altar with it (*Clarke Commentary Volume 4, page 614, Daniel 11:31*). This has not been repeated since that time—not even in 70 A.D. At that time the Temple was burned and completely destroyed by the Roman armies (*fulfilling the prophecy of Jesus Christ, Matthew 24:1-2*).

Approximately 123 years later, as if in derision, a statue of Jupiter was enthroned above the ruins of the Jewish Temple by Emperor Hadrian (*The Bible as History, Werner Keller, Page 408*).

## ***Keep our EYES on Jerusalem***



Certainly all of God's true people should be heeding this warning given by God's late apostle, not only to be watching world news, but in particular to keep our eyes on Jerusalem for it will be the focal point that will lead to the return of Jesus Christ.

Even now, this nation, the world, and the Church of God are facing some monumental and horrendous problems with much greater ones ahead. Hopefully God's people are preparing both mentally and spiritually to survive the horrors to soon befall Israel and the world; even now they are seen emerging! Always, God's people must be praying fervently for the spiritual strength needed to survive them (*Luke 21:36*).



Philadelphia Remnant Oct/Nov/Dec 2014



## This Writing is about Jerusalem; Past, Present, and Future



Please know this writing is only an overview. In our projected new booklet on this subject this will be made very plain in a more lengthy writing on this subject. It will also explain more fully how the 1290 and the 1335 days, of ***Daniel 12:11***, tie in with the 1150 days of the cleansing of the Temple, ***Daniel 8:13-14***, together with other important numbers pertaining to the end time.

However this brief writing on the subject should be sufficient to see the need of keeping focused on this most important City of Jerusalem and the prophecies pertaining to it while knowing the problems of today and in the near future will end upon the return of Jesus Christ back to this earth. Righteousness and justice will then begin to be restored as made known by God's prophet Isaiah:

**"I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city" (*Isaiah 1:26; 2:2-4*).**

And to make this possible Jesus Christ and His Bride will overpower and defeat the armies gathered in the Valley of Jehoshaphat just outside Jerusalem in what is called the Battle of Armageddon (***Joel 3:2, 12; Revelation 16:14-16***).

**"So the LORD will come down to fight for Mount Zion and for its hill. Like birds flying about (*Revelation 19:14; 5:10*), so will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem. Defending, He will also deliver it; passing over, He will preserve it" (*Isaiah 31:4-5*).**

Jerusalem will then become the world Capital when Jesus Christ establishes His Throne on Mount Zion (***Micah 4:1-8***). It will become the showcase City of the whole earth and all of mankind will marvel at its beauty and worship the KING of Kings and LORD of Lords (***Revelation 19:11-16***).

With this awesome future in mind, God's true people should be praying, as Jesus Christ instructed:



***Thy Kingdom  
Come***

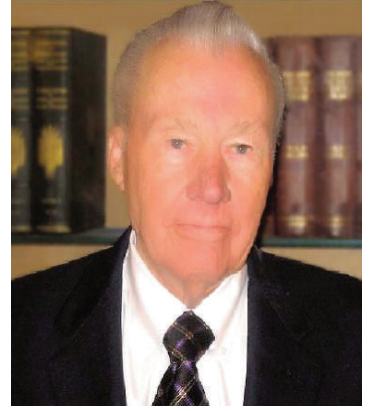


# *Personal*

from the Editor  
Alton B. (Don) Billingsley

*“And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, UNTIL the day that Noah entered the Ark, and the Flood came and destroyed them all.”*

*Luke 17:26-27*



*Alton B. (Don) Billingsley*

Dear Brethren,

While studying end-time Prophetic Scriptures, in view of what took place in the pre-Flood world, and with Sodom and Gomorrah, it becomes easy to see present day society is in grave danger!

Daily the News Media continues to make known the same evils exist in the House of Joseph as they did at that time. These evils can be compared to a developing cancerous growth that largely began in the past century and both societies have now been almost totally consumed by it with little life-time left; tragically very few people seem to care.

## *Perilous Times*

As the result, perilous times have begun overtaking the House of Joseph, especially Manasseh (*America, Deuteronomy 28:15, 45*); with grievous record-breaking disasters: large communities suffering loss of lives, total devastation of homes and properties from e-5 tornadoes, major hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, increasing drought over the bread basket states, and shockingly—recent frightening heavenly signs! Precursors that portend horrifying times soon to come!

Considering the evils of the pre-Flood world of Noah (*Genesis 6:1-3*), while knowing the loving God that He is (*Genesis 6:6*), there

must also have been warnings from Him, as are being seen now warnings that were manifested in many ways over the closing years of that world to try and help the people to see the like-sufferings they were experiencing was due to the violation of God’s Holy and Righteous Laws.

But they did not make the connection any more than the people do today.

Viewing the sinful condition of this present evil world as witnessed today (*Galatians 1:4*), one should be able to see the end is virtually in sight for the House of Israel as it took place in “... **the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water**” (*II Peter 3:6*).

## *The Death Throes of the House of Joseph—*

America is also nearing its death as a society and as a nation, just as is Britain and the other Tribes of Israel and for the very same reasons. The breakdown reasons for the near death of America are due to the ever-increasing legalized abominable sins of mankind, and the law rendered powerless to prevent the neverending and increasing violence with rampant murders, robberies, burglaries, strife, and contention.

America’s death has been made possible by the failure of the Justice System to uphold the

intent of the Constitution by its original founders.



This has brought about the wicked surrounding the righteous—people locking themselves in their own homes for their protection! And even with all of these terrible things ongoing in society, perverse judgment continues throughout the Judicial System.

This tragic sinful condition exists and continues to worsen in this country because it has been legalized by a majority of the law-making bodies of Congress and upheld by the majority of the Judges of the Supreme Court of the United States.



The Post-mortem examination, or [HYPERLINK "http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Autopsy"](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Autopsy) Autopsy, an examination of the corpse in order to determine the cause of death of the House of Israel would reveal all of the above causes—death due to the rejection of God and His laws (**Romans 6:23**); society living their lives their way—the way of grievous sins as did the pre-Flood world and Sodom and Gomorrah.

## **God the Same Yesterday, Today, and Forever**

With these things weighing on the mind, one should also realize: **“God does NOT change (*Malachi 3:60*); He is the same today as He was yesterday and will be forever” (*Hebrews 13:8*)!** And because He is—there should be great FEAR of what will soon take place as **severe corrective punishment** from Him for the nations of Israel and mankind:

**“And they shall (*come to*) KNOW that I am the LORD; I have not said in vain that I would bring all this CALAMITY upon them (*verses 1-7*).”** ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “Pound your fists and stamp your feet, and say, ‘Alas, for all the evil abominations of the House of Israel! For they shall fall by the sword (*verse 6, nuclear warfare*), by famine (*Joel 1:1-20*), and by pestilence (*Deuteronomy 28:58-61*). He who is far off shall die by the pestilence, he who is near shall fall by the sword, and he who remains and is besieged shall die by the famine (*food embargo, Deuteronomy 28:52*). Thus will I spend My FURY on them.’” (*Ezekiel 6:10-12*).



These Scriptures make known that almost total destruction for the House of Israel is sure to come and close at hand! Prophecy with its beginning fulfillment is now being witnessed with disaster coming upon disaster



of one kind or another with increasing frequency (**Ezekiel 7:26**)!

And just as it took place with that pre-existing world of drowning deaths for billions of people, so will death, and worse, be for the many millions of people today from famine, disease epidemics, and the Great Tribulation! **Ezekiel 5:12**.

### **The Flood that Destroyed a Pre-Existing World**

Scripture makes known only EIGHT members of just one family from among the billions existing at that time survived the Flood of Noah; the reason why is because:

**But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man (meaning he obeyed God's laws), perfect in his generations (the purity of race—no interracial marriage in contrast to the almost total interracial marriages in that world, **Genesis 6:1-3; Luke 21:27**); Noah walked with God (**Genesis 6:8-9**).**

### **Total Destruction Fell on Sodom and Gomorrah**



and Gomorrah, **instantaneous horrible fiery deaths for all the people in those cities!** (**Genesis 19:1-29**). Speaking of that time, Jesus Christ said:



**“Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; BUT on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it **RAINED Fire and Brimstone** from heaven and **DESTROYED them all**”** (**Luke 17:28-29**).

It should be noted that Marriage, as God intended it to be between man and woman (**Genesis 1:27-28**), was not mentioned here by Jesus Christ for those cities were mostly sodomites (**Genesis 19:4-9**). However marriages between the same genders undoubtedly did take place in those cities as they are today.

### **Why the Few Spared Each Time?**

Realizing the great need for our understanding of that time, together with the desire of being saved today from the coming horrors, the REASON why God spared those few people, while destroying all of the other people, must be emphasized!

Noah walked with God while the world about him had sunk into the vilest of sins. The level of evil they had reached was never enough! Scripture reveals they kept searching for other ways to reach the bottom in their obsession for sexual self gratification as well as being in a continued state of violence—so corrupted, God could no longer tolerate their evil; they had to die!

**Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ... So the LORD said, “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I made them”** (**Genesis 6:5-7**).

Imagine—of the billions of people who then lived in that pre-Flood world, only Noah was found to be righteous before his God—only Noah! And because he was found to be righteous in contrast to all others, speaks volumes why mankind continues to exist today!

Think—had Noah not been found righteous before his Creator God this could have meant the end of mankind! You and I would possibly have never known life.

### ***A New Beginning of Mankind***

And because of that one man's righteousness his immediate family was also spared making possible the beginning once again of mankind repopulating the earth. Think about this one man and why he was spared by God:

**“But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD; ... Noah walked with God”(Genesis 6:8-9).**

### ***The Pursuit of Sin Destroyed Mankind in that World***

In this context, one should soberly think about the following Scripture and its intended meaningful importance to all living in today's world in view of the same conditions now existing as they did at that time:

**The earth was also corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on earth (Genesis 6:11-12). And God said to Noah, “The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth” (Genesis 6:13).**

### ***Those Tragic Times Summarized by the Apostle Peter***

The Apostle Peter was also led by Jesus Christ to write of those times as a grave warning for God's people; and a witness for all others of the gravity of sin, and its deadly consequences:

**“For if God ... did NOT spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the Flood on the world of the ungodly; “and turning the**



**cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them AN EXAMPLE to those who afterward would live ungodly; and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the Filthy Conduct of the wicked, (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tortured his soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds)—then the LORD knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations (severe and heavy trials) and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the Day of Judgment, and especially**



**those who walk according to the flesh in the LUST of uncleanness and DESPISE authority. They are presumptuous, self-willed (*daring*). They are NOT afraid to speak evil of dignitaries (*Margin: glorious ones, Jude 8, meaning God's apostle, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong*)" (II Peter 2:4-10).**

### ***Noah and Lot Spared from Death***

The Church of the ever-living God needs to focus and seriously think about the vitally important reasons why He spared the families of Noah and Lot: They survived due to their obedience to His laws and having an ongoing relationship with Him while seeing all others flagrantly disobeying and disrespectfully thumbing their nose in defiance of their Creator God and His holy laws!

Is there any question in the minds of anyone about the same sinful problems existing in present day society as they were in that world? If you think otherwise then you are blinded to what is being seen daily via the News Media!

And like it was then with Noah and Lot, so it is today: Total destruction would have already taken place except for a very few select people of God who are living their lives as did Noah and Lot, as made known by God's prophet:

**"Unless the LORD of hosts had left to us A VERY SMALL REMNANT (*Matthew 24:22; Romans 11:4-5*), we would have become like Sodom, we would have become like Gomorrah (*completely destroyed*)."** *Isaiah 1:9.*

### ***Ten Percent to Survive in the near Future***

Bible prophecies make known as few as **Ten Percent of mankind** who are

living today will survive the horrors soon to be unleashed by Satanic forces that will lead Israel into the **Great Tribulation** to be followed three and one-half years later by the feared **Armagedon—a violent and deadly end for this age! The following Scriptures reveal the virtual decimation to which the nations of Israel will be reduced during the Great Tribulation:**

**Then I said, "LORD, how long (*blindness to remain on Israel, Romans 11:7-10*)? And He answered, "Until the cities are laid waste and without inhabitant, the houses are without a man, the land is utterly desolate (*Ezekiel 6:6*). The LORD has removed men far away, and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land (*Leviticus 26:31-39; Deuteronomy 28:63-68*).**



**But yet A TENTH will be in it** (*will return after Jesus Christ returns and liberates them from slavery*), **and will return and be** (*used by Jesus Christ*) **for consuming** (*Zechariah 14:14; 10:3-5; 12:5*), **as a terebinth tree or as an oak, whose stump remains when it is cut down, so the HOLY SEED** (*Israel*) **shall be its stump** (*Isaiah 6:11-13*).

Further, God's prophet Amos, wrote:

**“For thus says the LORD God: ‘The city that goes out by a thousand shall have a hundred, and that which goes out by a hundred shall have TEN left to the house of Israel’ ”** (*Amos 5:3*).

### ***These Tragic and Terrible Times Soon to Come***

Anyone who stays attuned to the news media, and has any astute discernment at all, should be able to understand the House of Joseph cannot endure under these terrible sinful conditions. Further, even aside from God's corrective punishment, it would in time crash under its own weight of sin.

Jesus Christ is very soon going to deal with Israel first, and later the Gentiles nations, for their iniquity is almost complete as it came to be with the Amorites (*Genesis 15:16*):

**“Behold the Day of the LORD comes, cruel, with both WRATH AND FIERCE ANGER to lay the land desolate; and He will destroy SINNERS from it”** (*Isaiah 13:9*).

As to why this severe chastening, God makes it known:

**“I will PUNISH the world for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; I will halt the arrogance of the proud, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a mortal more rare than fine gold”** (*Isaiah 13:11-12*).

### ***God Never Changes Nor Do His Laws***

Please know: IF God destroyed the Pre-Flood world because of their recalcitrant sins; and

He did! And IF God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah because of their abominable sins; and He did! And IF God is **“... the same yesterday, today and forever, He does not change ...”** (*Hebrews 13:8; Malachi 3:6*); THEN, and He is, then one should also know God is no respecter of persons!

Therefore, one should also know these

serious judgments are soon to come upon the House of Jacob for they are guilty of the very same sins!

### ***The Day of the Lord***

Having spoke about the terrible deaths to befall the pre-existing world, and the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, Jesus Christ added the following regarding the destruction to come in our time as it did then:

**“Even so will it be in THE DAY when the Son of Man is revealed”** (*Luke 17:30*).

It will happen quickly and unexpectedly as it did with Sodom and Gomorrah:





**“For it will come AS A SNARE on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth” (Luke 21:35).**

### ***A Blitzkrieg Nuclear Attack***

With bare notice (**Ezekiel 7:14**), Jesus Christ will permit Satan to bring about the **detonation of Nuclear Bombs** over the major cities of the House of Joseph and reduce them to melted rubble as severe corrective punishment for their heinous sins (**Ezekiel 6:6-7; 12:20**).

Those who do not perish in the **devouring fire and everlasting burnings from the Nuclear Blasts** (**Isaiah 33:14**), will be captured and removed from the land of Israel to Europe. Those who will not be incinerated in the ovens will be sold into captivity (**Deuteronomy 28:62-68**).

For the most part they will become the slaves of the nations that make up the Revived Roman Empire for three and one-half years before they are liberated by Jesus Christ when He returns to this earth (**Jeremiah 31**).

### ***Advance Warnings***

For those who have the discerning eyes to see, God's anger is already being poured out in limited ways as can be seen by the disasters in nature and otherwise, as **WARNINGS** of the worst yet to come! The only means of preventing the coming horrors is through godly repentance; which appears to be very unlikely.

*The question is asked by God's prophet:*

**“... Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings (from the Nuclear Holocaust)? He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly ...” (Isaiah 33:14-15).**



## **Burnings from Nuclear Blasts**

### ***The Warning Words of Jesus Christ***

While viewing these calamities already taking place one should also realize the warning words of Jesus Christ who spoke of these coming terrible times that are now drawing very close:

**“For then there will be great tribulation, such has not been since the beginning of this world until this time, no, nor ever shall be,” (Matthew 24:21).**

This will be the time of Jacob's trouble:

**Now these are the words that the LORD spoke concerning Israel and Judah: “For thus says the LORD: ‘We have heard a voice of trembling, of FEAR, and not of peace. Ask now, and see, whether a man is ever in labor with child? So why do I see every man with his hands on his loins like a woman in labor, and all faces turned pale? Alas! For that day is great so that none is like it; and it is the time of Jacob's trouble ...’ ” (Jeremiah 30:4-7).**

## ***Be Very Watchful***

Jesus Christ spoke of the need of always being vigilant, astutely observing the warning signs, that will enable us to see the closeness of these terrible things to fully take place that will also make known how so very close is His coming back to this earth:

**“Now WHEN these things BEGIN to happen, look up, lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.” Then He spoke to them a parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees. When they are already budding, you SEE and KNOW that summer is near. So you also, WHEN you see these things HAPPENING (beginning to take place), KNOW the Kingdom of God is near (Luke 21:28-31).**



In view of all these horrors that are soon to be upon all Israel and humanity, the closing words of caution and exhortation from our Savior Jesus Christ must seriously be kept in mind:

**“But TAKE HEED to yourselves, LEST your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come upon you unexpectedly. For it will come as A SNARE on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth” (Luke 21:34-35).**

With these warning words in mind, God’s people must extricate themselves from the evils

of this Babylonish System that is being manifested so promiscuously and prevalently in the House of Jacob:

**“And I heard another voice from heaven saying, ‘Come out of her My people, LEST you SHARE in her sins, and LEST you RECEIVE of her plagues. For her SINS have reached to heaven (as did the sins of the Pre-Flood World of Noah, and the Cities of Sodom and Gomorrah), and God has remembered her iniquities’ ” (Revelation 18: 4-5).**

To be accepted by the protective caring embrace of Jesus Christ’s loving arms from the terrible times that we have now begun entering there must be an ongoing love relationship with Him, with watchfulness, and never ceasing prayers to Him, as He made known in the closing part of this chapter of His overview of end-time prophecies:

**“WATCH therefore (being very vigilant of these warning signs), and PRAY Always (never ceasing) that you may be counted WORTHY to ESCAPE all these things that will come to pass, and to STAND before the Son of Man” (Luke 21:-36).**



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# *You Can Defeat Discouragement*

*by*  
*Steve Serfontein*

## *Moods and Attitudes begin with thoughts in the heart*

Discouragement and depression is something that effects many people! Do we feel "blue" and full of despair at times? Certainly, of all the people on the face of the earth, *GOD'S PEOPLE should feel the most encouraged, positive, and hopeful of the future.*

Even some of God's people during the long winter months following the Feast of Tabernacles find that things begin to ebb and wane after the rejuvenation and uplift of the Feast. If we are not careful—bleak discouragement begins to set in!

Problems begin to develop and perhaps marital troubles well up, and continue, and bring depression. Family problems come along and begins to perforate the peace at home! It happens.

Sometimes *discouragement* can set in and affect us when we begin to think that events are taking too long. We would like to see it come to

fulfillment and end. We would like to see the Kingdom come right now, and that there be no more delay.

For some, winter is a time of loneliness, and more discouragement—especially for the elderly. They need to be visited.

Because discouragement is such a huge problem for many out there in the world, it can, and does effect some of God's people and it can lead to loss of salvation. Therefore the purpose of this writing is to show how we can **DEFEAT DISCOURAGEMENT.**

**FIRST**; what makes people grow discouraged? What causes them to feel **GLOOMY** and full of despair?

There is a reason! The greatest enemy all people have—including us, God's people, is their own **HUMAN NATURE!**

Human emotions often fluctuate. It is normal for people to feel "positive" at certain times, and "low" at other times. But, most people, when they begin to feel "low," allow it to drag them into a self-pitying gutter of despair!

Millions in this world allow their human nature, and its emotional fluctuations, to guide and rule their lives, and therefore, countless thousands commit SUICIDE!

Humanity in this world does not realize that their own HUMAN NATURE causes them to feel, *discouraged and depressed* at times. They have not learned to master or rule over their emotions.

HUMAN NATURE also plagues God's people! That is why some of us feel the pangs of *discouragement* at times!

*As God's people we need to rule over our emotions and control our thoughts and frustrations.*

Ancient Isreal was plagued by discouragement. They allowed their emotions to run amok.

***Numbers 21:4-5.***

**They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way; they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!" (Their discouragement caused them to accuse and speak against God and His servant Moses).**

We must be careful that we do not cause others to become discouraged when we ourselves are, because it can happen.

***Deuteronomy 1:28***

**Where can we go? Our brothers have made our hearts melt in fear. They say, "The people are stronger and taller than we are; the cities are large, with walls up to the sky. We even saw the Anakites there."**

The downward pulls of human nature, then, is *ONE major cause of discouragement*. But there is another ... One which few in this world really recognize or face. One which we as God's people need to recognize *and be very aware of*.

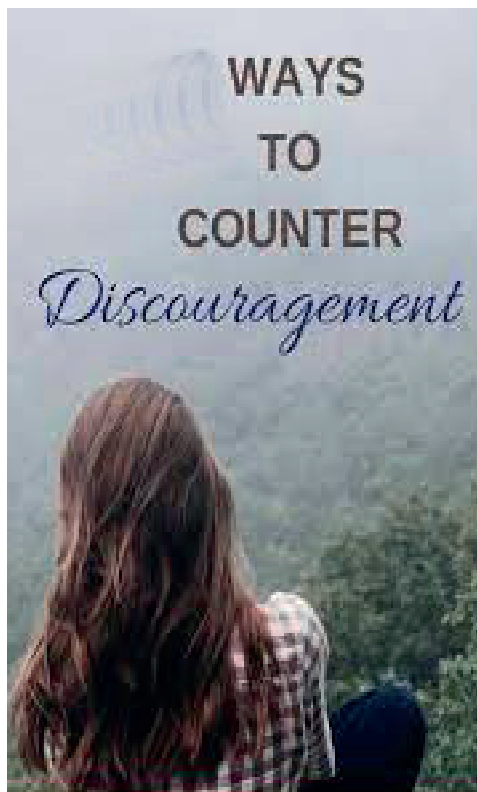
*This other cause* sometimes takes over where human nature leaves off and plagues the victim into the blackest, most negative of moods. If we as God's people are not wary, it

can lead some to give up the fight for salvation and QUIT— committing spiritual SUICIDE!

I would just like to pause here for a moment. I am not saying that the Church is plagued with discouragement—please don't misunderstand me. What I am saying is that it can and has happened to some of God's people in the other Church groups and SUICIDE has occurred.

One of the chief causes of discouragement in the world is not physical, but spiritual. Negative moods feelings and attitudes can and often are caused by Satan and his demons.

Satan is the one who feels utterly whipped and discouraged. Ever since he tried to thwart God's plan, and rebelled against God, he has been irreversibly doomed! His fate has been sealed.





Misery loves company. Satan or one of his demons would just love to find an opening in our minds—an opening caused by *discouragement* and of negative feelings, so they can enter in, fill you with misery, and really drag you down into the gutter of despair!



If we begin to feel negative towards God, as if His way is too hard, and moods of *discouragement* and spiritual depression begins to strike us down, *we need to immediately take action*. God's Word says we need to fight these feeling and mood swings we need to conquer and overcome them.

**How?**

***I Peter 5:8-9***

**v. 8 Be alert and of sober mind.**

**Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.**

**v. 9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.**



We must be on the *alert, soberminded and vigilant* whenever we are tempted to bog down in the quicksand of self-pity, gloom, and out-and-out depression. Such feelings do not come from God!

*(They are either the result of own own human nature or they are caused by Satan and his demons, WE THEREFORE NEED TO RESIST THEM James 4:7-8)* God is not the author of GLOOM, or unhappiness and misery SATAN IS!

The Word of God gives vital information regarding conquering every human, and spiritual problem, including *discouragement*, depression, and despair.

To tackle the problem, we need to know just where these negative feelings start.

***Proverbs 23:7-8*** This Scripture

illustrates a basic principle. As one thinks in his heart, he ACTS whether negatively, or positively. *Moods and attitudes begin with thoughts in the heart*. The thought is reflected in the personality, the



hearing, *(the ear)*, manner of expression, *(the eyes)*.

Therefore, *every thought* needs to be brought under control. ***II Corinthians 10:4-5***.

God says we are to bring every thought into *CAPTIVITY*. We are to control and rule over our very thought processes!

To take air out of a bottle or container is to pour liquid into it, and this is the way we cast wrong negative thoughts out of our mind. We replace them with positive ones. ***Philippians 4:8-9***. The Apostle Paul says we are to exercise the mind with these things.

Paul instructed the evangelist Timothy that a Christian's thoughts are very important, and must be ruled over and be brought into subjection! ***I Timothy 1:12-15***. In this way, *discouragement CAN BE DEFEATED*.

Sometimes trials and tests bring *discouragement*. Sometimes personal problems, faults and weaknesses contribute to depression, but all these factors concern the one great problem, which people have—*they get their eyes*

the GOAL, They begin to think about THEMSELVES, and lose sight of the PURPOSE God is working out in their lives. If we let down on prayer, and neglect Bible study, we then lose CONTACT with God. Discouragement and depression is the end result.

If some of us take a close look at our lives we will see that this has been the case, where physical matters, personal concerns, have taken precedence over the spiritual. It most certainly has been my downfall when I look back in my life! When one loses contact with God, the result is ALWAYS failure, resulting in depression and discouragement.

Therefore, it is vitally important that one DRAWS CLOSE TO GOD whenever discouragement threatens as James tells us in **James 4:8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.** This can only be done through earnest prayer and fasting, and the study of God's Word which is the Most POSITIVE Book ever written! **Mathew 17:21.**

God created the Universe. He made the worlds, the seas, the skies, the mountains, and valleys. Surely, then, He can enable us to conquer



discouragement and depressions, which are trivial by comparison! We need to go to Him and ASK for help.

**Luke 11:11-13** If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" The Spirit of God is NOT the Spirit of discouragement, moodiness, and negative feelings!

**Galations 5:22-23** We do not read anything here about sorrow, guilt, depression, moodiness, sulkiness, negative feelings or discouragement, despair and hopelessness.

Notice what Paul wrote to Timothy in **II Timothy 1:6-7. A SOUND mind is not plagued by fear complexes, phobias or negative attitudes!**

It is HOPEFUL of the future! It is the Spirit of Love! **And there is NO FEAR in LOVE. I John 4:18.**

God's Spirit imparts power to overcome negative discouragement. The Holy Spirit will impart that power to you and me if we stir it up as Paul told Timothy.

Some of God's greatest servants suffered periods of blackest discouragement and depression. Some of them were so discouraged and depressed at times they wanted to DIE. Life became to much of a struggle. **Job 6:2-3.**

**v. 2 "If only my anguish could be weighed and all my misery be placed on the scales!**

**v. 3 It would surely outweigh the sand of the seas—no wonder my words have been impetuous."**



Moses, the man of God, also once felt so overwhelmed that he just had to speak to God about it (*Discouragement! Depression!*) **Numbers 11:11-15.**

Fortunately, God did not answer that particular request. If He did we might never have been born!

Elijah also at one time knew bitter discouragement as he became fearful for his life. **I Kings 19:1-4.** Yes he felt like giving up, quitting! God had to rebuke him. **Verses 9-15.**

Elijah, was human. At times he had problems with his attitude, but he yielded himself to God to pull him out of it. (*That is the only way*).

**James 5:16-18.** God's servants did not allow discouragement to drag them down into the muck and mire, or the gutter of despair. They did not allow it to lead them to RUIN. Why? Because they saw their weaknesses and failings, and took them to God. God imparted to them spiritual strength so He could use them mightily in His Work.

What about the Apostle Paul? He was used to write more Books of the New Testament than any other man. Was he ever discouraged or depressed?

When he saw old friends and longtime converts fall away from God's truth, Paul must have suffered great personal pain and heart-ache. Yes, his life was filled with troubles, trials,

turmoils and narrow escapes, but did he ever allow discouragement to reign in his life?

Let's allow Paul to speak for himself. **II Corinthians 4:8-10.**

**v. 8 We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair;**

**v. 9 persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.**

**v. 10 We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. Although buffeted and beset by circumstances beyond his control, Paul was not a quitter.**

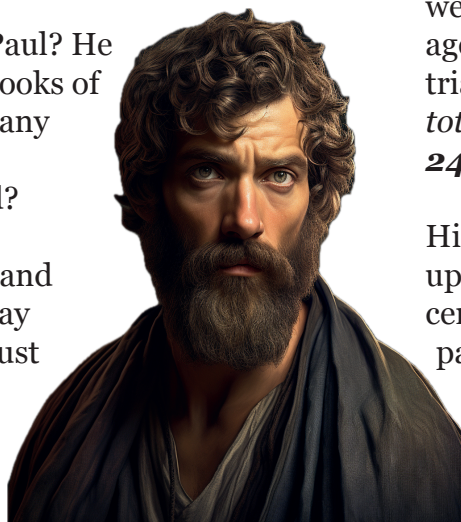
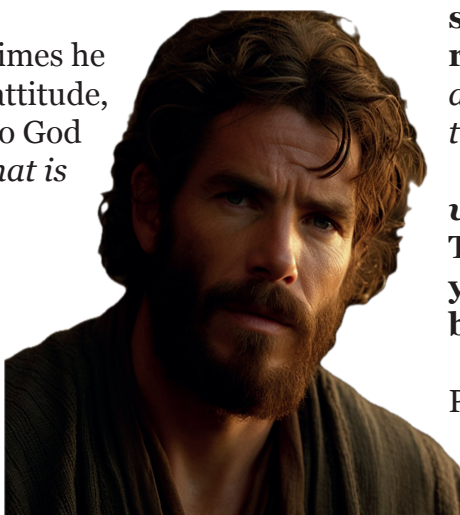
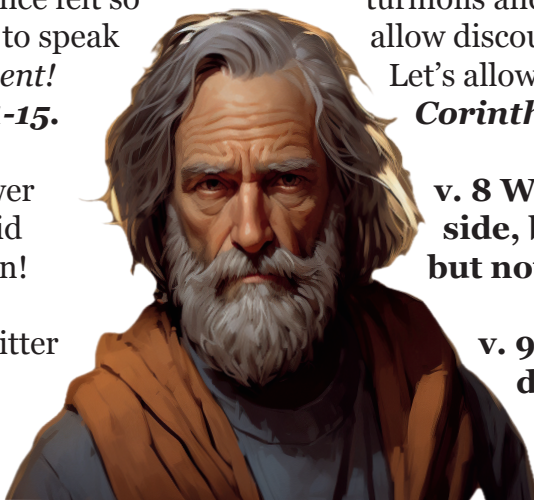
**v. 16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.**

Paul shared intimately his sufferings as a minister of God with the brethren at Corinth. **II Corinthians 6:4-10.** Surely, if any man had anything to be discouraged and disheartened about, Paul would have been one, but he did not. **II Corinthians 1:3-5.**

Paul was able to help and succor others who were suffering, distressed, and even discouraged, because he had been through these trials, and stayed close to God. *His life was totally dedicated to God.* **Philippians 1:21-24.**

His eyes were always on God—focusing upwards. **Colossians 3:1-2.** His mind was centered and concentrated on forgetting the past events, failures or discouragements.

*His attention was on the things that lay before him.* **Philippians 3: 13-14.**



Paul had totally CONQUERED discouragement! Toward the end of his life, he wrote Timothy in absolute faith and assurance.

**II Timothy 4:7-8.** Here is an example of absolute faith, determined hope, and assurance. *Paul had no room for doubt, discouragement or despair. His life was filled with radiant hope and faith toward God.*

So can our faith be if we draw close to God through DAILY prayer and diligent Bible study and we should not forget fasting as often as we can. *We must be willing to do our part!*

**Isaiah 55:7-8.** *We are to change our THOUGHTS! We must learn to rule over them!* God wants us to draw close to Him, and His Holy Spirit, to think positively, as He Himself thinks!

Paul was inspired to write in Romans: **For what things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.**

IN ENDING THIS WRITING I WOULD LIKE TO CONCLUDE WITH THIS IN MIND.

Jesus Christ never ever became discouraged. **Isaiah 42:4** *He will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In His teaching the islands will put their hope.*

Jesus did not come to bring sorrow and depression. **John 10:10** *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*

The abundant life is not filled with worries, frowns, anxieties, depression, concerns, negative dispondency and discouragement!

*It is filled with the fruits of God's Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace!*

It is not self-centered, but God centered. It is not worried about the affairs of this temporary, short, physical life. It is concerned about the TRUE GOAL of life—the Kingdom of God!

**Philippians 3:8** *The abundant Christian life is filled with SPIRITUAL CONCERNS and is God centered!*

It is a truly positive, hopeful, happy life! It can and should be ours!







# ***VALENTINE'S DAY Pagan Practice or Christian Custom?***

*by  
Herman L Hoeh*

"Will you be my Valentine?" That question is asked by millions about this time of year. Why? Is there any religious significance to February 14? Read the surprising answers in this historically documented article.

WHERE DID St. Valentine's Day come from? You might suppose school teachers and educators would know. But do they?

How many of you were ever taught the real origin of Valentine's Day—and were ever told in school why you should observe the custom of exchanging valentines?

## ***The Silence of Educators***



Teachers are all too often silent about the origin of the customs they are forced to teach in today's schools. If they were to speak out, many would lose their jobs!

Today, candy makers unload tons of heart-shaped red boxes for February 14, while millions of the younger set exchange valentines. Florists consider February 14—St. Valentine's Day—as one of their best business days. And young lovers pair off—at least for a dance or two—at St. Valentine's balls.

Why? Where did these customs originate? How did we come to inherit these customs? Isn't it time we examined why we encourage our children to celebrate St. Valentine's Day?

## A Christian Custom?

Many have assumed that the traditional Valentine's Day celebrations are all in connection with an early Christian martyr by the name of Valentine.

Nothing could be further from the truth!

Notice what one authoritative encyclopaedia says about this idea: "St. Valentine's Day as a lovers' festival, the choice of a valentine, and the modern development of sending valentine cards has no relation to the saint or to any incident in his life" (*article, "Valentine, Saint," Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1970 edition*).

Did you know that centuries before the birth of Jesus, the pagan Romans celebrated February 15 and the evening of February 14 as an idolatrous and sensuous festival in honor of Lupercus, the "hunter of wolves?"

The Romans called the festival the "Lupercalia." The custom of exchanging valentines and all the other traditions in honor of Lupercus—the deified hero-hunter of Rome—was also linked anciently with the pagan practice of teenagers "going steady." It usually led to fornication.

Today, the custom of "going steady" is thought very modern. It isn't. It is merely a rebirth of an old custom "handed down from the Roman festival of the Lupercalia, celebrated in the month of February, when names of young women were put into a box and drawn out by men as chance directed." That's the admission of the Encyclopaedia Americana, article, "St. Valentine's Day."

The Encyclopaedia Britannica also points out that the custom of exchanging valentines arose from this "name drawing" during the Lupercalia. The "custom was introduced to England by the Romans and continued through the Christian era. To adapt the practice to Christianity the church transferred it to the feast of

St. Valentine" (*article "Greeting Card"*).

When Constantine in A.D. 313 made Christianity an official religion of the Roman Empire, there was some talk in church circles of discarding this pagan free-for-all, but the Roman citizens wouldn't hear of it! So, it was agreed that the holiday would continue as it was, except for the more grossly sensual observances.

It was not until the reign of Pope Gelasius that the holiday became a "Christian" custom. "As far back as 496, Pope Gelasius changed Lupercalia on February 15 to St. Valentine's Day on February 14" (*Lavinia Dobler, Customs and Holidays Around the World, p. 172*).

How did this pagan festival acquire the name of "St. Valentine's Day"? Why is the little naked Cupid of the pagan Romans so often associated with February 14? Why do little children and young people still cut out hearts and send them to "sweethearts" on a day in honor of Lupercus the hunter of wolves? Why have we supposed these pagan customs, in honor of a false god, are Christian?



## Who Was the Original "St. Valentine"?

Valentine was a common Roman name. Roman parents often gave the name to their children in honor of the famous man who was first called Valentine in antiquity. That famous man was Lupercus, the hunter. But who was Lupercus—and why should he have also borne the name Valentine among the heathen Romans?

The Romans identified Lupercus with the





Greek god "Pan" (*Smith's Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology, Vol. II, article "Lupercus"*). Pan was an Arcadian god of light. As such he was equivalent to the Phoenician sun-god "Baal." Baal—mentioned so often in the Hebrew Bible—was a title of Nimrod, "the mighty hunter" (**Genesis 10:9**). The Persian author Rashid al-Din, in his History of the Franks, mentions that Nimrod extended his hunting expeditions

even to Italy. The Apennine mountains of Italy also bore the name the Mountains of Nembrod or Nimrod. The hunter Nimrod pursued wolves in the Apennine mountains of Italy and acquired the title Lupercus—or wolf hunter. Valentine's Day was originally a day set aside by the pagan Romans in his honor!



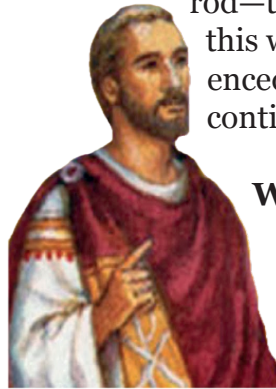
Why should Nimrod have been called "Valentine" by the Romans? Why should the celebration of this day have been anciently limited to the city of Rome before Pope Gelasius' time? What part did the site of ancient Rome play in the life of Nimrod?

Valentine comes from the Latin word Valentinus, a proper name derived from the word valens, meaning "to be strong, powerful, mighty." Any connection with Nimrod? We read in the Bible that Nimrod was the "mighty hunter" (**Gen. 10:9**). It was a common proverb of ancient time that Nimrod was "the mighty hunter before the Lord." Nimrod was their hero—their strong man—their valentine!

Why do we associate HEARTS with a day in honor of Nimrod—the Bad of the Phoenicians?

The surprising answer is that the pagan Romans acquired the symbol of the heart from the Babylonians. Nimrod founded Babel. He was the first lord of the Babylonians. In the Chaldean tongue, spoken in Babylonia, the word for "heart" was bal. The heart—bal—became, because of similarity in sound, a symbol of Nimrod—the Baal or Lord of the Babylonians!

Later, professing Christians in Constantine's day associated one of their martyrs named Valentine with festivities honoring Nimrod—the Valentine of the heathen. In this way pagan Romans were influenced to "embrace" the church while continuing their pagan customs.



### Why February 14?

Why should the early Romans have chosen February 15 and the evening of February 14 to honor Lupercus—the Nimrod of the Bible? (*Remember that days in ancient times began at sunset the evening before*).

Nimrod—the Baal or sun-god of the ancient pagans—was said to have been born at the winter solstice. In the twenty-first century B.C., the winter solstice occurred on January 6. Semiramis I, who ruled as queen in that century, ordered Nimrod's birthday to be celebrated on the day we designate January 6.

Eastern Orthodox churches still commemorate this day, but now call it "Christmas."

Later, as the solstice changed, Julius Caesar ordered the Roman world to celebrate this birth date on the new date of the solstice—on December 25 on his reformed calendar. This day was called the Brumalia. Today it is labeled "Christmas." It was the custom of antiquity for the mother of a male child to present herself for purification on the fortieth day after the day of birth. The fortieth day after January 6—Nimrod's original birth date—

takes us to February 15, the celebration of which began on the evening of February 14—the Lupercalia or St. Valentine's Day.

On this day in February, Semiramis, the mother of Nimrod, was said to have been purified and to have appeared for the first time in public with her son as the original "mother and child."

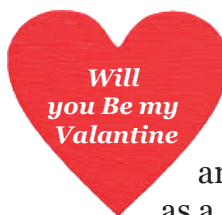
The Roman month February, in fact, derives its name from the februa which the Roman priests used in the rites celebrated on the Lupercalia. The februa were thongs from the skins of sacrificial animals used in rites of purification on the evening of February 14.

### ***Cupid Makes His Appearance***

Another name for the famous child who became a hunter was "Cupid"—meaning "desire" (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, art. "Cupid"). It is said that when Nimrod's mother saw him as a young boy she desired him—lusted after him. Nimrod became her cupid—her desired one—and later her Valentine! So evil was Nimrod's mother that it is said she married her own son! Inscribed on the monuments of ancient Egypt are inscriptions saying that Nimrod (*the Egyptians called him Osiris*) was "the husband of his mother."



As Nimrod grew up, he became the child-hero of many women who desired him. He was their Cupid! In the book of Daniel, he is called the "desire of women" (**Dan. 11:37**). Moffatt translates the word as Tammuz—a Semitic name of Nimrod. He provoked so many women to jealousy that an idol of him was often called the "image of jealousy" (**Ezek. 8:5**). No wonder the pagans com-



memorated their hero-hunter Nimrod, or Baal, by sending heart-shaped love tokens to one another on the evening of February 14 as a symbol of him! This, then, is the origin of Valentine's Day.

Why should we continue teaching children these pagan customs, derived from ancient and outdated pagan sex and hero-worship? Why not teach them, instead, what history and the Bible really say?



## ***Thy Kingdom Come***



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Just What Do You Mean Born Again  
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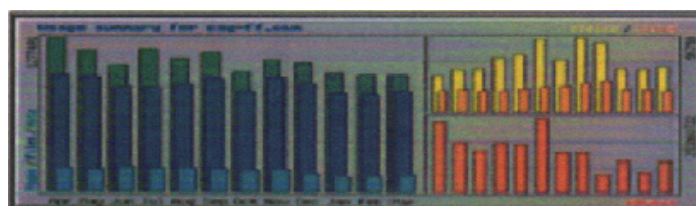
The Philadelphia Remnant Magazine Website  
[www.Philadelphiaremnant.com](http://www.Philadelphiaremnant.com)

Prophetic Events  
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The Restored Truths of God  
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Which day is the Christian Sabbath  
[www.Sabbathcentral.com](http://www.Sabbathcentral.com)

The Three Elijahs  
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