



THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

The Official Newspaper of the Church of God International

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"Put on the whole armor of God" (Ephesians 6:13)

Summer 2010

News From The Home Office

This excerpt, taken from the December 2009 co-worker letter from Charles Groce, bears repeating.

Now that we're in the spring of 2010, read it with refreshed perspective.



Charles Groce

Can you believe it? We're already moving into 2010! Do you remember just *10 short years ago*? As the world looked toward the new millennium, there were dire predictions of a catastrophe. There were widespread predictions of massive computer failures. Many people thought the year 2000 would usher in the end time!

Do you remember *just one year ago*? This past January (2009), Israel was at war with Hamas; suicide bombings killed people in Iraq and Pakistan; Osama bin Laden urged Muslims to launch a holy war on Israel; destructive earthquakes shook Costa Rica (now most recently Haiti/Chili/Baha/Indonesia); fierce windstorms swept through France and Spain; Al Franken was certified as the winner of the Minnesota senator's race; the U.S. Congressional Budget Office estimated the federal government would run a record \$1.2 trillion budget deficit for 2009 (it is now surging to \$1.6 trillion, \$4,700 for every person in U.S.!); Barak Obama was inaugurated as the 44th President of the United States; Timothy Geitner and Hillary Clinton were confirmed as

Secretary of the Treasury and Secretary of State; Michael Steele became chairman for the U.S. Republican National Committee.

Do you remember—this December, 2009, President Barak Obama announced 30,000 extra American troops will be deployed to Afghanistan within the next six months; the United Nations Climate Change Conference opened in Copenhagen; the tabloids and media fed on Tiger Woods' moral lapses (and now his return); U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates admitted he has had no new information on the whereabouts of Osama bin Laden in years; President Barak Obama accepted the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize; Houston elected its first openly gay mayor; and then there were the ongoing struggles marked by deadly violence in Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, India, and most everywhere else!

What a decade! What a year! With all that's happened in just the last ten years, you can't help but wonder what's ahead. What's going to happen to our nation and our families in 2010 (and beyond)? Just how long can the shoulders of the world bear the incredible pressures weighing upon human civility? Can our leaders really rule fairly? Can they bring themselves to admit their mistakes and turn away from their egregiously self-serving ways? Can they repent? Let's hope and pray our leaders and fellow citizens will find their way (back?) to God.

During this last decade, God has favored the *Church of God International*. Against all odds, our message of "witness and warning" has continued unabatedly. The *Armor of God* telecast can be heard around the world in over 40 countries, or by anyone with a computer. Families are listening; lives are being changed. Over 22,000 calls and 86,000 pieces of literature/CDs went out from the office filling requests, or offering support. Through the faithfulness of thousands of people, our income for this year, 2009, is slightly above last year. That's incredible! Especially when you consider the high unemployment and financial concerns affecting so many families. *God has been good to us, and we are mindful from Whom our blessings flow.*

As you look to the coming year, what do you see ahead? Of course, you can only speculate. Each of us is helpless against the fickleness of time and chance. Will you love man and God no matter what? Christians know what they're up against and are able to see beyond today and into tomorrow. *Christians realize and know there are better days ahead.*

The ministry of the CGI continues to serve God's people. They serve because they want to, not because they have to. Looking to the future, we must rely upon God and one another. Together we will accomplish what God has for us to do.

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A World In Transition —Part 3—

There are international forces at work today attempting to forge a greater global influence on the sovereignty of individual nations, including the United States. Climate change, economics, terrorism, and a variety of political threats with potential WMD's are all having their effect to leverage impact and control. Where is this leading the United States and the global community?

by Bill Watson



Bill Watson

In our last installment, we presented this fact: God is not pleased with those cultures that have adopted His Word (the Judeo-Christian Bible) as their standard for social and religious identity. It was suggested that historical facts prove the United States and the United Kingdom prophetically represent the "birth-righted" cultures that are, indeed, the modern-day recipients of the *physical promises* of wealth, affluence, and power originally promised to Abraham of Ur (Genesis 12:1-3). And furthermore, it was mentioned they carry the name of the "end-time" nation called Israel, prophesied to be divided into two broad profiles: 1) a company (commonwealth) of nations, and 2) a single great nation (Genesis 48:19-20).

With this in mind as a plausible world view, it becomes reasonable to accept that God had specific expectations for these nations. Understandably then, a lot of questions are answered as to *why*, over the course of their national life span, these cultures have enjoyed such great blessings of material wealth and protection from natural disasters and international calamities, and military success, relatively speaking, when compared to the rest of the world over the last 400 to 500 years. It is unequivocally apparent—the United States and United Kingdom have failed to live up to God's expectations; and the mission He had in mind for these nations, that of becoming an example to the world "as a city on a hill," clearly has never been achieved!

This is to our shame as a culture of multi-ethnic people who claim the name of Jesus Christ, the God of Israel. We have been given so much, and have been obviously blessed by God, our Father, for approximately 10 to 12 generations; yet we have miserably squan-

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Parents Are People, Too

by Jean Jantzen

“Parents are people, too. They have their own hopes and dreams. They have experienced hurts along the way. They need to be valued as people, first and foremost, not simply as parents.” —J. Whittaker



Jean Jantzen

There was something very different about that afternoon. I could sense it, feel it, taste it. I knew I could not leave her side. I hovered over her like an anxious mother cat, gently soothing her face and hands with a hot cloth. A slight movement had my full attention. Would she like a sip of water, her back massaged, her body turned? The emaciated 85-year-old woman lay with her eyes closed, her limbs restless. I laid my hand lightly on her arm so there was a connection—to let her know someone was near. As the afternoon progressed, her breathing became shallow and quick, and I knew the end was near; still, I was shocked by the deafening silence when it ceased altogether. My heart was in my throat witnessing this monumental final event in her life.

Her daughter had diligently nursed her mother for four long months of failing health, but had needed a respite, and that's where I came in. How could she have known it would be this quick, and when she was not there? I made the difficult phone call. Her daughter was overwhelmed by grief and guilt about not being by her mother's side. After comforting the daughter as best I could, I told her that her mother had deserved—worked hard, endured hardship—and had earned her rest. Besides, there was no doubt in my mind when I told her, “You will see your mother again.” How could I tell her that God says the day of one's death is better than one's birth? It seems when our parent dies, we focus on our needs and emotions instead of their blessed release.

Why do we carry so much emotional and psychological baggage when it comes to our parents? Maybe it's because we don't see our parents as people or individuals. As adults, we tend to see our parents as how they did or did not fulfill our needs, wants, and desires as a child, never stopping to think that maybe Mom and Dad had needs, goals, unfulfilled dreams and fears, just like we do, and that they did the best they could. Most parents gladly give up their lives to serve and provide for their children, juggling many demanding roles during their lifetime. I certainly learned much about this amazing woman for the dozen days I cared for her. She read the newspaper cover-to-cover every morning. She had been an avid gardener, a faithful wife, a mother of three, as well as a much-respected and beloved matriarch of her community. Neighbors flocked to her door. She had faced many trials, including her own serious health issues, with grit, humor, dignity, and strength of character. I will always value my time with her.

I've also had to face the eventual loss of my own mother, who is now 98. She has never been one to share her feelings, and I've never been close to her as I would have liked. What could I say when she died? Was I just viewing her with horse blinders on? What was she like as a girl and woman rather than just my mother? Writing a eulogy brought to light the grit and resilience this woman showed during her lifetime. Going through the “dirty thirties” was a trial; pregnant with her first boy, my parents were so poor my mother went into a home for unwed mothers so she would get enough to eat. When I was born, the lights went out in the hospital (Vancouver, BC) after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. A tiny five pounds, I slept in a dresser drawer; she was afraid the rats would eat me during the night. When she was a girl, she had a good distance to walk to school, so her mother bought her an old horse which she had paid two dollars for. My mother wasn't going to ride this “old Plug” as she called him, so she made a deal with a neighboring farm family—if she could use their pony, she would bring their cows into the barn at night. They said “Sure thing.” I learned my mother was quiet, but she knew what she wanted.

Sometimes children's lifelong perceptions of their parents are inaccurate and shallow. Susan Swan, novelist and humanities professor, wrote, “If I had sent my father a letter a few years ago, I would have written something like this: *Dear Dad, Thanks a lot, you narcissistic [so and so#*!] for ignoring me most of my childhood and giving all your time to your patients instead of your family.* If I sent a letter now, I might write: *Dear Dad, Why has it taken me all these years to see you as a person and to understand that your reasons for working so hard as a country doctor had nothing to do with me? Your early death was tragic, but your values of judiciousness, loyalty and compassion for others have been a moral compass all my life.* Her father worked 80 hours a week...operated from 8-12, had office hours all afternoon, came home at six for supper. By seven, he saw patients at his

office till 9, and then set out on house calls till 11 pm. She says, “I am 63 now, a year older than my father was when he died, and it's taken me all this time to understand that I've spent much of my life searching for a way to keep my father close...I wanted him for myself....” (*Readers Digest*, June/2009).

So as adult children, let's not get caught up in hating Mom and Dad for things in the past, things we may have misunderstood, or taken out of context. Let's not hold grudges and harbor bad feelings, or talk about Mom and Dad in negative ways to siblings; let's just be thankful for and cherish them as people—people with distinct personalities, backgrounds, and experiences—people who contributed to who we are today. Appreciate what they did right—that they watched over us in sickness and health, through good times and bad, influencing, loving, guiding, protecting, providing, hoping against hope they did a good job. Remember, having children was a learning experience for them, too; forgive them their bloopers, foibles, and lack of experience.

Keep in mind what Paul said: “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you” (Philippians 4:8, 9 NIV).

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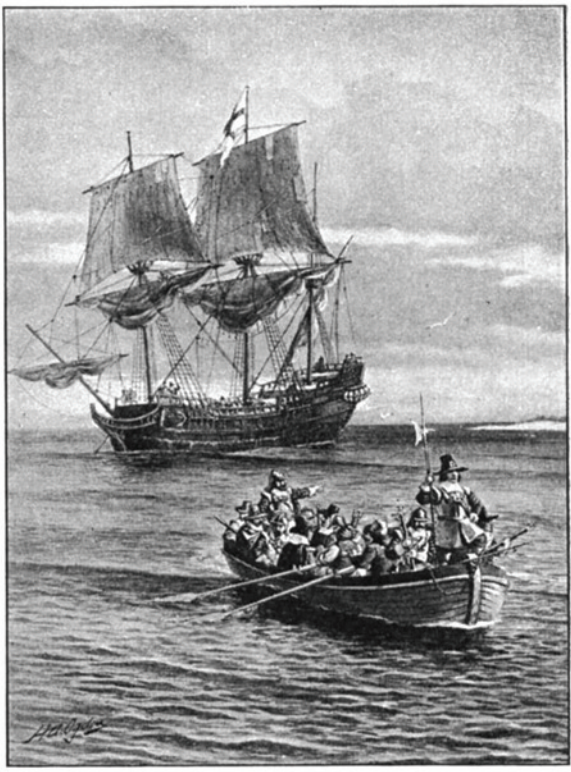
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dered our wealth, influence, and power by mismanaging our resources and affluence, while we exacerbate our condition by abandoning the God who blesses us. It's a pathetic legacy to our God, after one realizes how much He has done for us!

Without a doubt, this understanding of "prophetic significance" has been debated for well over a century or so, and will most assuredly continue to be contested. Though it may be difficult to understand and accept that the *cultures* of the British and American people are the end-time, modern-day Israelites prophetically mentioned throughout the writings of the prophets, let's just suppose: *What if it's true?*

Let's Consider Some "Real Life" Historical Facts

Before we answer this "what if" question, let's consider some *actual historical facts*. This will help us add some context to this perspective before resuming our present discourse on the global trends that appear to be leading us in the *transition* toward this Greco-Roman, Babylonian system which is prophesied to emerge in the end times and take on the role of ultimately invading and occupying Palestine and other Middle-Eastern and North African countries as the King of the North (Daniel 11:40-43).



Mayflower Pilgrims

The sixth president of the United States, John Quincy Adams, once said the highest glory of the American Revolution was this: "...it (the Revolutionary War) connected in one indissoluble bond, the principles of civil government with the principles of *Christianity*." Charles Hodge of Princeton Theology Seminary said, "The proposition that the United States of America is a *Christian and Protestant nation*, is not so much the assertion of a principle, as the *statement of a fact*." Conversely, to illustrate how far the American culture has drifted from this perspective, consider the *current* President's statement: "...the United States *is not a Christian nation*."

So, let's ask ourselves: Do you really think it's all just *coincidental* that the cultures of the U.S.A. and the U.K. subscribe to a *Christian heritage* and just happen to have their history *solidly ensconced* within the framework of the writings from both Old and New Testaments? We're just supposed to believe it's all just *coincidental* that the fact of their social, religious, and political views "just happened" to be based on the religious tenants and covenants that clearly connect with the belief that the *God of Israel* and *Jesus the Christ* are deity and represent *their* God, rather than Buddha, Vishnu Mohammad, Hara Krishna, or some other god? And furthermore, we're just supposed to believe it was *coincidental* that this Christian faith "just happened" to result in initiating a worldwide missionary work, second to none, for

advancing the name of *Jesus Christ* as the *exclusive Savior* to the world for centuries? Really? What do you think the chance of that is? Seriously, what do you think the odds of that happening are—especially when considering the many varieties of different religious and faith-driven possibilities that could have been?

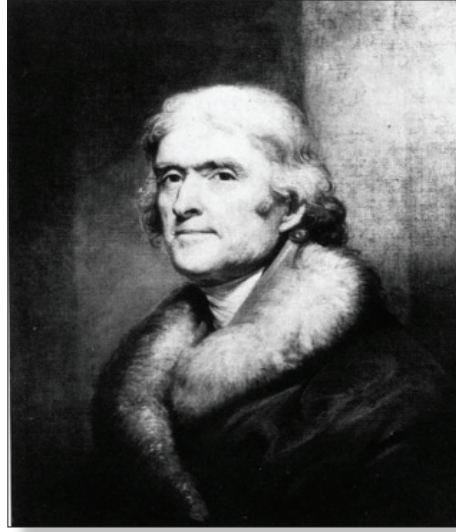
Additionally, can it be just *another* coincidence that the British and American governments "just happen" to be the primary *charitable providers and protectors* for that little Jewish Israeli state in Palestine since its commencement in 1948? Why *them* of all people? Doesn't it seem a bit strange, that to their own national risk and political detriment in some cases, they insist on maintaining such an affinity and protective concern for the Jewish people? Why do you think that is? It almost seems as though they may be related in some way—that somehow, their (the U.S.A. and U.K.'s) heritage is connected to each other in some way. Could this be possible?—and therefore, without us even realizing it, be what's actually at the basis of this cultural proclivity? In light of the real-life geopolitical *realities* of the last 62 years, this is something to seriously reflect on.

And what about *this historical fact*: The British and American nations seem so close; and in times of trouble, figuratively lock arms in support and/or in defense of each other, allied, as though they were brothers. These are just a few *historical realities* we should recognize and consider as we ponder the *possibilities* of the "what if" question regarding this plausible Israelite worldview.

With this in mind, it's also an *unquestionable fact* of history: the United Kingdom and United States are closely interconnected. History proves that what ultimately became the United States was originally nothing more than a handful of colonies that were part of the Commonwealth of Nations that primarily the British and others from the United Kingdom settled. At the time, Britain was a world power growing in its global influence and control. At its peak, the British Empire flew the Union Jack flag over a network of "common wealth" nations that covered about 21 million square miles (33.7 million kilometers) of earth. This translates to about 2.3 times the geographical size of China, which is about 9 million square miles (14.7 million kilometers).

There has never been, in the history of the world, an empire as large and geographically all-consuming and powerful as the British Commonwealth of Nations. Over its history, this trajectory of ascent finally achieved world power status, with London becoming the *financial capital of the world*, and its currency, the pound sterling, becoming the *world's* standard reserve currency at the outset of the twentieth century. It controlled virtually all the key gateways of the world, i.e., Gibraltar, the Suez Canal, the Khyber Pass, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malta, the Panama Canal, etc. (see Genesis 22:17), and brought an element of education and technology that "seeded" many undeveloped cultures throughout the world at the time: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burma, Egypt, Eritrea, India, Iran, Libya, Madagascar, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, etc. (see Isaiah 27:6). It was a stunning accomplishment by such a small but aggressively gallant, hard working, and creative culture.

After previously failed attempts in the late 1500s, England finally successfully settled Jamestown, Virginia in 1607, followed by the colony of Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1620. This was the commencement of what would ultimately become a very great nation and superpower in its own right. Actually, United States history *proves* many of these first settlers from the United Kingdom were bound with the purpose, from the start, to propagate Protestant Christian standards and moral values in the name of Jesus Christ. Consider the first charter of Virginia, which was granted by King James



Thomas Jefferson

I in 1606 and written before those first settlers left England. It plainly stated the goals of the colony were to be for "...propagating of [the] Christian religion to such people as yet live in darkness and miserable ignorance for the true knowledge and worship of God."

Following the settling of Jamestown came the New England colonies, which undoubtedly were Christian and Puritan in custom and style. The Pilgrims (Separatists) landed in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1620, but before even setting foot on the ground, they authored the "Mayflower Compact." This document clearly states they came "for the glory of God and the advancement of the *Christian faith*." Frankly, if the truth were known, approximately half of those on the Mayflower were from a congregation of Puritan Separatists (Pilgrims), originally from Scrooby, England, who moved to Leyden, Holland and finally left for Plymouth, looking for religious freedom from the Church of England. In other words, this was nothing more than a relocation project for a *Christian congregation*!

Later came the colony of Providence, Rhode Island, named after God, founded by Roger Williams in 1636, whose charter openly states evangelistic goals that "...may win and invite the native Indians of the country to the knowledge and obedience of the only true God and Savior (Jesus Christ) of mankind..." This was followed by the first complete constitution in the U.S. It was the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut, 1639. This document states the purpose of the colony was: "...to maintain and preserve the liberty and purity of the *gospel of our Lord Jesus* which we now profess, as also the discipline for the Churches, which according to the truth of the said gospel is now practiced amongst us." In other words, they were "practicing" the *tenets* of the gospel. It was their culture to be *Christian* in principle, standard, and value!

I could go on mentioning so many more original charters, Puritan constitutions, and compacts of those original colonies that in total exceed 100 different documents, finally leading up to the Articles of Confederation, the Declaration of Independence, the Northwest Ordinance, and of course, the Constitution; but suffice it to say, the United States' Protestant "Christian roots" are obvious for those who are honest with history.

For anyone to disavow that many *state constitutions* today still maintain, in their original documents, requirements that state and federal representatives must publicly claim belief in the Old and New Testaments and Jesus Christ, is simply refusing to accept reality! These are national facts of United States history, which sadly is no longer required, or taught, and is unfortunately ignored, or is being *rewritten* from an angry and disruptive perspective, in which, lamentably, God is simply not included!

It would do us all well to remember Benjamin Franklin's interesting statement and consequent observation, made in the course of his "plea to prayer" at the Constitutional Convention on June 28, 1787. He said, "...I have lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth—that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid?" This happens to corroborate the biblical truth that the most High rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomsoever He will (Daniel 2:20-21; 4:25).

Clearly, after reviewing the facts, to deny the United States was originally intended to be established as a Christian (Protestant) nation with the goal of propagating the name of Jesus Christ, is at best disingenuous, or flagrantly ignorant; or at worst, intentionally malicious! Regrettably, there is far too much ignorance and

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malice today regarding the history of the greatest combination of superpowers the world has ever known—and which, historically, the Living God has blessed beyond all other nations of the world (Genesis 49:22–26; Deuteronomy 33:13–17). One *cannot apologize* for this, because it is the *substantive reality* of our world history. John Adams, second President of the United States, once said, “Facts are stubborn things; and whatever may be our wishes, our inclination, or the dictates of our passions, they cannot alter the state of facts and evidence.” It simply *is what it is!* To deny it would be to repudiate the *reality of history* and the *providence of God’s prophetic writings*.

In other words, to deny the facts (“if this is true”—and *it is!*)—of the particular history of these two world powers (it’s *documented* world history)—is to deny the very will of God and His involvement in leading and blessing these nations with His promises that ultimately lead them to become the *world* (not just regional) powers they became (Genesis 35:10–11; Genesis 48:10–22; Genesis 49:1, 22–26)!

But Where Are They Today?

With this in mind, consider the words of Abraham Lincoln, who said in a speech on January 27, 1837: “At what point then is the approach of danger to be expected? I answer, if it ever reach us, it must spring up amongst us; it cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot we must ourselves be the author and finisher. As a *nation of freemen* we must live through all time, *or die by suicide*” (emphasis mine).



Constitution

Clearly, what we see happening around us is exactly what appears President Lincoln warned would happen. It’s as though the United States is now on a path of national self-destruction—*suicidal*, if you will. From a peak position at one time of being a nation controlling 80 percent of the world’s resources, with only about six percent of the world’s population enjoying those resources, and then succumbing to the current position of the world’s largest debtor nation, presently generating a \$1.5 trillion per year deficit (2010 expected annual deficit) or more, necessitating the U.S.A. to implore other nations to lend to them, like beggars, in order to maintain the “international Ponzi scheme” required to remain solvent, is simply outrageously deplorable and unconscionable. It’s a disappointing commentary plainly indicating a sad miscarriage of multiple decades of massive political (Democrats, Republicans, Progressives, and Independents alike), economic, social, and religious mismanagement!

Unfortunately, prosperity is problematic. It seems it’s almost natural that as prosperity increases, it becomes easier to forget God. Affluence seems to feed the delusion over time that the prosperity was accomplished by those who prospered. John Wesley of Great Britain had this insight: “I fear, wherever riches have increased, the essence of religion has decreased in the same proportions... For religion must necessarily produce both industry and frugality, and these cannot but produce riches. But as riches increase, so will



Abraham Lincoln

Deuteronomy 8 is for our present-day cultures! Without a doubt, the United States and United Kingdom are paralleling Israel of old.

Currently, the United States has become weakened in its political, economic, and military condition. Culturally, we have become a very secularized country, engrossed in our own personal lifestyles and pursuits of personal pleasures. Also, the United Kingdom has virtually lost control of all its “commonwealth nations.” Essentially, within about a dozen years or so after WW II, the United Kingdom’s age of hegemony was effectively over. Since then, it too has conceded to a humanistic secular society whose culture is more concerned with self-absorbed pleasures, entertainment, and leisure. Presently, its Parliament is in disarray, suffering from a lack of vision and purpose as well. Today, the sun *does* indeed set on this once globe-girdling British Empire. Sadly, it has lost its luster, and has faded into something far removed from the grandeur it once had as the glistening, mighty United Kingdom.

There was a time when the cultures of the United States and United Kingdom were like “lions in the forest” (world) among the “beasts” (nations of the world). At one time, not too long ago, they could have had their own way with any nation of the “forest.” They were a powerful duo when combining their geopolitical influence and military might. Two world wars in the twentieth century illustrated this, as they teamed up to push back the tentacles of tyranny and untangle the invasion of socialism upon the world. Like brothers covering each other’s backs, they fought alongside each other; and in the case of WW II, fought side by side in two theaters of war simultaneously: Europe and the Pacific Rim—and won!

This is history! This is fact! And if they weren’t *blessed with the success* they achieved, the world would be significantly different today—and *all of us know it!* But, regrettably, so much has been lost over time and generations—and the deep sense of gratitude we should have for these nations—and allies, who sacrificed so much, too—including the intervention of the God of Israel—is all but forgotten! Things are not the same today. Circumstances and world conditions are very different. There has never been a time like the times we’re presently in. It has *decisively changed!*

So Let’s Presume and Consider:
It is True

If then, the Biblical origins of the lost ten tribes of Israel do indeed connect with the United Kingdom and United States, and these cultures are actually the descendants of the lost ten tribes, if we allow for this possibility, then what is it we are beginning to witness? By comparing historical statistics with the present, an obvious loss of the industrial base reflected in a decrease of output production, and growing economic debt is plain (see sidebar). But *more importantly* and most recently, a loss of *respect* and *admiration* for free markets, human liberty, freedom, and “trusted” political leadership is apparent! The world community is losing confidence in the American culture of free markets, liberty, and political leadership. In other words, the rest of the world is *losing its certitude* in the American system be-

pride, anger, and *love of the world* in all its branches.” And of course, God warned the ancient Israelites of this possibility, and undeniably, it applies very appropriately to the present condition of our culture today. Please, *get your Bible* and read how *applicable*

cause they perceive we have an unsustainable amount of uncontrollable greed and debt, combined with political and business corruption, declining morals, and *no national vision*. Make no mistake—*this is a perilous trend and world view*, regardless of whether or not you believe in the Israelite cultural origins of the United States and United Kingdom.

Unmistakably then, this poses a glaring, but reasonable question: Is this visible evidence that God is finally *beginning to remove* His “protective hedge”? Is the *economic mismanagement* of the United States going to be the *fundamental element* of America’s weakening, decline, and ultimate fateful fall? World history has proved this to be true with most nations, empires, and kingdoms of the past that experienced similar political, religious, moral, and financial failures. This is a sobering statistical reality!

The reason for asking these questions is simply because the answers appear to be obvious, after considering a few items of recent history. For instance, since the climactic end of WW II, up until the beginning of the twenty-first century, for about 50 years now, the United States has virtually enjoyed an uninterrupted ascent to power and greatness that is unmatched. Actually, since the early 1990s, the case could be made that the United States was the last remaining “superpower” from the Cold War era. Once the Soviet Union defaulted in 1989 and ultimately began to dismantle in 1991, the United States had no peer. For all intents and purposes, the ongoing threat of nuclear war between these two “titan nations” was diminished for the time.

However, circumstances have changed again! It’s been about two decades since that event occurred, and Russia is rebounding and presently regaining its position of influence and strength. China is also on the rise and gaining prominence among the nations of the world as a viable emerging market to be seriously considered (it’s the third largest world economy, behind only the U.S.A. and Japan). India, Brazil, the Middle East, Europe, and a variety of Asian nations are all legitimate markets, competing for their fair share among the community of nations. The world is far more inter-linked and interdependent than ever before. This has been made evident by observing the effects of the recent economic “meltdown,” and how *all* nations have been impacted by it. Plainly, the world has become a much smaller place, and more intimately connected within the fraternity of nations throughout the world.



Burning Money

As we have tried to illustrate throughout this series of articles, the global community has become more dependent on each other in many ways, and the United States is presently in the middle of it. Unfortunately, the United States is also a major contributor, and has even been blamed as the *primary cause* for much of the world’s economic woes and political malaise.

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Global Money Meltdown

Conversely, the United States remains a *major obstacle* to the gravitation of the World Orders' move toward Global Socialism. Currently, it presents a real "stumbling block" for the advancement of this world trend, and further complicates this because its *money* is the world's reserve currency; and to its additional advantage, its debt has caused many nations to become *addicted* and *co-dependent* to its market by seducing them to produce excessive goods and services to supply it, while Americans strive to satisfy their immense appetite for spending, which generates prodigious amounts of debt. It's quite a sad and convoluted reciprocating cycle, and unfortunately leads to subservience to the lenders (Deuteronomy 28:43–44). This is illustrated very poignantly by China, who holds over three-quarters of a trillion dollars in U.S. treasuries (U.S. debt), thereby enjoying quite a position of *influence* over U.S. foreign and currency policy.

For the present, the perception of the *alleged superpower status* of the United States and its "AAA" treasury bond rating, which is at risk of becoming downgraded, in combination with the American people's ability to *buy* foreign goods and services, continues to provide an element of stability to the world's geopolitical and financial conditions. How long can this charade and immense Ponzi scheme be maintained? It's hard to say. However, it is slowly being eroded, and many nations who have been buying up the debt of the United States are beginning to see the "handwriting on the wall." This has caused some of our largest lenders to back away from financing the deficits we continue to generate, because most realize it's just a matter of time before the U.S. dollar will lose considerable value via inflation; and obviously, nobody wants to be holding excessive dollars when that happens.

Admittedly, the nations of the world know this. It's an oxymoron to claim "superpower status" when your country lacks a unified political vision, the value of the currency is at risk, and the nation is considered the greatest debtor nation in the history of the world, with no indication of reducing the debt or spending. Additionally, at the same time, its *military might* is perceived to be nothing more than a *paper tiger*. Unfortunately, this is the present "real world" status of the United States of America, and to a similar degree, the United Kingdom. It's quite a disturbing change from the positions of military supremacy, respect, economic dominance, and influence these former superpowers had throughout the twentieth century.

Both of these former "lions of the forest," metaphorically speaking, have been tamed, and unfortunately, are much more moderate than what they should be. But in today's "politically correct environment," it's not practical, nor acceptable to do much more. Additionally, the United Nations has provided a venue for smaller, less consequential nations like Iran, North Korea, Jordan, Syria, Libya, Pakistan, Venezuela, Cuba, etc., who, if they choose to act defiantly and with impunity toward requests made upon them by other nations of the world, usually can expect little to no real action of retribution.

What all this simply illustrates is the unfortu-

Then... And Now...

In the Book of Deuteronomy, the Eternal warned the House of Israel that their failure to hear His voice and obey His commandments would result in many curses overtaking them, including gradual economic ruin and foreign control and domination. "The alien who is among you shall rise above you higher and higher, but you will go down lower and lower. He shall lend to you, but you will not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you will be the tail" (Deuteronomy 28:43–44).

The fulfillment of these prophetic warnings have been dramatically illustrated in the economic decline over the last 50 years of the modern descendants of the House of Israel, especially among those nations who represent the inheritors of the birthright blessings given to Ephraim and Manasseh—Great Britain and the United States.

In 1960, the combined exports of the Anglo-American nations amounted to \$31.2 billion, which represented 24 percent of total world exports (World Trade Organization, Statistical Program, Time Series, 1960 World Exports, International Trade Statistics 1900-1960, Statistical Office of the United Nations, May 1962, Tables XXII and XXIII). It is also interesting to note that in the same year, the United States had a trade surplus of \$3.5 billion (U.S. International Trade in Goods and Services, 1960-2004, BOP Basis, compiled from official statistics of the U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis). In addition, for fiscal year 1960, the United States ran a budget surplus of \$3 million (Table 1.1 Summary of Receipts, Outlays, and Surpluses or Deficits, 1789-2013, <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/usbudget/fy09/sheets>).

In 1965, the Gross Federal Debt of the United States was \$322 billion, which amounted to 46.9 percent of the nation's Gross Domestic Product (Historical Tables, Budget of the U.S. Government, Fiscal Year 2010, Table 7.1 "Federal Debt at the End of Year: 1940-2014"). The Public Debt, that amount of the gross debt held by institutions outside of the U.S. Government, amounted to \$260.8 billion. Of that amount, only \$12.3 billion, or 4.7 percent, was held by foreign nations (Analytical Perspectives, Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2008, Table 16-6, "Foreign Holdings of Federal Debt").

In less than 50 years, the economic decline of the Anglo-American powers is reflected in grim statistics. In 2009, the combined exports of the United States and the United Kingdom amounted to approximately \$1.4 trillion. While this figure is much greater than their combined exports in 1960, the two nations' overall exports, as a percentage of total world exports, dropped dramatically from 24 percent in 1960 to barely 11 percent in 2009 (WTO Secretariat, World Merchandise Trade by Region and Selected Country, 2009).

The United States had a budget surplus in 1960; however, by 2009, the estimated annual budget deficit amounted to \$407.4 billion (Table 1.1 Summary of Receipts, Outlays, and Surpluses or Deficits, 1789-2013, <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/usbudget/fy09/sheets>). While the United States maintained a trade surplus in 1960, it had run into deep trade deficits by 2009. In 2009, the United States trade deficit was \$378.6 billion ("U.S. Trade in Goods and Services, BOP Basis, 1960-2009," U.S. Census Bureau, March 11, 2010).

In addition, the federal gross debt in 2009 was about \$12.8 trillion, which amounted to 90.4 percent of GDP. The gross debt for 2011 is estimated to be \$15.6 trillion, which will represent 101.1 percent of GDP (Historical Tables, Budget of the U.S. Government, Fiscal Year 2010, Table 7.1 "Federal Debt at the End of Year: 1940-2014"). If these estimates are accurate, the federal gross debt in 2011 will exceed the total value of all goods and services produced in the United States.

Perhaps even more alarming is the percentage of the public debt owned by foreign nations. In 1965, foreign nations held 4.7 percent of the United States' public debt. In 2006, foreign nations held \$2.1 trillion of the public debt, which amounted to 44.2 percent of the total public debt (Analytical Perspectives, Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2008, Table 16-6, "Foreign Holdings of Federal Debt"). As of February 2010, foreign nations held \$3.7 trillion of the public debt, which amounts to 65.8 percent of the total public debt. Of that amount, China and Japan combined held \$1.64 trillion, or 43.9 percent of the total public debt ("Major Foreign Holders of Treasury Securities," Department of the Treasury/Federal Reserve Board, April 30, 2010).

As of June 30, 2009, the United Kingdom's total external debt in U.S. dollars was \$9.088 trillion. The public debt represented 68.5 percent of GDP in 2009 (CIA World Factbook, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/uk.html>). As of March 2010, public sector net debt was £890.0 billion, which is expressed as 62.0 percent of GDP. In addition, the public sector showed a current budget deficit of £14.8 billion as of March 2010 (Office for National Statistics - Public Sector Economy, <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=206>). Finally, the U.K.'s trade deficit for 2009 was \$122.3 billion ("United Kingdom Trade Statistics 2009," Daniel Workman, March 3, 2010, <http://import-export.suite101.com/article.cfm/united-kingdom-trade-statistics-2009>).

Submitted by David Miller

nate *world bias* that has grown over the years, and how perceptions have changed and consequently paralyzed the global community from really being able to implement any kind of real solution regarding any category of issues facing mankind today. This cannot and will not last for long. The world's community of nations is "pro-

gressively" moving toward this Socialistic Babylonian Mystery System, and it will not be denied, regardless of the size, power, or might of any obstacles attempting to prevent it—and that includes the United States of America! W

...TO BE CONTINUED...

Leadership and Growth

Good leadership has a direct relationship with growth. There are some principles and a strategic focus that, if applied, can improve the growth that surrounds *good leaders*; but it does require work. It's plain to see that in order for growth to occur, a degree of leadership must be in place. However, leadership of and by itself doesn't guarantee substantive growth. But the *type* of leadership does. *That's what makes the difference!*

What's at the heart of growth is *good leadership*. And *good leadership develops leaders*. There's a distinction between those leaders (ministers) whose focus is on attracting and *leading followers* as opposed to attracting and *developing leaders*. Clearly, there's a particular mind-set, or different paradigm, that is used.

Consider this fact: Leaders who attract followers need to feel and be needed. But, leaders who *develop* leaders want to be succeeded. This requires a certain level of "security" within yourself as a leader. Though having followers can make you feel needed and important, it is rather shallow when considering the bigger picture of the "Work of God" and our duty to labor toward extending this mission beyond our own lifetimes! As Christian ministers, we have an obligation to our Savior and His mission that we duplicate ourselves every time we have opportunity. And shame on us if we allow those opportunities to pass us by.

Good leaders (ministers) lead for the well-being and edification of their followers. They are selflessly serving for the sake and benefit of the congregation. But an additional, very professional goal for their leadership (ministry), is to consider, *Who will they leave behind to continue in their place*, extending beyond their own life? And what kind of leader will he be?

Also, leaders who attract followers develop the bottom 20 percent, while those who develop leaders develop the *top 20 percent*. The point is, we need to be mindful of our time and how we spend it. There are many needs, as even Moses found out. But even he, through the wisdom of his father-in-law, came to recognize *delegation is key* to successful and quality growth. If you allow it, the trouble-prone 20 percent will take up 80 percent of your time. If we allow that to occur, those 20 percent will never be served with the kind of leadership they need and deserve.

Therefore, it's important the pro-active leader practices, *without fail*, the 80/20 rule: spend 80 percent of your time developing the top 20 percent of your congregation. This is the fastest way to secure *high quality* service for the greater whole of the congregation. However, that's not to say don't help the needy; but rather, don't allow the "needs of the needy" to prevent developing the leadership!

Clearly, proactive leaders view leadership as an investment. They invest time developing leaders. They understand if they take the time to "front load" their labor, in due time, the return on that investment of the best will in fact take care of the rest! And that is what's really behind this approach. It has nothing to do with neglecting the needy; but instead, everything to do with preparing for their long-term needs by increasing back-up to your leadership resources. To do anything less is dereliction of duty! We, as ministers of Jesus Christ, owe it to God's people and the upcoming generation of our young people to assure them of a stable ministry for years to come, beyond our own lifetimes. Those who selfishly focus on just building a following are very shallow in their service and are not considering the long-term needs of God's called-out ones, His church!

Leaders who only attract followers focus on weakness. Leaders who develop leaders focus on strengths. Ministry *necessitates* we work with the 20 percent who are consistently needing something to help them deal with their weaknesses. Troubled and unsuccessful people usually need help with the basics. It's usually these areas that consistently prevent them from achieving their personal objectives. However, when you work with your potentially best people as well, you build on their strengths in the hope of expediting the speed in which you can serve the needy with improved help and attention. Ultimately, it should all work to the good of the whole!

Remember, leaders who attract followers *spend time* with others, but leaders who develop leaders *invest time* in others. This is a major distinction! Those who are only interested in followers never really develop them. They don't increase their value to serve because they're not taught or given opportunity, not to mention the lack of forum available to them.

However, when leaders (ministers) take time to develop other leaders, the veteran minister makes an important investment in them *as well as for the congregation*. Therefore, it's important we use the forums we have to maximize those who are being mentored. This is just another reason for maintaining our congregations, which help in so many ways for the development of the Christian community and leadership!

Leaders who attract followers grow by addition, but leaders who develop leaders grow by multiplication. This is so true! A follower impacts the church by one, because when you attract a follower, you gain one follower. However, leaders who develop leaders receive the value of multiples. The reason for

this is simply because for every leader you develop, you have the potential of receiving the value of all the followers of that leader. Add ten followers to your congregation and you get the power of ten new people. But develop ten leaders to your congregation, and you receive the power of *ten networks!* It's something to think about. You can't go wrong developing leadership!

W

Excerpted from the *Ministerial Chronicle*, Vol. 6, Issue 1, Spring 2010

The next deadline for submitting articles, church news, and pictures for the International News is August 15, 2010.

Writer's Guidelines

Are you considering writing for the International News? We welcome you! Below are writers' guidelines for your consideration.

- Pays \$.03 (3 cents) per published word for articles and booklets on biblical/theological topics.
- Accepts unsolicited manuscripts.
- Pays on publication.
- Does *not* pay for church reports, poetry, human-interest stories, or personality profiles (items normally run in the *International News*).
- Buys all rights, including the right to reprint, in whole or in part, in any format.
- Items *must* be submitted electronically (e-mail attachment or floppy disk), preferably as a Microsoft Word file.
- Prefers plain text in 12-point type: no colors, frames, multiple columns, auto-indent, or auto-paragraph spacing. (Use tab key to indent paragraphs.)
- Reserves the right to edit for style, content, length, etc.

A few pointers...

- Use only *one* space between sentences (discard the old typewriter's "two spaces" rule).
- Periods (or other punctuation) should be *after* references at the end of a quotation, not inside the quotation or parentheses.
 - Wrong: "Jesus wept." (John 11:35)
 - Wrong: "Jesus wept" (John 11:35.)
 - Correct: "Jesus wept" (John 11:35).
- Commas and periods are always *inside* quotation marks.
 - "Before Abraham was, I am," said Jesus.
 - When Christians die, their souls do not "go to heaven."
- Question marks (and exclamation points) are *inside* the quotation when *part* of the quotation, but *outside* when *not part* of the quotation.
 - Just what do you mean, "born again"?
 - He asked, "Have you been born again?"
- Not all submissions can or will be published, depending on content, composition, timeliness, or space available at the time of publication. All submissions will, however, be given consideration and archived for possible future publication.
- Send your submissions to Vance Stinson at vancestinson/cgi.org or to Lloyd Cary at lloyd Cary@gmail.com (preferably to *both*!).

Notice: *The International News* welcomes your submission of articles, features, church news, pictures, or manuscripts. However, it cannot be responsible for the return of unsolicited materials.

W

“All Things Are Ready—Come to the Feast!”

Ready or not, God's Feast of Tabernacles is just around the corner. But will YOU be ready?

by Lloyd W. Cary

At God's Feast of Tabernacles, we often sing a beautiful hymn, *All Things Are Ready—Come to the Feast!*

But ARE you really ready?

Despite what some naysayers may say, God's Feast of Tabernacles pictures the Millennium—the 1,000-year reign of Jesus Christ that begins at His return.

“Speak unto the children of Israel,” God says in Leviticus 23:2, “and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are *my* feasts.” They are WHOSE feasts? Notice, these are *not* the feasts of the Jews or any other group; they are the feasts of the LORD God. God then goes on to enumerate each of His seven annual holydays, which depict, step by step, His plan of salvation for all mankind.

Concerning the great autumn feast, now fast approaching, God says, “Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be *the feast of tabernacles for seven days* unto the LORD. On the *first* day shall be an *holy convocation*: ye shall do *no* servile work therein. *Seven days* ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: *on the eighth day* shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: *it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein. These are the feasts of the LORD*, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations...” [emphasis mine throughout] (Leviticus 23:34–37).

Notice what these verses do NOT say—they do *not* say we only need to keep the first and last days of the feast. The Feast of Tabernacles is a *complete* feast consisting of SEVEN DAYS immediately followed by a separate eighth holyday called the Last Great Day. A holy convocation is a commanded assembly—an assembly of God's people called by Almighty God Himself! In God's sight, your attendance is NOT AN OPTION! He *commands* that you attend. You are left with a choice: Will you obey God, or make an excuse?

We are reminded of the excuses men made in Luke 14:16–20 as they bowed out, one by one, from attending the Lord's marriage supper: “Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. *And they all with one consent began to make excuse.* The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: *I pray thee have me excused.* And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: *I pray thee have me excused.* And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore *I cannot come.*”

Finally, note what the Lord's response was to those who were bidden to attend the feast but would not come: “For I say unto you, That *none* of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper” (Luke 14:24).

“The truth of the matter is, if you *want* to attend badly enough—if you *commit* yourself to obey God with all your heart, mind, and soul—you will find a way!”

Human nature is masterful at making excuses (see Jeremiah 17:9 and Romans 8:7). Some will object that they do not have the finances to go. God's answer is that you should have been saving your second tithe—ten percent of your income—to attend His commanded assembly. For those who may be on a very fixed income or have come into this knowledge too late in the year to have accumulated adequate funds, start saving up for next year. God does not accept excuses in place of obedience. Some will argue that they cannot get the time off from work. Have you planned ahead, attempting to get your vacation time scheduled for this time of the year? And even if your boss will not give you the time off, you must make a decision: *Whom* will I obey? God—or man? Acts 5:29 instructs that we ought to obey God rather than man. The truth of the matter is, if you *want* to attend badly enough—if you *commit* yourself to obey God with all your heart, mind, and soul—you will find a way!

It is a sad commentary that some undoubtedly treat the Kingdom of God the same way they treat His feast days; they make very little, if any, advance preparation. They assume that they can “be ready” at the last minute. Just as you cannot possibly develop the needed quality of character and habit of obedience “just before the Lord comes,” so very few will enjoy a rushed, half-prepared Feast of Tabernacles. Why not make your preparations now, while there is still time?

Following are a few tips to assure that you will have the “best feast ever!”

- 1) Be sure you save a full ten percent of your income for God's feasts. It is no fun to scrimp and scrape at the Feast of Tabernacles, or miss out on fun-packed activities when those around you are having the time of their lives, worshiping God as He commands. After all, the Feast of Tabernacles pictures that millennial time period when Christ will be ruling on the earth and all will be green and plush with plenty for everyone. This is not the time for penny pinching, but should be the high point of the year to sustain you through the coming winter doldrums.
- 2) To the best of your ability, schedule your time off from work or school far enough ahead so that your absence will not be a hardship. Ask your teachers for advance homework assignments, indicating that you really do care about your grades and are not just looking for an excuse to skip school. Instead of thinking negatively—“What will people think?” “Will I lose my job?” “Will I flunk out at school?”—consider what a *positive* witness you will be for God's way of life.
- 3) Make your housing reservations early so you will be more likely to get the type of room or cabin you need.
- 4) Think ahead about what you will need at the feast in the way of food, clothing, and accessories. If you take prescription medicines, make sure you will have enough for the time you're gone from home. You may wish to convert your money into traveler's checks for safety. Make a “feast list” far enough ahead of time so you can review it often and adjust it accordingly. Write it out. *Do it!* You don't want to forget something important, but you don't want to overdo it either! Seasoned travelers always travel light.
- 5) Immediately before the feast, put a hold on your mail and stop your newspaper. There is no wisdom in “advertising” to would-be burglars that you are not at home. Consider using timers for your lights. Also, be sure to mow your lawn at the last possible moment, or arrange for someone to mow it while you are gone. As an aside, make sure you have your household bills paid up so you won't have any late fees. Make arrangements for your pets to be taken care of.
- 6) Make sure your car is in good condition for the trip, or make sure you buy your airline tickets early. Nothing puts a damper on the feast like car trouble or missed flights.
- 7) And lastly, just before you leave for the feast, be sure to claim the promise God gave in Exodus 34:23–24: “Thrice in the year shall all your men children appear before the Lord GOD, the God of Israel. For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders: *neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the LORD thy God thrice in the year.*”

If you will do these things in a willing, godly attitude, you will be able to sing out, *All things are ready—I'm coming to the Feast!* W

The Devil's Beatitudes

Beware the Devil's Beatitudes! They go something like this:

- Blessed are those who are too tired, too busy, too distracted to spend time once a week with their fellow Christians—they are my best workers!
- Blessed are the touchy-feely ones who stop attending church services—I can use them!
- Blessed are the troublemakers—they shall be my children!
- Blessed are the complainers—I listen to their every word!
- Blessed are those who are bored with the minister's mannerisms and mistakes—for they shall receive nothing from his sermons!
- Blessed are those who gossip—for they shall cause strife and divisions that please me!
- Blessed is he who professes to love God but despises his brother or sister—he shall live in my house forever!
- Blessed are the easily offended—for they shall soon become angry and quit!
- Blessed are you who, when you read God's correction, think it is for others and not yourself—I've got you, too!

W

Numbering Our Days

The title of this article could be “As the World Turns,” “The Days of Our Lives,” “It’s A Matter of Time,” or “The Matrix of Life.” But King David said it best: “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom” (Psalms 90:12).

by Lloyd W. Cary

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Here’s a quick quiz for you: What does the diagram above represent? How does it correspond to your life? The answer is, of course, it represents *one year*. The horizontal columns represent *days* and the vertical rows are the twelve *months* of the year, so each day of the year occupies one square. This framework is laid out in a typical table format similar to those we see in weekly or monthly calendars.

“Okay,” you say, “I see the comparison—so what?”

When we look at this grid, knowing it represents an entire *year* of our lives, an icy tingle ought to begin to crawl up our collective spines. Why? Looking ahead, a year may seem to be a *long* time. But when laid out in this manner—when you can see every day of the year *at a glance*—suddenly a year doesn’t appear so long anymore. In fact, it is disturbingly short.

Our modern-day watches, clocks, and calendars are time indicators. They serve as rulers for measuring time. When we consider that as a day, (or square) of our lives is crossed out as each 24-hour period passes, no power in heaven or on earth can bring that day back for us. Once it’s gone, it’s irretrievable—nada, zip, gone forever. And when another year has passed—when all the squares are blackened out, irrevocably gone, lost, used up and discarded—we move on to another grid, another year—if we are blessed.

The Past is Gone

Consider: *How much time—how many more grids, such as the one above—do you have left?* The Bible says the days of our years are an average of “threescore and ten” (Psalm 90:10), that is, barring time, chance, disease, accident, or other unforeseen circumstances. With each passing year, another grid is removed inextricably from your life, never to exist again. Each passing year, your matrix contains considerably fewer squares. Another way of putting it is, how many grains of sand remain in your hourglass?

When we think about our lives in this way, we come to the inescapable conclusion that, indeed, life is short—much *too* short. Soon all our cards are played out, and as they say, “That’s all there is, there ain’t no more!” People quip frequently, “I’m not as young as I used to be, nor as old as I’m going to be,” but all too often, even that comes to a halt. In reality, we have a very restricted time in this plane of existence. If life is a lesson, it’s a crash course.

“Okay,” you repeat, “I see the comparison—so what?”

The Future is Different

The “so what” is that your time is running out. One of the things we can know about time is how it moves. Time moves only in one direction, straight forward, always flowing toward us. It never reverses. It is like traffic on a one-way street. It moves relentlessly in that one direction and no mortal on God’s green earth can reverse the process. By providing man with the ability to comprehend and measure time—an ability that is far beyond the comprehension of lower animal creation—we come to perceive how rapidly time moves from the present to the future. God set the sun, the moon, and the stars for signs, seasons, days, and years (Genesis 1:14). Each time the earth completes a cycle around the sun, one solar year passes—and, hopefully, we are given another “go” pass, or “grid” to fill in, such as the one at the beginning of this article, realizing we may or may not finish inking in all the squares of this new cycle

The future is different. We have a say in our future. In a limited way, we can manipulate our own future through appropriate action. To God, one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day (2 Peter 3:8), *but not with us!* Man is deeply conscious of the passing of time. With each tick of

the clock, he progresses a step further down time’s corridor. We are limited, living a temporary physio-chemical existence. God *only* has immortality (1 Timothy 6:16); we do not. God created man for a purpose. He has a pre-ordained plan, and you and I are intimately involved in that plan. God has outlined that plan through the proper understanding of His appointed holydays. Those He has called in this age are in a training period—a spiritual “boot camp” if you will. Ultimately, we are to become kings and priests in the world tomorrow (Revelation 1:6; 5:10). The apostle Paul advised, “And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we [first] believed” (Romans 13:11). Repeatedly we are told to redeem, “buy back,” or make the best use of that time: “Redeeming the time, because the days are evil” (Ephesians 5:16). “LORD,” David said, “make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am” (Psalms 39:4).

What Should We Do—and When Should We Do It?

Christians need to know not only *what* to do, but *when* to do it. Realizing the brevity of life, we need to ask ourselves:

- In the time I have left, do I have a sin or weakness to overcome? If so, what am I waiting for?
- Is there someone I need to forgive or make amends to? Time is growing short.
- Am I procrastinating, waiting to see “certain prophecies” fulfilled before I decide to “really get busy” for the Lord? Could it be that *my* end of days will come before I see these fulfillments in full?
- Am I growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ daily, now, while there is still time, or am I putting it off until tomorrow, knowing tomorrow may never come for *me*?

These are things to think about, to ponder, to contemplate now, while it is yet day.

Ways to Waste Time

Most of us do not need lessons on how to waste time; we do it very well without thinking. Whether we waste time—allowing it to slip unnoticed through our fingers—or not, largely depends upon our habits. If we have formed good habits, we are making good use of our time, and, if not, we are most likely wasting and discarding valuable time. Long hours watching television, reading novels, or playing video games deprives us of using our time judiciously. Used within wise limitations, entertainment, games, television, gatherings, and so forth, can provide relaxation for Christians, and should be used in moderation. We often hear people say, “I’m just killing time.” This is an unfortunate misnomer. Time, used unwisely, kills us! It is wasting a priceless non-renewable commodity, an opportunity to grow, change, and overcome. Our time is our life. The dedicated servant of God has no life to squander. His life is no longer his own to waste. We are “bought with a price” (1 Corinthians 7:23; 6:19). Therefore, our time, yes, our very lives, once called, belong to God.

Wasting Time Over Trivialities

All too often, trivial things not worth mentioning consume a tremendous amount of precious time. Little misunderstandings, contentions, and oversights can cause no end of headaches and heartaches if we allow them. These differences are bound to arise as long as men are imperfect. Consider what a tremendous amount of time is wasted daily through worry alone! Worry accomplishes nothing and probably kills more people than work. Worry is

little more than holding a negative image in the mind of things we do *not* want to happen. A lot of people who are worrying about the future ought to be preparing for it. Worry cannot change the past, but can ruin the present. Today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday. We cannot lengthen or shorten the remaining time by worrying. We are exhorted to care comparatively little for worldly things, but to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matthew 6:25–34).

Know this: The devil is real, and he is greedy for our time. If he cannot get at us any other way, he will waste our most precious resource—our time. It seems most people resort to “head games” in order to keep from seeing themselves as they really *are*—from *God’s* perspective! It is almost as though they are afraid of what they might *see* there. It is *so easy* to rationalize, ignore, or excuse our ill-behavior, our shortcomings, or play the “blame game” in order to get around what the Bible tells us to do! We are told repeatedly and earnestly to “*Examine* yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; *prove* your own selves” (2 Corinthians 13:5). David was a man after God’s own heart because he sincerely prayed, “Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart” (Psalms 26:2) and then *acted* upon what he found there. David was an overcomer, and we must be as well (Revelation 21:7).

Arguments over inconsequential matters, long-winded discussions on hypothetical situations and personal theories, claim valuable time from any who are foolish enough to allow it. “But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes” (2 Timothy 2:23). See also, 1 Timothy 1:4; 4:7; 6:4–5; 2 Timothy 2:14,16; and Titus 3:9.

Many wasteful hours might be spent with those wise in their own conceit, who desire only to make a show of their own wisdom and pet theories. Usually these have no time to listen to the good news of God’s Kingdom. The servant of God who is concerned with his time will not spend unnecessary time with those who are willfully ignorant of God’s purposes. Many have left the faith because they have been seduced by cunning arguments. Matthew 7:6 records some good advice directly from our Savior for the faithful servant: “Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.” There are simply too many people of good will with whom time can be profitably spent, who are more anxious to listen and learn than hear themselves talk. It is with such meek ones that we can profitably spend our time. God promises that “The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way” (Psalms 25:9; 147:6).

Take Hold of Opportunities

What has been done or what we have failed to do in the past cannot be changed. Wasted time cannot be bought back. That time is gone forever. It cannot be regained or used again, no matter how we try. A life spent in God’s service is never wasted. A life spent in service to God is how we store up “treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust corrupt, and where thieves do not break in and steal” (Matthew 6:19).

“And let us not be weary in well doing,” urged Paul, “for in due season we shall reap, *if* we faint not” (Galatians 6:9). Even now in this life, we see and experience evidence of God’s approval and blessings upon our actions, His assurance of a work well done. If He is patient enough to allow men a little more time to heed and turn from their time-wasting, life-wasting course, surely we should extend the same patience (Galatians 6:9).

Christians should walk into the days ahead with a positive attitude, with our heads held high, by making our time count and by being busily engaged in godly service. Study God’s Word (2 Timothy 2:15). Store God’s Word in your heart (Psalm 119:11). Pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Get behind the work that is helping fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19–20). In these ways, you will make prudent use of the remaining time, and with it attain the prize that comes with faithful service—everlasting life (Philippians 3:13–14; Galatians 6:8)!

A Parable For Our Time

Christ taught, “Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near” (Mark 13:28). He gave us a condensed prophetic outline in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21. Read these prophetic statements in your own Bible, compare it with your daily news, and ask yourself, *Do I see the leaves on the tree? Is “summer” drawing nigh? Can I see the events prophesied coming to pass right before my eyes? Do I see a dramatic increase of cataclysmic wars, famines, diseases, earthquakes, and manmade or natural disasters?* We know, too, that time and chance happens to all (Ecclesiastes 9:11), and that it is appointed to all men once to die, but after this the judgment (Hebrews 9:27).

“See then,” Paul admonished, “that ye walk circumspectly [cautiously, with awareness], not as fools, but as wise, redeeming [buying up, rescuing from loss] the time,” *why?*—“because the days are evil” (Ephesians 5:15–16).

God’s Word, the Bible, is the only record that accurately lists all the periods of time back to the creation of man, and even beyond. No other document does this. God is the Great Timekeeper. He has a set time for every purpose (Ecclesiastes 3:1). When He prophesies a matter, we can rejoice in

the fact that these prophecies will certainly be fulfilled, and exactly on time. Because of this, God’s people do not have the fear and anxiety others have. “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and *of a sound mind* (2 Timothy 1:7). How many around us in this insane world—even world leaders—have a really sound mind? Others see the same events we see, but do not see the *solution* to mankind’s problems—the Second Coming of Jesus Christ in power and glory (Matthew 24:30) to set up the Kingdom of God on earth. God’s Word tells us *in advance* what to expect and approximately when to expect it. Amos 3:7 comforts us with the promise, “Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.”

The time of the end—the time of the Great Tribulation and the Battle of Armageddon—is rushing headlong upon us. Jesus Christ spoke of a future so horrendous that no flesh would be spared “unless these days should be shortened” (Matthew 24:22). Did He have our time in mind? We do not set dates. Christ assured us, “But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father *only*” (Matthew 24:36). Some reflect upon these things with great fear and dread, having no hope. God’s called and chosen people do not need to fear the days ahead. We understand through faith that Christ’s Second Coming will be just in the nick of time to prevent mankind from destroying himself utterly (Matthew 24:22). Praise God that, “when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh” (Luke 21:28; John 14:27; 15:11).

Collectively and individually, whether by the Second Coming of Jesus Christ or by the end of our personal life cycle, the time of our redemption is drawing nearer day by day. We need to spend our remaining time wisely, redeeming the time, preparing ourselves to God’s praise and vindication. In this way we will make wise use of the remaining time, and with it attain the prize that comes with faithful service—everlasting life!

God Almighty warns sternly, “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot”—you are neither heathens nor Christians, neither good nor evil, neither led away by false doctrine, nor thoroughly addicted to that which is true, because you are listless and indifferent—“I would thou wert cold or hot. So then *because* thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth” (Revelation 3:15–16).

And finally, the apostle Paul writes, “And that, knowing the time, that *now* it is high time to *awake* out of sleep: for *now* is our salvation nearer than when we believed” (Romans 13:11).

W

My Bible and I

(John 3:31–33 and Psalm 119)

*We’ve traveled together,
My Bible and I,
Through all kinds of weather,
With smile or with sigh!
In sorrow or in sunshine,
In tempest or calm!
Thy friendship unchanging,
My lamp and my psalm.*

*We’ve traveled together,
My Bible and I,
When life had grown weary,
And death e’en was nigh!
But all through the darkness
Of mist or of wrong,
I found there a solace,
A prayer, and a song.*

*So now who shall part us,
My Bible and I?
Shall “isms” or schisms,
Or “new lights” who try?
Shall shadow for substance,
Or stone for good bread,
Supplant thy sound wisdom,
Give folly instead?*

*Ah, no my dear Bible,
Exponent of light!
Thou sword of the spirit,
Put error to flight!
And still through life’s journey,
Until my last sigh,
We’ll travel together,
My Bible and I.*

—Charles Sanford

The Fall Festivals—What They Mean, What Will Happen

“Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a Sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation” (Leviticus 23:24). Why? What do the fall festivals mean to us—and to the rest of the world?

by Lloyd W. Cary



As we look around at deteriorating world conditions, many wonder, “What on earth is God doing?” From a human perspective, the future has never been more erratic and uncertain. Somewhere in the world, a new “crisis” seems to appear weekly, if not daily. What are God’s people to do? What is the *next* major event for God’s people—in fact, for the whole world? God has the answers! And He has “hidden” them in plain sight, right where most of mankind refuses to look—in your own Bible—away from the “wise” and “mighty” of this world (1 Corinthians 1:26–29; Romans 1:21:26). The unfortunate fact is, most people are Biblical illiterates, and most who do study their Bibles are blinded because they believe the “keys” to understand in the God’s plan are “done away.” We are talking about God’s holydays.

In Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21, pivotal prophecy chapters, Christ details the general overall scenario for the world: religious deception, wars, famines, disease epidemics, earthquakes, and so forth. These have been going on in ever-increasing intensity from the beginning. Christ said, however, “All these are the *beginning* of sorrows,” or “birth pangs,” of the world (Matthew 24:8). Things were going to get worse! Much worse! World conditions are building up to a grand-smash earth-shattering crescendo. Christ warned that at the end of the age, “...there shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be” (Matthew 24:21). “And except that the Lord had shortened those days,” Christ prophesied, “no flesh should be saved [alive]: but *for the elect’s sake*, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days” (Mark 13:20, emphasis mine throughout).

God’s holydays, or festivals, as laid out in Leviticus 23, picture God’s plan of redemption—what God is doing on the earth—from the Sabbath and Passover on through to the Last Great Day. (If you have not already done so, please send for our FREE booklet, *God’s Seasonal Plan*, which explains each in great detail.) The spring festivals, Passover, the Days of Unleavened Bread, and Pentecost, relate mostly to God’s church, the firstfruits (James 1:18), and have been fulfilled in history. The rest, the fall festivals consisting of the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles, and the Last Great Day, deal with the rest of the world and lie immediately ahead of us. And what *awesome* things they portend!

Many pray, “Thy kingdom come,” or have said, “I can’t wait for the Day of the Lord to come” without realizing what the answer to this prayer will entail! Amos 5:18 declares, “*Woe* unto you that desire the day of the LORD! To what end is it for you? The day of the LORD is darkness, and not light.” It is often said, correctly, “Be careful what you wish for.” Zephaniah 1:1–15 goes even further: “The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers” (Zephaniah 1:1).

The Feast of Trumpets—What it Means—What Will Happen

Trumpets have been almost universally a signal of war. The Feast of Trumpets that we celebrate reminds us in advance of both the coming “trumpet plagues” (Revelation 8–11) that will be poured out in the terrifying “Day of the Lord,” and of our present job of lifting up our voice “like a trumpet” (Isaiah 58:1) to warn the nations of the soon-coming Great Tribulation (Matthew 24:21). The Feast of Trumpets will indeed be a day of fear and trepidation for mankind, but a day of rejoicing for the saints!

This is the time when Jesus Christ shall come again in clouds, riding upon a great white horse, descending with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God (1 Thessalonians 4:14–17). This will be at the last trumpet, “... for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (1 Corinthians 15:52)!

What a day this will be! The saints of God will be resurrected to immortal life—metabolically changed into spirit beings, born into the very Family of God—the time of our “spiritual birthday,” if you will. At this time, those who will have received everlasting life will be given authority to rule and serve on the earth under Jesus Christ (Revelation 1:6; 2:6; 5:10; 20:6) for a thousand years.

The second coming of Christ is revealed in the book of Revelation as occurring in three sets of seven: the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven last plagues of God. In Revelation 5, we see a seven-sealed scroll or book that only Christ was deemed worthy to open. The seven seals cover the rest of the book. One by one, Christ strips opens the seals, as we see in chapter 6, verses 1 through 17. Note that these seven seals are an expanded visionary description of the same series of events Christ described earlier in Matthew 24. The Bible interprets its own symbols, and Christ here reveals what these seals mean in His own words! The seventh seal is and consists of—constitutes—seven trumpets; and in turn, the seventh or last trumpet is and consists of—constitutes—the seven last plagues, which culminate in Christ’s second coming.

In Revelation 8:1–2, the time of the opening of the “seventh seal” marks the beginning of the Day of the Lord, the prophesied time of God’s wrath. Notice John’s description of this momentous event: “And when He had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.”

Christ will begin to directly intervene in world affairs at the seventh or last trumpet (Revelation 11:15–19). A trumpet is symbolic of war. The seven trumpets symbolize a series of plagues that are to fall upon the hostile powers that oppose and oppress God’s people. The first four plagues are poured out on the land, the sea, the rivers, and the atmosphere—the basic components of man’s life support system!

Christ Our Warrior-King

When Christ came the first time, He came as the meek and lowly Lamb of God whose mission was to die for the sins of the world. When He comes the second time, He is coming as a Mighty Conqueror—as King of kings, and Lord of lords (Revelation 17:14; 19:16). But before worldwide reconstruction can commence, Christ must deal with His enemies by waging war with the nations opposing Him. He will “destroy them which destroy the earth” (Revelation 11:18).

In Revelation 19:13,16, we see Christ returning as a mighty conquering Warrior-King: “And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God... And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.” He will then execute the supernatural seven last plagues, which will ultimately bring rebellious mankind to its knees. We see here another Bible opposite. As shocking as it may seem to those who picture the Lord Jesus Christ as only a sweet, harmless, loving Lord Jesus who would never hurt anyone, the first thing He is going to do at His return is KILL multiple millions of people! Revelation 6:17 declares, “... the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”

John writes: “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself. And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God” (Revelation 19:11–15). “And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth” (Zechariah 14:12). Christ will subdue all who resist Him. (See Psalm 110:6; Zechariah 14:3; 12:9; Isaiah 34:1–3; 66:15–16; Revelation 16, and 19:17–21 in your own Bible.)

The Day of Atonement

The next holyday, the Day of Atonement, falling between the Feast of Trumpets and the Feast of Tabernacles, is the one day of the year God’s people are commanded to fast, or humble themselves. Most professing Christians know little or nothing of the Day of Atonement, and the vast majority of those who do know of this day usually label it “Jewish,” “done away,” and not for Christians today. They could not be more wrong! Just what does the

Day of Atonement picture? How does it fit into God's plan? How does this day "connect" the Feast of Trumpets to the Feast of Tabernacles?

Christ will make all things right. Satan, the original sinner and our ultimate enemy, will be dealt with. We read, "... the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him" (Revelation 12:9). The Day of Atonement foretells how this enemy of God and mankind will be dealt with, and ultimately, the whole world will be made at "at-one-ment" with God.

"Atonement" [Hebrew *kippur*, from *kaphar*, which means *covering* or *expiation*] as used in Leviticus 23:28, means to make amends for sins and shortcomings. In its broadest sense, it means "to make right." The Day of Atonement, described in Leviticus 16, was anciently the most important of all the ordinances given to Israel, because on that day, atonement was made for all the sins of the entire congregation. This day also portends tremendous prophetic significance to God's people.

Notice how the observance is depicted in Leviticus 16:7-10: "And he [the priest] shall take the *two* goats, and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And Aaron shall cast *lots* upon the two goats; *one lot* for the LORD, and *the other lot* for the scapegoat." Note the difference! "And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD'S lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering. But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive *before* the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness." (Emphasis mine.)

Note the *FATE*, the end, of the two goats. First, there were *two* goats, and *only ONE* (not two) was representative of Christ, the one that, like Christ, was sacrificed. The *other*—the one *not* for the LORD—represented the *azazel*, or scapegoat—and was *not* sacrificed, but after confessing all the sins of Israel upon his head, was sent away "by the hand of a fit man" into the wilderness (Leviticus 16:21).

Now, is there any description in the New Testament of an event that occurs *after* the return of Christ coinciding with the above? Yes, there is! Letting the Bible interpret its own symbolism, turn to Revelation 20:13: "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, *which is the Devil, and Satan*, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."

Notice the similarities. Just as a "fit man" takes the scapegoat to the wilderness to let him go "unto a land not inhabited," an angel (and angels are very "fit") lays hold on Satan and casts him into the bottomless pit. This could mean nothing else.

Many are confused, even within the culture of God's church, what the second goat, the *azazel* goat, represents. Some believe both goats represent different aspects of Christ's one sacrifice. This theory dates back hundreds of years to the Catholic Church. Others believe the scapegoat represents none other than Satan the Devil. The word translated "scapegoat," the goat of departure, in the King James Version is from the Hebrew word, *azazel*, and simply means "the one responsible." Satan the Devil is ultimately the one responsible for all man's sins. He was the tempter in the Garden of Eden, the tempter of Christ Himself, and has influenced mankind ever since. The world cannot distinguish the difference between the true Christ and the false Christ—between the true God and the false god. They appear *so much alike* that man cannot differentiate between them—it required divine revelation demonstrated by the casting of lots (Leviticus 16:8). "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers [yes, Satan has ministers!] also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (2 Corinthians 11:14-15).

The day ultimately points to that time when the saints—God's people from all ages—will become fully and finally *at-one* with God.

The Millennium Begins

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Revelation 11:15). Once Christ, the Conquering King, destroys His enemies with the "brightness of His coming" (2 Thessalonians 2:8)—once Satan the Devil is put away for a thousand years (Revelation 20:2-3), He will establish world headquarters at Jerusalem, and then proceed to gather the peoples of Israel and Judah into Palestine to repopulate the land (Hosea 1:10; Ezekiel 37:21,22)—thus, Israel will be restored as a nation; the people "shall dwell safely all of them" (Ezekiel 38:8); and "Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls" (Zechariah 2:2-5). "And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem" (Micah 4:2).

The Feast of Tabernacles will be reinstituted and enforced worldwide. Those nations who refuse to keep it will suffer the plague of no rain (Zechariah 14:16-19). At long last, all Israel will be reconciled with God, and will become the model nation she was intended to be.

Christ will, at that time, restore true worship, peace, and harmony in the land. The long-awaited Millennium—the prophesied thousand years of utopian peace, harmony, and global reconstruction—will then begin. "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of the LORD from Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:3).

"And He [Christ] shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years" (Malachi 3:3-4).

Yes, the time is soon coming when God is going to set His hand to heal our world. In spite of the enormous problems we face today, a happy, prosperous future awaits the inhabitants of planet earth.

In the meantime, we have the responsibility of doing the Work, of submitting to God's rule now, of looking to and relying on Jesus Christ as Lord and personal Savior, of obeying the ten commandments of God, of keeping His annual feasts and holydays.

The Eighth Day

The eighth, or Last Great Day, immediately follows the the Feast of Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:36,39), and what a GREAT day it will be! This is the time of the second, or general, resurrection. The scripture reads, "But the REST of the dead"—those not in the first resurrection that occurs at Christ's Second Coming—"lived not again *until* the thousand years were finished" (Revelation 20:5). This day pictures the time of the great "fall harvest," when all the billions and *billions* of people who have lived and died who never had the opportunity to hear and accept the only name under heaven by which men might be saved (Acts 4:12) will be resurrected to physical life and have their *first* opportunity to come to full repentance and receive salvation! Families and loved ones will be reunited. Parents, children, grandparents, and extended families will live again! The earth will be green and lush, having undergone a thousand years of restoration under the government of God. The people will be hungry for knowledge, wondering what has happened since their long dreamless sleep of death, and we who are now called and chosen will be there to guide and teach them. We will have been kings and priests in the kingdom of God for a thousand years (Revelation 5:10). How much worry and grief about who may or not be in heaven or hell would be laid to rest if only people understood God's holydays! But now *you* know.

What About You?

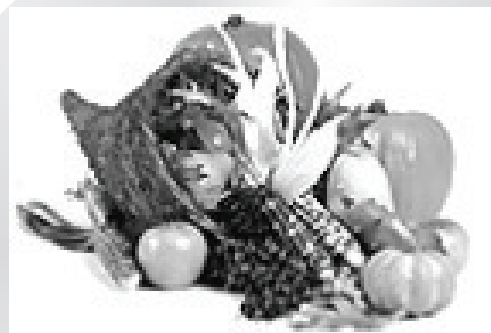
What about *you*? Are you called and chosen? Are you growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18)? Are you longing to keep His holydays just as Jesus and His disciples did? If so, we have great news for you! The *Church of God International* will be observing holyday services in various locations across the United States and around the world—and *you* are invited to attend! Just bring your smile, your Bible, and be prepared to learn and grow and enjoy God's feasts!

This year, the Feast of Trumpets falls on September 9th, the Day of Atonement on September 18th, and the Feast of Tabernacles begins September 23rd, and concludes with the "Last Great Day" on September 30th.

If you would like to keep God's holydays with brethren of the *Church of God International*, please call us here in Tyler, and we will be glad to put you in touch with someone who can tell you the time and location of the holyday services nearest you. Call us at (903) 939-2929 any time between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Or you may find us on line at www.cgi.org. A detailed festival brochure will be published shortly. In the meantime, see the summary of 2010 Festival Information on page 12 of this publication.

Let us rejoice in the feast! God willing, we'll see you there.

Ω



Congregations of the *Church of God International* will be celebrating the Feasts all over the world. For locations and other important information, see our website at:

<http://www.cgi.org/resources/feast-holy-days-information/>

Want to know more about the celebration of the Feasts? Watch our video "Celebrate The Feast" at:

<http://www.cgi.org/celebrate-the-feast-video/>

Church News

2010 Feast Site Information

HARRISON HOT SPRINGS, ARKANSAS

Durand Conference Center, 870-391-3100
 Site Coordinator: Ron Elkins, 870-653-6043
 relkins17@gmail.com

LAND BETWEEN THE LAKES, KENTUCKY

Kentucky Dam Village, 800-325-0146
 Site Coordinator: James Pollitte, 903-825-5921
 jamespollitte@kih.net

PINELLAS PARK, FLORIDA (*Infuse Site*)

Pinellas Park Performing Arts Center
 Aleida Fontao, 305-385-6306; Cell: 305-794-3639

NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA (*Infuse Site*)

Ocean Dunes Resort, 888-999-8920
 Site Coordinator: Mike Nolen, 843-761-5211
 tmnolen@homesc.com

NIAGARA FALLS, ONTARIO

Best Western Cairn Croft Resort, 800-263-2551
 Site Coordinator: Murray Palmatier, 514-269-0354
 murraypalmatier@yahoo.ca

VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Harbour Towers, 800-663-5896
 Site Coordinator: Eric Jantzen, 250-714-1117
 ericjantzen@shaw.ca

OCHO RIO, JAMAICA

Site Coordinator: Ian Boyne, 926-765 2160
 iboyne@jis.gov.jm

MANILLA, PHILIPPINES

Development Academy, 63 2 995 0294
 Site Coordinator: Rene Corpuz, 63 2 995 0294
 rene@cgiiphils.org

BALLINA, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

Ballina Jockey Club, 0408-101-309
 Site Coordinator: Herb Haupt, 011 61 7 5463 2949
 h-thaupt@skymesh.com.au

Dates of the Fall Festivals

- **Feast of Trumpets: September 9**
- **Day of Atonement: September 18**
- **Feast of Tabernacles: September 23–29**
- **Last Great Day: September 30**

Coming Soon: A Festival Brochure with housing information of the various sites will be published in time for you to make your reservations.

You may call the site coordinators listed above for housing information on sites you may be interested in, and/or check with our website at:
www.cgi.org/resources/feast-holy-days-information/

The Evolution of “CARING Connections”

Driven by a sense of growing societal loneliness among men and women of all ages, especially within the microcosm of the Church of God, I decided to write and ask Charles Groce the following question: What can we in CGI do to facilitate the development of lasting relationships with international and North American members?

Brethren, loneliness hurts. Just because a person has lots of friends does not necessarily mean you are free from loneliness. Surprisingly, the number of intimate contacts a person has in his life does not determine his likeliness to feel lonely; it's more about how positive relationships with others really are.

Combating loneliness head-on is our goal. Loneliness impacts our human condition and the global economy. University of Chicago researchers say loneliness, like pain, is an important signaller to people about the danger they're in. They found loneliness is as bad for your overall health as smoking, high blood pressure, or obesity.

Initially, our thought was to establish a singles group that would be available to young adults, single parents, disabled, mature adults, and seniors. Believing many have inherent desires to connect with like-minded folks in hopes of creating meaningful and lasting friendships, and possibly, even romances, I prepared a “draft proposal” for Charles. He then referred me to Mike James, who also involved Anika Sandy. The name *Singles Connections* was chosen, and was introduced to brethren through the last edition of *Infuse*. However, I remained concerned about the core issue of loneliness, and set aside a day to fast, pray, and study more deeply into it.

Upon reviewing James 1:27, I was convinced creating such a *Singles Connections* was just one step toward alleviating loneliness. We must consider all the folks between the “orphan” and the “widow.” When I read this scripture in the *New Living Translation*, “Pure and lasting religion in the sight of God our Father means that we must care for orphans and widows in their troubles, and refuse to let the world corrupt us,” the word “care” jumped off the page. I knew we, as the Family of God, could do better than simply set up yet another singles group.

Therefore, today, I am proud to announce the *Church of God International* is happy to assist in the development of meaningful friendships, and is establishing a coordinating group of catalysts (possibly including you) to launch our new project: *CARING Connections*.

As we explore aspects of loneliness, we see very early in the beginning, our Great Creator said, “It is not good for the man to be alone” (Genesis 2:18, NIV). Further, we read He, too, was touched by various forms of loneliness: “I was hungry...thirsty... a stranger... naked...sick... in prison” (Matthew 25:35, 36).

We have read the answer so many times, brethren. We know the major key to alleviating loneliness within our Family of God is *love*; true *agape* love. John 15:12 says it all. Our challenge now is to take the initiative and truly become catalysts in developing a change process vehicle, our exciting project: *CARING Connections*.

So, exactly how do we begin to develop new Christian friendships with brethren in Australia, Canada, Jamaica, the Philippines, the United States, and other locales scattered around the globe? Let's:

1. Ask scattered global brethren via the *International News*, *Infuse*, *Prevail*, and *Armor of God* publications, TV broadcast, and congregational announcements if they are interested in being part of our emerging and vibrant project. Men, women, and young adults can participate either as a CARING provider, CARING geographical zone facilitator, or CARING recipient.

2. Ask the ministry whenever they prepare sermonette or sermon messages on topics focusing on aging, disability, emotional health, friendship, loneliness, marriage, romance, seniors, singles, etc. if they would enthusiastically inform brethren of our new, exciting servant mentorship group, *CARING Connections*.

3. Ask brethren where they plan on celebrating any of God's high holydays (Passover, Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Trumpets, Atonement, Tabernacles) and establish a registry so folks could make future plans to “Connect.”

We can also create opportunities for *both* distant and personal “Connections” such as:

- Pen Pal Connections (actual written/postal-delivered mail)
- Daily Buddy/Mentor telephone communication Connections
- Internet Email and Instant Messaging Connections
- Regularly scheduled informal mini-social Connections before/after Sabbath Services

Connections, continued on next page

Church News

Connections, continued from previous page

- Bible Studies Connections
- Fund raising and community service event Connections
- Special project Connections—music, genealogy, crafts, talent shows, games, etc.
- Camp-out Connections
- Themed Retreat/Workshop Connections
- An Annual General Meeting during the year, perhaps immediately after Pentecost, or adjacent to any high holyday or Sabbath

All the while, we must consider potential economic, mobility, and transportation barriers.

Sadly, brethren, this quote by Mother Teresa from her book, *My Life for the Poor*, shook my heart: “Of all the diseases I have known, loneliness is the worst. I have come to realize more and more that the greatest disease and the greatest suffering is to be unwanted, unloved, uncared for, to be shunned by everybody, to be just nobody to no one.”

Think of the scripture we have read countless times, about Christ Himself feeling the ravages of loneliness in Matthew 25:35–36. How alone He felt hanging on the cross for you and me. Think also of the very first time God Almighty felt completely alone, and the deepest sense of loneliness ever—when Christ died on the cross.

Brethren, I urge you to consider Family of God members in your own congregation, as well as congregations scattered around the globe. Become a catalyst for change. Accept the invitation to become a geographical zone facilitator from Australia, Jamaica, the Philippines, and the U.S.A. Submit a brief bio to Canadian contact James Ludvigson at jvoyager@telus.net.

Guided by God’s direction, together we shall move boldly towards the soon-coming Kingdom of God with renewed emotional and spiritual enthusiasm. Together, we shall alleviate some of the misery of loneliness. We can make a difference.

Submitted by James Ludvigson

W

Annual Infuse Retreat

When: July 9-11
Hosted by: CGI Detroit
16250 Northland Dr., LL6
Southfield, MI 48075



Theme: Romantic Relationships (Because of the nature of the theme, participants are asked to be over the age of 18.)

Get more details online: www.infusecgi.org/events

Submitted by Anika E. Sandy

Feast of Tabernacles – 2010 Pinellas Park, Florida



Come one, come all, to be a part of the 2010 Feast of Tabernacles Choir in Pinellas Park, Florida. Each year at the Feast, choir members are needed to sing in the Festival Choir. This year, 2010, we will have several new pieces to learn. On the first of July, I would like to send out the music on a CD. Please call me soon with your intentions so plans can be finalized. Thank you. Ω

Frank Klett
5940 Burdette St.
Toledo, OH 43613
(419) 475-2554

Toronto Brethren “Contend For The Faith”

“Contending for the Faith” was the theme of the Bible Study Weekend hosted by the CGI Toronto congregation, March 19 to 20. The weekend had a high turnout of just under 150 people, who came to hear presentations on the importance of defending the faith. The Bible Study Weekend in Toronto has now become an annual event, and the major thrust of the local congregation’s outreach activities.

The presenters were local pastor George Ramocan, regional pastor Bill Watson, and from the Tyler office, Wynn Skelton and Wes White. The



Bible Study began on Friday evening with Mr. Watson opening the presentations on the subject, *The Destiny of Man*. He was followed by Mr. George Ramocan, who spoke on the topic, *Who Changed the Sabbath to Sunday?* A question and answer session followed the presentations.

The sessions focused on the ordinance of Passover as kept by the early church, instead of the pagan Easter. The history of the church that Jesus built and the encroachments that were brought to bear on the church’s fundamental teachings by Greco-Roman/Babylonian/Macedonian influence were highlighted as necessary to understand why churches uphold the non-biblical Easter celebration.

Mr. White continued the study on Saturday morning, when he gave a comprehensive outline on *Who Changed the Passover to Easter*. This was followed by *The Truth Behind the Holydays*, by Mr. Watson, while Mr. Ramocan closed the morning sessions with *The Nature of God*. The regular Sabbath service was held in the afternoon.

The rich, multifaceted communication program the church offered to visitors included an assortment of audio-visuals such as *The Chronicles of the Early New Testament Church* DVD and the mass-produced publications, *The Armor of God* periodical, *Prevail* magazine, and *Infuse* magazine. A local Welcome Kit was also given to visitors.

Local church deacons Horane Smith and Ken Allen participated by offering the opening prayers. At the regular Sabbath service, Psalms 25 was read by Toronto teen member, Mr. Ryan Davis, and his father, Mr. Adrian Davis, offered the opening prayer and blessing of the gospel entertainment programme, which came later in the evening.



The gospel outreach programme began with a puppet show for young children by the Tyler group, *Peace of Millennium*, and a musical drama performed by Toronto teens. Local talent, featuring singers from the Toronto congregation, delivered an inspiring line-up of songs. *Peace of Millennium* took to the stage after, and gave a well-received presentation of gospel songs. The group concluded their act with the popular hymn, *Stand up, Stand up for Jesus*, which was met with great applause.

W

Submitted by Merika Ramocan-Ford

Church News

3 Baptisms in Fayetteville, AR



We had three baptisms at the Fayetteville, Arkansas church on May 15, 2010. On this very special Sabbath, Wayne Turnbull, minister of record, was assisted by Archie Reynolds, Denny Ledford, Lonnie Hendrix, and others in the baptizing of my brother, Ronald Rich, Robin Fetu Hladik, and her husband, Jonathan Neal Hladik. Lonnie Hendrix had recently given a sermon explaining how some put off baptism thinking they are not ready or righteous enough. We also had three children, Skyler Langan, Phillip Langan, and Jenna Lyn Langan, brought in by a relative of Ronald Rich, to be blessed. *Submitted by James Rich W*



Ronald Rich



Jonathan Neal Hladik



Robin Fetu Hladik

Home Bible Study Course

Got Bible questions? The *Church Of God International* provides these free courses to help you grow in strength and knowledge of His Word. Request your free subscription from the Home Office or download them from our website.

- Understanding Repentance
- Understanding Faith
- Understanding Baptism
- Understanding The Laying-On Of Hands
- Understanding Resurrection
- Understanding Eternal Judgement
- Understanding Perfection
- Understanding The Sabbath
- Understanding Passover
- Understanding The Feast of Unleavened Bread
- Understanding The Day Of Pentecost
- Understanding The Feast of Trumpets
- Understanding Atonement
- Understanding the Feast of Tabernacles
- Understanding The Last Great Day

“Get wisdom, *get understanding*: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth... Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting *get understanding*.” (Proverbs 4:5,7)



15 Baptized, 400 Attend Unleavened Bread in CGI Jamaica

The Jamaican CGI reaped another bounteous harvest from its tireless evangelism efforts when Pastor Ian Boyne baptized 15 new members during an exciting and memorable 2010 Passover season. This was the highest ever Passover baptism apart from baptizing an entire congregation four years ago. These baptisms followed on the heels of six persons who were baptized during the Feast of Tabernacles last year, and a previous six earlier at Passover.

The candidates were baptized on the day of Passover at the Kingston YMCA swimming pool. The baptisms were witnessed by 129 members amidst a typically ebullient Jamaican worship atmosphere. These baptisms were a source of joy and a reason for great celebration as they demonstrated that the unwavering emphasis on evangelism was continuing to pay rich dividends.

The Jamaican CGI church model maintains a strong focus on preaching the distinctive doctrines of the Church of God, as well as honoring the traditional liturgical forms. These are balanced by rigorous interactions with the best doctrinal challenges to the faith as well as the inclusion of exciting contemporary praise and worship music. Pastor Boyne's number-one priority has always been, however, the fulfillment of the Great Commission given by Christ in Matthew 28 to preach the gospel, baptize, and make new disciples.

312 Observe Passover

Later that day, 252 persons met at the Sagcor Auditorium in Kingston for what many members said afterwards was for them “the best Passover ever.” The atmosphere was as poignant as ever, as the liturgical form was enriched by brief biblical insights interspersed throughout by Pastor Boyne, which were relevant to the ceremony. Meanwhile, 50 persons met for the Passover in Maroon Town in Western Jamaica, and 10 persons at the Ocho Rios CGI Worship Hall.

On the First Day of Unleavened Bread, 312 persons met for services in Kingston. Mr. Boyne's dynamic sermon was very expansive in its scope and highly relevant to the issues faced by members; it had something for everyone to reflect on and implement. He delivered an in-depth study on the key lessons from Israel's deliverance story, based on the book of Joshua. In it, he highlighted and explicated three important principles for spiritual success, including obedience to the whole law, courage and inner strength, and keeping an unwavering focus on the mission. He also expounded on the lessons of leadership, as well as being good followers. The influence of sin to affect individual lives and the life of the church was also addressed, as was the importance of faith in claiming God's promises, to those whom He has

led out of spiritual Egypt. Meanwhile, in Maroon Town, approximately 50 persons met, while in Ocho Rios, ten persons met.

Nearly 400 Observe Last Day of Unleavened Bread

The high spirits of the Kingston, Jamaica congregation continued to be matched by a high attendance of 341 for the Last Day of Unleavened Bread. The capacity of the Sagcor Auditorium was challenged as members and visitors filled the hall for a day of high-energy worship, praise, and preaching. Meanwhile, approximately 55 brethren met at the Maroon Town congregation in Western Jamaica, bringing total attendance on the Last Day of Unleavened Bread to approximately 400 in Jamaica.

In his Last Day sermon, Mr Boyne delivered a life-impacting presentation titled, “The Passion Story: Lessons from the Characters.” In it, he explored the lessons from the lives of Peter, Judas, Pilate, Herod, and Joseph of Arimathea. He showed how emotions of fear and uncertainty and experiences of disillusionment and suffering could cause believers to compromise their faith. He demonstrated the importance of knowing how to rebound from failure by contrasting the examples of Judas and Peter, while emphasizing the compassion, mercy, and forgiveness of Christ, our Redeemer and Unleavened Bread.

He also showed how it was fear of losing his political influence that caused Pilate to deliver Jesus up to be crucified, and not any proof that Pilate found against Him. We should be careful, he warned, to live true to our spiritual convictions rather than succumbing to expediency and the fear of losing things we value. The concept of living Unleavened Bread beyond the ritual came alive as a result of the sermon for many members, as Mr. Boyne didn't stray far from the practical, everyday issues facing listeners in his presentation.

The traditional second service on the holyday was a memorable experience for all members, as Pastor Pedro Hall of the Spanish Town congregation delivered a powerful sermon entitled “The Man in the Mirror is the Problem”. In it, he pointed out that for a better church, for better marriages and families, for better working relationships, we should develop the discipline of looking first at the man in the mirror. Rather than blaming others, or finding fault with others, we should instead follow Jesus' command to take the mote out of our own eyes so we can see to take the speck out of others' eyes. His dramatic, humorous, and skillful use of the mirror metaphor throughout made his presentation riveting, searching, and actuated many brethren to commit to taking up this practice.

Submitted by by Glenford Smith W

Church News

Passover With Knoxville Congregation

For the observance of Passover, Night to be Much Observed, the weekly Sabbath, and First Day of Unleavened Bread, the Knoxville, Tennessee congregation secured a facility near Athens, Tennessee called the Bradbury House.

The Bradbury House is set up to be used for gatherings such as ours, and as evidenced by the photos, is conducive to fellowship, worship, and the enjoyment of meals together. We all arrived on Saturday and enjoyed a great Sabbath together. The Passover service was held at the same facility, as was the Night to be Much Observed. We then conducted the First Day of Unleavened Bread services on Tuesday morning earlier than usual to give us time for a leisurely journey back to our homes.

We did invite others to join with us; unfortunately, it was not feasible for them to attend with us. Perhaps if events arrange themselves again so that we are able to do this, we can be joined by other brethren. It is so enjoyable to share time, good food, and fellowship with God's family. W

Submitted by John O. Brown



Tennessee Birthday Bash

I want to show you how our congregation celebrated my birthday this year. Almost the entire congregation, including our minister, Marvin Wyke, went out to eat at a local Mexican restaurant after services. As a total surprise to me, our deacon, Johnny Boyd, had arranged a special treat for me after we finished eating. Just as I was finishing my beverage, I noticed that everyone across the long table from me was smiling and their eyes were wide. All of a sudden, *Whap*, a large sombrero was placed on my head by a waiter standing behind me and then—well, the picture speaks louder than words! At least six waiters sang “Happy Birthday” as I tried to clean myself up. I heard cameras clicking and laughter so loud the entire restaurant was watching. I must have been quite a spectacle! W

Submitted by Sharon F. Richardson



“A merry heart doeth good like a medicine...”
(Proverbs 17:22)

In loving memory...



Jack LeRoy Brunt, 82, of Millbury, Ohio passed away Monday, May 10, 2010 in his home with his loving

wife of 61 years by his side. He was born on April 15, 1928 in Toledo to Melvin and Pearl (Firsdon) Brunt. Jack worked as a carpenter for 19 years, along with teaching apprentice carpenters for the Toledo

Board of Education. He attended night school to become a design engineer. He retired

March, 1990 from GlassTech in the AmPoint Industrial Park. Jack and Janet attended the *Church of God International*, Toledo congregation, for many years.

He is survived by his wife, Janet; daughter, Kathy; sons, Terry, Tim and Ty; 7 grandchildren; 9 great grandchildren; and sister, Carol. Jack was preceded in death by his parents and brother, Eugene. W

NOTICE:

The home office in Tyler would like to recruit the services of foreign-language writers and speakers. If you can offer any assistance, please call at 903-939-2929.

The next deadline for submitting articles, church news, and pictures for the International News is August 15, 2010.

Watch our video, “Celebrate The Feast”

<http://www.cgi.org/celebrate-the-feast-video/>

Sabbath Services at Tyler, Texas

Church services in Tyler, TX begin at 11:00 AM Central Standard Time every Saturday at 3900 Timms Street, Tyler, Texas, 75701. Church services are followed by fellowship and a potluck. Everyone is welcome to attend. Bring a smile and your Bible.

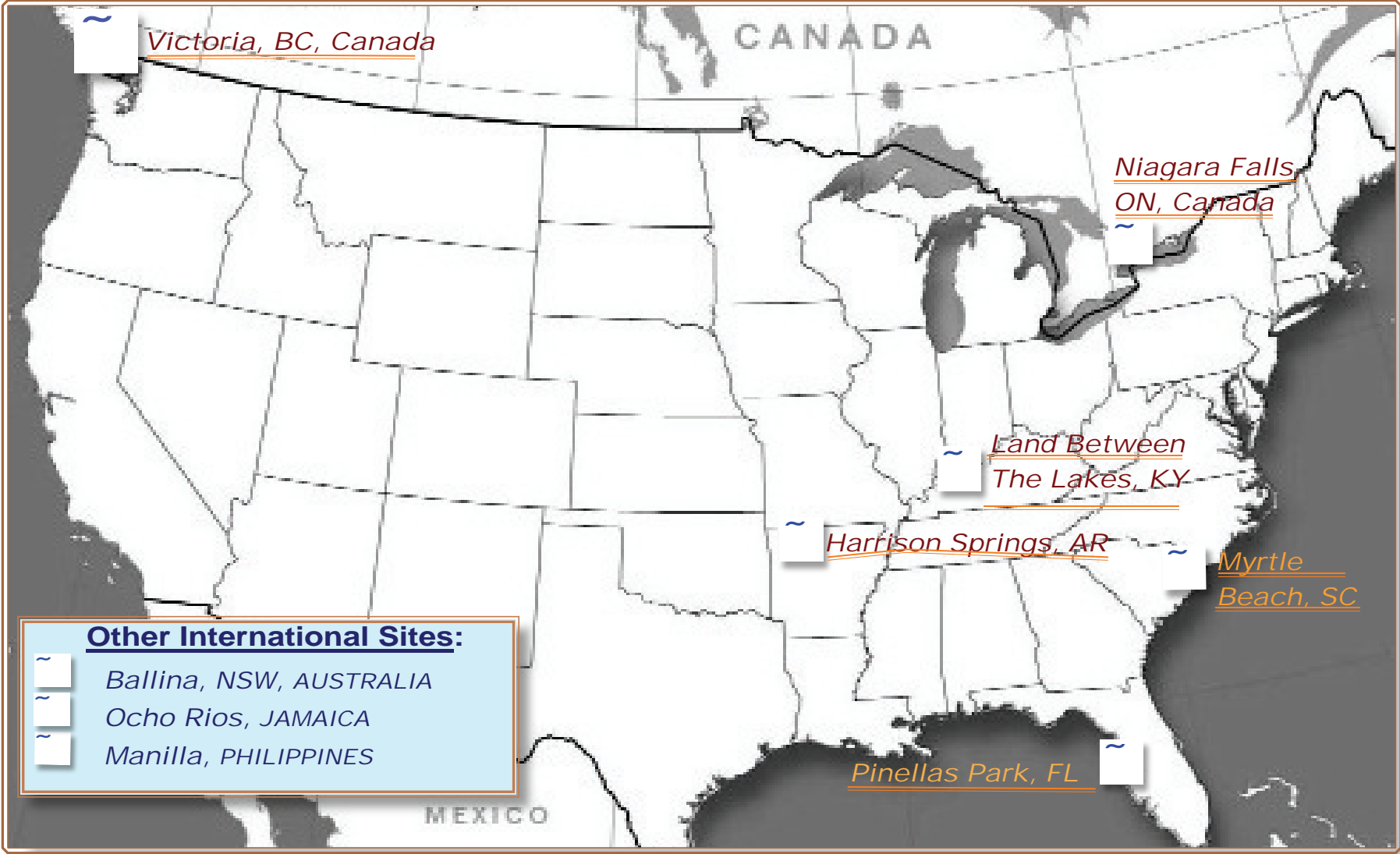
Live Webcast!

The *Church of God International* presents live webcasts every Saturday:

Tyler, TX, USA — Saturdays 11 AM CST —
<http://www.cgiwebcast.com/>

Nanaimo, BC, Canada — Saturdays 2:30 PM EST —
<http://www.cognanaimo.org/livestream/>

Feast Sites 2010



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