



THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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

Fall 2010

The Feast of Trumpets

Of all God's feasts, the only one not mentioned in the New Testament is the Feast of Trumpets. Yet, the tremendous truths pictured in this holyday are found at the very heart and core of the New Testament message. What does the Feast of Trumpets mean to YOU?

by Vance A. Stinson



Vance Stinson

"Surely if God meant that we keep all those feast days, the New Testament would have had more to say about them." Isn't that the way the argument goes? If you have been keeping God's holydays for very long, your chances of having heard such arguments are quite good.

Yes, it is true that the New Testament does not have a great deal to say about the annual holydays. But just how much does the New Testament *need* to say about God's feasts before we are convinced that we should keep them?

A common assumption is that God required Christians to obey only those Old Testament laws which are reiterated in the New Testament. Yet, those who hold this view seem never to quote any specific verse of Scripture which says that Christians are to obey only laws mentioned in the New Testament.

If the only Old Testament laws binding on Christians are those reiterated in the New Testament, then bestiality, a sin punishable by DEATH in the Old Testament period (Exodus 22:19), must not be a sin for Christians, for it is NOT MENTIONED in the New Testament!

God says, "Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is confusion" (Leviticus 18:23).

This is an OLD TESTAMENT law! And it is *not* repeated in the New Testament. But is there a professing Christian anywhere on this planet who

honestly believes that this law is no longer binding? Surely, every "orthodox" theologian, every "televangelist," every Baptist preacher in America knows that bestiality is a disgusting, abominable SIN against Almighty God!

The point is this: *There is no rule anywhere in the Bible which says that the only laws binding on Christians are those specifically mentioned in the New Testament!*

Notice what Jesus Christ Himself said about the Old Testament law:

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law...Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law...Whosoever therefore shall break one of these *least commandments*, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall *do* and *teach* them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:17-19).

Make no mistake about it—Jesus was not speaking of some "new law"; He was speaking of the so-called LAW OF MOSES! In fact, the "law of love," which many believe to have been introduced in the New Testament, was quoted from the Old Testament law!

When asked, "[W]hich is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said, "Thou shalt love the Lord your God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matthew 22:36-40).

These were not two "new" laws, as some seem to think. They were quoted right out of the OLD TESTAMENT! They are found in the "Mosaic law." The first is found in Deuteronomy 6:5, the second in Leviticus 19:18.

Clearly, Jesus Christ did not come to abolish the law. Rather, He *magnified* God's commandments; He emphasized the rich spiritual *intent* and true *meaning* of the law.

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A World In Transition —Part 4—

The United States remains one of the last bastions of freedom, liberty, and free market capitalism; however, how long will it last? In a world that appears to be gravitating toward world socialism under the guise of "State Capitalism," the question is: When will the compromises and concessions finally break this anti-socialist country we know as the United States of America?

by Bill Watson



Bill Watson

Undoubtedly, it's becoming obvious: The government's encroachment of states rights and involvement with the business sector of the United States is increasing. Legislation is consistently being passed, designed to allow the United States *federal government* to exercise control and/or influence on the states or in the private business sector that was never intended. Though unquestionably, it's true: Free market capitalism, or a representative democratic republic, is not the answer to mankind's problems. In fact, socialism is not the way to world peace either, especially when it's apparent the end-time Babylonian System described in Revelation is configured as a *socialistic confederation*, led by an autocrat (tyrant) and deceptive religious leader (false prophet) who combine their strength with ten other kings fully intending to rule the world by controlling the masses via a *mark*, which is required for anyone who wants to earn a living and exist peaceably within the system. That is a disturbing picture, especially when one realizes the world appears to be growing more comfortable with socialistic values.

Let's not forget the historical legacy of tyranny, communism, and socialistic reformative government. The history of these forms of *cultural management* is filled with oppression, bloodshed, and slavery. The governments of Napoleon, Mao Tse Tung, Stalin, Karl Marx, Juan Peron, Adolf Hitler, Mussolini, Fidel Castro, Saddam Hussein, and so many more that could be mentioned, are grotesquely recorded as macabre events, void of human rights and saturated with control and unjustified prejudice, murder, execution, and thievery! Revelation 13, 17, and 18, in combination with Daniel 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12, all portray a repeat of socialistic tyranny that will ultimately gain control of the world (Daniel 7:23), force people to receive some kind of *mark* that allows

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The Resurrection

by Bill Russ



Bill Russ

In God's church we hear a lot about the resurrection of the saints of God, those who will be resurrected at the second advent of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Just what *is* a resurrection?

A *resurrection* is the event of rising from the dead or returning to life. We could say that death is the absence of life, not life somewhere else. *Life* means you are not dead; *dead* means you have no life. Death is the end of life, not life removed from God, or life in another locality or dimension.

People tell stories about "all dogs go to heaven," yet we find no verse in the Holy Scriptures showing dogs, or any other animal, in heaven, the third heaven where God resides. Not even man is shown in the third heaven. Ecclesiastes 3:19–20 reads, "For what happens to the sons of men also happens to animals; one thing befalls them: as one dies, so dies the other. Surely, they all have one breath; man has no advantage over animals, for all is vanity. All go to one place: all are from the dust, and all return to dust" (Ecclesiastes 3:19–20, NKJV). Is there any proof of an immortal soul in man? If man has one, it seems to me that the animals have the same. Man does have an advantage over the animals. Man has the hope of a resurrection, but animals do not; however, when each dies, one is just as dead as the other.

Many say death is a separation from God, and in a sense this is true. Can you live apart from God? Do you have life within yourself? Where can one go to become separated from God? The Psalms have something to say about becoming separated from the Most High: "Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, Even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me. If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall fall on me,' even the night shall be light about me; Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You" (Psalms 139:7–12, NKJV). Only in death are we truly separated from God. God is the God

Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. (1 Corinthians 15:51–52)

of the living, not the dead.

Without God there is no life. Only God has life inherent. John 5:26, NKJV: "For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself." Where is the proof that God the Father has given life to any other to have life within themselves, not counting the only begotten Son of the Father? God is the source of all life. You are either dead or you are alive. If you can have life without God, then the promise (guarantee) of life eternal makes God untruthful in what He promised. The promise is not a higher quality of life, but life eternal, life without end. Not life in heaven, and not in hell. You will not be resurrected from life to life, but from death to life. "But for him who is joined to all the living there is hope, for a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they will die; but the dead know nothing, and they have no more reward, for the memory of them is forgotten" (Ecclesiastes 9:4–5, NKJV). If one is in heaven or hell, and is conscious, he has to know something, doesn't he? "The dead do not praise the LORD, nor any who go down into silence" (Psalms 115:17, NKJV). What is the purpose of standing before God, living in heaven, and not being able to praise the Lord? Some may ask what is the purpose of being alive in hell and not able to curse God.

"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being" (Genesis 2:7, NIV). This is not saying man has an immortal soul, but like the animals, man was an air breather; cut off the air, and man becomes a dead soul. What is the promise of God to all who love Him? Romans 6:22–23: "But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Without understanding death, you cannot understand the resurrection. The Bible expresses death in two ways—being "dead" or "asleep." Both expressions mean you are dead. In Daniel 12:2, NKJV, we read, "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt." Those who sleep in the dust of the earth are dead, and have the assurance of a resurrection.

Those living in this society do not usually use the word "sleep" when referring to death. There are many euphemisms we use to describe death—*deader than 4:00*, *dead as a door knob*, *dead as a door nail*, *kicked the bucket*, *pushing up daisies*, etc.

When word came to Jesus that His friend Lazarus was sick, Jesus delayed going to Bethany until well after the death of Lazarus. The phrase Jesus used was "Lazarus *sleeps*," but Lazarus was actually dead. "These things He said, and after that He said to them, 'Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up.' Then His disciples said, 'Lord, if he sleeps he will get well.' However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus said to them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead'" (John 11:11–14, NKJV).

God is the source of all life. He is thus called the living God, in opposition to idols that have no life. "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matthew 22:32, NKJV). Were any of these among the living during the time Jesus walked the earth as the Son of man? No, but they all have the assurance of a resurrection, some to eternal life and some to judgment.

"Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live" (John 5:25, NKJV). "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation [judgment]" (Verses 28–29). Be in the resurrection of life! The second death has no rule over those in the first resurrection. May the God of both the heavens and the earth richly bless and keep you till the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ. Ω



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Isaiah wrote, “He [Jesus Christ] will *magnify* the law, and make it honorable” (Isaiah 42:21).

Just compare Isaiah’s statement with the “sermon on the mount” as recorded in Matthew 5, 6, and 7, and see exactly how Jesus magnified God’s law.

No *true* Christian would dare claim that the commandment forbidding bestiality is no longer applicable in the New Covenant dispensation, even though it is not reemphasized in the New Testament. Yet some, even among Sabbath-keeping groups, *do* seem to think that the New Testament’s silence regarding the Feast of Trumpets is evidence that this holyday need not be kept.

But remember, Jesus declared in the clearest of terms, “Whosoever therefore shall break one of these *least* commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven.”

Even if we regard the commandment to keep the Feast of Trumpets as one of the “least commandments,” *we are still to keep it*—whether it is mentioned in the New Testament or not.

Now, let’s examine the prophetic and spiritual significance of the Feast of Trumpets.

God says, “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).

Notice that this holyday was to be “a memorial of blowing of trumpets.” Why trumpets? What do trumpets signify in the Bible?

Paul writes, “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the *trump of God*; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:16–17).

We have for years seen the connection between the sound of the trumpet and the second advent of Jesus Christ. Clearly, the Feast of Trumpets pictures the return of Jesus Christ and the resurrection of the saints.

But that’s not all. This holyday serves as a stern reminder of the horrifying events to occur in the prophetic time period known as the DAY OF THE LORD.

Bad News, Good News

Just think how wonderful it will be to once again see our brothers and sisters who now sleep in Christ. We have lost Christian loved ones to cancer, heart disease, accidents, and other causes—and we miss them so much. Can you imagine the feeling we will experience when we see them again? Can any of God’s people fully and accurately envision the overwhelming joy we will experience when we actually ascend into the presence of our Lord and Savior?

Think of it. Every year we partake of the bread and wine, which symbolizes the shed blood and broken body of Jesus Christ. Throughout the year, we hear sermons on Jesus Christ, read articles about Him, pray in His name. Just how would we feel, what depth of emotion would we experience, if we could meet Him face to face?

That’s exactly what is going to happen; and that’s exactly what the Feast of Trumpets pictures.

At last, we will meet our blessed Savior; we will be transformed into immortal spirit beings; we will meet our beloved brothers and sisters who had died in the faith. And at long last, the Church of God will, for the first time, come together as a single, unified body, as the saints from all ages rise to meet the returning Christ.

Yes, when the trumpet sounds and the Lord descends, something absolutely *wonderful* is going to happen.

But listen! The Feast of Trumpets not only points to the *good news* of our Savior’s coming for His saints, it also points to the horrifying events of the great and terrible DAY OF THE LORD—the time when God’s WRATH will be poured out, His FURY unleashed, upon the *wicked* nations of this world.

In the book of Revelation, the opening of the “seventh seal” marks the onset of the *Day of the Lord*. 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*” (Revelation 8:1–2).

The seven trumpets symbolize a series of plagues which are to fall upon the hostile powers, which oppose and oppress God’s people. The first four are poured out in the *land*, the *sea*, the *rivers*, and the *atmosphere*—the basic components of man’s *life support system*!

But this is only the beginning—the worst is yet to come!

John writes, “And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, *Woe, woe, woe*, to the inhabitants of the

earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound” (Revelation 8:13).

The first two “woes”—the fifth and sixth trumpets—are described in chapter 9.

After witnessing the horrible plagues brought on by the fifth and sixth trumpets, John sees a “mighty angel come down from heaven...and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, *that there should be time no longer*” (verses 5–6).

Six trumpets have sounded; and now, the time has come for the seventh and final trumpet—“that there should be time no longer.” What does this trumpet signify?

Notice verse 7: “But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the *mystery of God* should be *finished*, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets.”

Turn to 1 Corinthians 15, and read verses 51 and 52. Paul writes, “Behold, I shew you a *mystery*; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the LAST TRUMP: For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”

And, as we have seen, the saints will rise from the state of death at the *return of Christ* (1 Thessalonians 4:16–17).

Now turn to Revelation 11, and see proof positive that the “last trump” Paul speaks of is the SEVENTH TRUMPET of the Day of the Lord.

“The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly. 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 His Christ; and *He shall reign for ever and ever*” (verses 14–15).

Some claim that this is *past* history, that Christ is *now* reigning over all nations, that the kingdoms of this world are *now* being converted to Christianity and are, therefore, slowly but surely becoming the “kingdoms of our Lord.”

But this interpretation simply cannot be correct, as the next few verses prove.

Continue: “And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy [corrupt] the earth” (verses 16–18).

Clearly, the seventh trumpet signifies the return of Jesus Christ and resurrection of the saints. And this great event has *yet* to occur.

But notice: the sound of the seventh trumpet will bring both *bad* news and *good* news—good news to “the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear [His] name,” bad news to “them which corrupt the earth.”

The Wrath of God Unleashed

When Christ comes the second time, He will not come as the meek and lowly sacrificial Lamb of God; He will come as the LION of God—the “Lion of the tribe of Judah” (Revelation 4:5)—and He will wage WAR with the nations which oppose Him.

Notice John’s description of the returning Christ: “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).

In chapter 14, the wicked are depicted as clusters of grapes which have been gathered and cast into “the great winepress of the *wrath* of God” (verse 19).

“And the winepress was trodden without the city, and *blood* came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs” (verse 20).

Do you realize what is being described in these verses? Try to imagine it: A gigantic trough filled with *human beings* who are being *squashed*, crushed underfoot, by a furious, wrathful, WAR-WAGING Christ; their blood literally *gushing* from the winepress, flowing as high as horses’ bridles for well over a *hundred miles*.

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WARNING

A God of Warning



WARNING

“Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7)!

by Lloyd W. Cary



Lloyd W. Cary

God never strikes without warning. *Think!* Did He immerse the first world in watery destruction without warning? Did He burn out depraved Sodom and Gomorrah in a fiery downfall without warning? Did the Almighty take Egypt unawares as He sent wave after wave of devastating plagues through the land? When God orchestrated the overthrow of Israel and Judah by foreign invasions, were the victims unwarned? Mighty Babylon that ruled like a glamorous queen over peoples and nations—should she have been surprised and caught flat footed when enemy hosts took her by storm? And what of the

desolation that struck Jerusalem during the first century A.D.—did that blow fall without warning? To each one of these questions the resounding answer is: *No!* If we study the calamitous events of human history, we can take them as warning examples and learn their inducing causes. *If* we will.

God has always sent a warning message to mankind before He corrected them. We read, “... I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not....” (Jeremiah 7:13). “Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them....” (verse 25). “But thou shalt say unto them, This is a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the LORD their God, nor receiveth correction: truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth” (verse 28).

God’s warnings have seldom been heeded by a majority, even when patiently sounded over long periods of time. Prior to the flood, “And GOD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination [purposes and desires] of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually... The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence” (Genesis 6:5,11). God determined to cleanse the filth from the earth, not by a mere shower of a few minutes’ duration, but by a torrential deluge of forty days and nights whose waters were not dried from off the earth till ten months and thirteen days!

God foretold His judgment 120 years in advance (Genesis 6:3). Perhaps 50 or 60 years passed as Noah had three sons who grew to manhood and married. Then God told Noah of the impending flood, and instructed that righteous man to build an ark for the preservation of himself and his family. For some 40 or 50 years before the deluge, Noah gave a warning witness of its coming, and thereby earned the designation “preacher of righteousness” (Genesis 6:3, 13, 18; 2 Peter 2:5). But the vast majority of mankind scoffed and looked upon Noah as a false meteorological forecaster and scoffed at the possibility of an earth-wide flood. God created the earth—He was able to give it a scrubbing. After giving a sufficient warning witness through Noah, God cleansed the filth that had collected on earth’s surface. **The world had its warning!**

Several centuries later, the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah became so saturated with filth and sin that their destruction was due. Not even ten righteously inclined persons could be found there! When angels appearing as men stayed overnight with Lot, they were threatened with sexual molestation by a gang of men and boys. That mob was about to rape God’s angels! Even when struck blind—which should have been sufficient warning—they *still* groped for their victims in blind lust. When the angels instructed Lot to warn his own household of the impending destruction of Sodom, Lot’s warning message was taken as one who mocks or jests. Lot’s own wife did not take the instructions seriously. Only Lot and his two daughters escaped when, “The LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; and He overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground” (Genesis 19:24–25). **The Sodomites had their warning!**

Down in Egypt in the sixteenth century B.C., God gave a series of warnings to Pharaoh through His witness Moses. Before each of the plagues, the ruler was *warned*; after each, his heart was hardened more and more. With devastating effect, the ten plagues rolled through the land: rivers turned to blood, frogs infested the land, lice were as plenteous as dust, swarms of flies bit and pestered, followed by murrain of beasts, plaguing boils, destructive hail, followed in rapid succession by plagues of locusts and total darkness—then the woeful tenth—the death of all Egypt’s first-born! Pharaoh unwisely placed his confidence in the pagan religious leaders of Egypt who attempted to misinterpret, counteract, and imitate God’s warnings. Warnings of Moses were most certainly noised among the people of that first world power, as the Israelites had contact with the Egyptians, talked with them, and found many hearing ears, so much so that when they

finally made their exodus from Egypt, “a mixed multitude went up also with them” and witnessed the destruction of Pharaoh’s armies in the Red Sea (Exodus 12:38; 7:1–14:31). **The idolaters had their warning!**

Israel Repeatedly Warned of Her Captivity

Long after the Israelites had entered Canaan, after the centuries in which judges ruled, Israel was warned. Even after the nation had split into two separate kingdoms, when the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel had its capital at Samaria, they received repeated warnings from God from the prophets Isaiah, Micah, and particularly Amos, as witness of captivity to come (Isaiah 10:5, 11; Micah 1:6; Amos 5:27; 7:11). But through the prophet’s fiery warnings and rebuke, Israel persisted in copying the pagan days and customs of the nations around them. How brazen her guilt! God’s Sabbaths were forsaken, bands of robbers ravaged the land, priests murdered and committed lewdness, physical and spiritual whoredoms were rampant, idols for demon worship defiled the populace; like “a silly dove without heart,” her trust shuttled from Egypt to Assyria, but never rested in Almighty God (Hosea 6:8–10; 7:1–11). “They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind” (Hosea 8:7). Hosea cries, “They are gone up to Assyria . . . The Assyrian shall be his king . . . Samaria shall become desolate; for she hath rebelled against her God: they shall fall by the sword: their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child shall be ripped up” (Hosea 7:1–11; 8:7–9; 11:5; 13:16). **Israel had warning** before Assyria carried her captive in 740 B.C.

Judah Warned of Her Captivity

One hundred and thirty-three years later, the kingdom of Judah, centered at Jerusalem, fell to Babylon. Caught unawares? God’s prophets, Hosea, Micah, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel—all of them gave witness of the coming calamity. Micah, Hosea, and Isaiah gave witness some 150 years before the fall (Micah 3:10–12; 4:10; Hosea 5:5; Isaiah 3:8; 5:13; 39:6,7). During the forty years prior to desolation, Jeremiah endured abuse and mockery, beating, and imprisonment in order to witness to the doomed nation till the time it fell. He even warned of the length of desolation: “Thus saith the LORD of hosts; *Because ye have not heard my words*, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years” (Jeremiah 25:8, 9, 11).

Destruction was determined for this city that bore God’s name because it had abandoned God’s worship, offered incense to Baal, poured drink offerings to heathen gods, sacrificed children to Molech, and mocked the prophets sent to warn them. Yes, this Jeremiah and the others like him were considered calamity howlers, social misfits, fanatics, malcontents, against everything and everybody, said the people. Down through the years, the prophets foretold their downfall, and down through the years, the people mocked. They said: “... The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil” (Zephaniah 1:12). They said: “The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth” (Ezekiel 8:12). They said: “. . . The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth” (Ezekiel 12:22). They said, “. . . The vision that he seeth *is* for many days *to come*, and he prophesieth of the times *that are* far off” (Ezekiel 12:27). They undoubtedly had their share of agnostics and non-believers as well.

But God Himself refutes them: “For I *am* the LORD: I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass; it shall be no more prolonged: for in your days, O rebellious house, will I say the word, and will perform it, saith the Lord GOD... Therefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; There shall none of my words be prolonged any more, but the word which I have spoken shall be done, saith the Lord GOD” (Ezekiel 12:25, 28).

The skeptics, the intellectuals, the pious priests, were *wrong!* The prophets of God were *right!* The witness of doom was not for the distant future, for times far off. It was for their day, and by repeated visions of the impending desolation, Ezekiel was qualified as a watchman to sound warning: “I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me” (Ezekiel 33:7) .

Through His prophet Habakkuk, God revealed their fall would come *not* in distant days, but upon the very ones hearing the warning witness: “I will work a work *in your days*, which *Warning, continued on next page*

Warning, continued from page 4

ye will *not* believe, though it be *told* you. For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling places that are not theirs. . . . They shall gather the captivity as the sand” (Habakkuk 1:5–9). **Judah had her warning!**

Pagan Nations Were Warned!

God foretold the victorious rise of Babylon against His people Judah, but he also forecast *her* fall. Babylon took approving note of the prophecies favoring her, and showed special consideration to Jeremiah because of them, but she forgot the accompanying prediction of her fall: “It shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations” (Jeremiah 25:12). Habakkuk’s words went unheeded—that retributive justice would return upon Babylon’s head—“Because thou hast spoiled many nations,” God warned, “all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee; because of men’s blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein” (Habakkuk 2:8). **Babylon was warned!**

But most amazing was Isaiah’s witness concerning Babylon’s collapse, given some *two hundred years in advance!* At length He taunts powerful Babylon about her fall; in detail He tells how it will come about. The conquerors would be the Medes and Persians, the chief militarist would be Cyrus, and before him the city’s two-leaved gates would be found carelessly left open (see Isaiah 21:2, 9; 45:1–4; along with chapters 13, 14, and 47). So Babylon should not have been startled when in 539 B.C., Daniel read the handwriting on the wall, that last-minute warning of doom (Daniel 5:25–31).

Nor should mighty Assyria have been shocked when it came *her* turn to taste the bitter pill she had once inflicted upon Israel, namely, the overthrow that she suffered from Nebuchadnezzar in 625 B.C. God’s prophets Micah, Isaiah, Zephaniah, and Nahum had forecast it in vivid detail (Micah. 5:6; Isaiah 10:12–16; Zephaniah 2:13–15; Nahum 1–3). **None heeded the warning!**

The Warning In Jesus’ Day

But the restoration of Judah released from captivity was not permanent. As years passed, formal ceremony and rabbinic traditions grew. By the time of Christ, centuries later, true worship had been all but smothered and choked out by the traditions of men. Religious tradition has always been the enemy of the truth. Time for another warning. “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord,” Christ demanded, “and do not the things which I say” (Luke 6:46)? “For laying aside the commandment of God,” He said, “ye hold the tradition of *men*” (Mark 7:8)! “Not every one that saith unto me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that *doeth* the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works?’ And then will I profess unto them, ‘I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity!’” (Matthew 7:21–23).

Christ Jesus did not feint, spar, or shadowbox with diplomatic doubletalk when He proclaimed God’s warning. His warnings were plain, blunt, and undiluted. He called the false religious leaders of that day a generation of vipers (Matthew 12:34) and blind guides (Matthew 23:24). They led other blind followers into the ditch of destruction, teaching traditions that voided God’s Word, coveting flattering titles, donning religious clothing, thrusting themselves into the public eye, praying long-winded repetitive prayers, and doing works to be seen of men—gnat-straining but camel-swallowing hypocrites who appeared piously holy outwardly, but were blasphemously filthy within. Backed by the facts, Christ branded them liars, fools, serpents, and sons of Satan, the chief serpent. He warned those wicked clerics that bloodshed would come upon their generation, that their house would be left desolate, and at the temple not one stone would be left atop another; and searchingly, He inquired of them: “How can ye escape the damnation of hell [Gr. *gehenna*]” (Matthew 15:1–14; 23:1–38; 24:1, 2; John 8:44)?

Christ Jesus’ witness and warnings were so devastating to the religious leaders of the day, they wailed to one another: “Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? Behold, the world is gone after him” (John 12:19). Under satanic prompting, they stilled His tongue in death. Yet, they little knew that this, too, was fulfilling prophecy (Isaiah 52:13–15; 53:1–11).

Just as the flood victims could not nullify Noah’s warning by stopping up their ears and stiffening their necks—just as the Sodomites could not quench the rainfall of fire—just as furious Pharaoh had no antidote for the ten plagues—just as Judah was helpless to hurl back the Babylonians as Israel before her had been helpless to ward off the invading Assyrians—so shall any *one* or any *nation* reap what they sow!

Final Warning For Our Day

Looking down through time and under divine inspiration, the Apostle Paul warned our people today, in these last days: “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, high-

Trumpets, continued from page 3

Of course, Christ is not going to *literally* tread the wicked underfoot in a *literal* winepress. But the symbolism John employs gives us a feel for just how horrible a time it will be for the wicked when Christ appears.

At that time, the birds of prey will be called to the “supper of the great God” (Revelation 19:17), and will feed upon “the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both small and great” (verse 18)—the tens of thousands of strewn and heaped bodies of those who dared oppose the returning Christ.

Notice Zechariah’s terrifying description of the fate of the wicked at Christ’s return:

“Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongues shall consume away in their mouth” (Zechariah 14:12).

Indeed, the seven trumpets depict BAD NEWS for the ungodly!

But there is still more pictured in the Feast of Trumpets.

The Work of God

God, through the prophet Joel, says to us, “Blow ye the *trumpet* in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the DAY OF THE LORD cometh, for it is *nigh at hand*; A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations” (Joel 2:1–2).

Notice, this prophecy pertains to the time when the *Day of the Lord* is “nigh at hand.” It is for *our time* and the years ahead.

The message with which God has commissioned His church is both a *witness* as well as a WARNING. Christ says, “Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that *repentance and remission of sins* should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (Luke 24:46–47).

Notice that the message the church is to proclaim to all nations is a message of REPENTANCE—a *warning* to turn away from sin, which ultimately leads to destruction.

God says, “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a *trumpet*, and shew my people their transgression” (Isaiah 58:1).

Through the prophet Ezekiel, God says, “When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman: If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the *trumpet* and warn the people; Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul” (Ezekiel 33:1–5).

The Feast of Trumpets not only points to the Day of the Lord, which will culminate with the return of Jesus Christ and unleashing of the seven last plagues, it reminds us that there is a WORK to be done *now*, before the onset of the Great Tribulation and ensuing Day of the Lord.

The work of God’s church is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and make disciples of all nations, to call on the peoples of this world to turn from their sins, and—as the watchmen of ancient Israel sounded the trumpet to warn the people of the approaching enemy—to *warn* the nations of the coming Great Tribulation and Day of the Lord.

The Feast of Trumpets may not be mentioned in the New Testament, but surely we can see that the New Testament scriptures are replete with the tremendous truths portrayed in this holyday. Jesus Christ had much to say about His second advent, the calamitous times associated with His coming, and the resurrection of the saints—all of which are central to the message with which He has commissioned His church to preach in all the world.

The Feast of Trumpets occurs on the first day of the seventh month, when the moon is in its “new beginning” phase. The new moon is associated with “new beginnings” throughout the Bible. And how appropriate, for the return of Jesus Christ will introduce an exciting new age for humankind—a *new beginning* for planet earth.

Let’s not neglect the Feast of Trumpets.

Ω

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minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form [outward appearance] of godliness, but denying the power thereof: *from such turn away*” (2 Timothy 3:1–5). Compare these sins with our society today. Christ said, “I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:5).

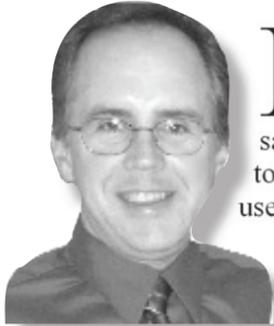
“And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, ‘*Come out of her*, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues’” (Revelation 18:4).

You have been warned! Will you heed that warning?

Ω

I Am the Son of God!

by Lonnie C. Hendrix



Lonnie C. Hendrix

Does the title of this article offend you? Long ago, there was another man who made that claim, and the people who heard him say it were so offended they were ready to stone him to death (John 10:32–39). Moreover, they eventually used this as a pretext for condemning Him to death (John 19:1–16). They asserted that His claim was tantamount to making Himself equal to Almighty God, and thus constituted blasphemy. Nevertheless, Christ plainly said, “My Father is greater than I” (John 14:28). Hence, their reaction to Christ’s assertion that He was the Son of God flowed from a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of God and His purpose for humankind.

Why are we here? What is God doing here? What is the purpose of human life? More importantly, how do we fit into God’s purpose? Do we really comprehend that God is expanding His family, and that He has called us to be a part of His Divine family? Do we fully comprehend the FACT that God is OUR FATHER? Do we understand that we are both figuratively and *literally* the CHILDREN of Almighty God? Or do these statements seem incongruous to your mind? Do they offend something deep inside of you? Do they sound like blasphemy to your ears?

What did Jesus Christ mean when He said, “Call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven” (Matthew 23:9)? How does the model prayer that Christ gave us open? “Our Father which art in heaven...” (Matthew 6:9). Was that just poetic language? Or did it mean something?

Paul’s letter to the saints at Rome made plain that this was more than poetic language, and that those words really did mean something. He wrote: “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they *are* [present tense] the SONS OF GOD. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry [present tense], Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we *are* [present tense] the CHILDREN OF GOD: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together” (Romans 8:14–17). He went on to discuss how God’s plan for humankind will unfold, and the Spirit’s role in fulfilling that plan (Romans 8:18–27). Then he went on to assert: “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, *to them who are the called according to his purpose* [emphasis mine]. For whom he did fore-know, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, *that he might be the firstborn among many brethren* [emphasis mine]” (Romans 8:28–29).

God is about the business of making Himself a family! That is His purpose! That is why we are here! That is why we exist! God *is* adding children to His family. “Oh well, sure, someday, somehow, in the distant future—right?” “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth

us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, NOW ARE WE THE SONS OF GOD [present tense, emphasis mine], and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he [Christ] shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is” (1 John 3:1–2).

Paul wrote to the Christians at Galatia, “For

ye are all *the children of God* by faith in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:26). He went on to make plain that Christ’s arrival on the world scene, and His work had made them God’s sons. He wrote: “But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons [or become sons of God, as it appears in the margin of some Bibles]. And because ye are [present tense] sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ” (Galatians 4:4–7).

The very creation of humankind points to God’s purpose: TO BUILD HIMSELF A FAMILY. We have all read the story of how God created Adam and Eve (Genesis 1:26–27) and have waded through those seemingly endless genealogies contained in Scripture, but do we comprehend what they

reveal to us about ourselves? Have you ever noticed that Adam is recorded as “the son of God” in Luke’s account of Christ’s genealogy (Luke 3:38)? Have you ever thought about the fact that Adam is our ancestor, our great grandfather many times over? And Adam was the son of God (Luke 3:38). Brethren, we are physically, genetically, literally, the descendants of Almighty God!

Likewise, someday we will be reborn as spirit beings and *literally* become part of the Divine Family. Paul said: “...as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly” (1 Corinthians 15:49). Christ subjected Himself to everything He went through to bring *many sons* to glory (Hebrews 2:6–18).

BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST, God is building a family! That is His plan. That is His purpose. Do we really grasp that fact? Do we even understand who we are? Brethren, I am the son of Almighty God—are you?

Ω

Why Me, Lord?

By Vivian Hall



Vivian Hall

Plugged with distress, malady, anguish, or disaster, it is easy to ask in misery, “Why me, Lord?” Our bodies are amazing masses of flesh, bones, blood, water, and electrical systems equipped with an analytical system that adds to and grows complex functions beyond comprehension. That is not altered by the fact that we, like everything else, will wear out. We were not made to last! If we are never sick, we will still die. We are subject to time and chance, which happens to all (Ecclesiastes 9:11). We encounter accidents, fire, water, floods, storms, job stress, money loss, and “people hurts.” It seems only natural to cry, “Why me?” when we’re in anguish! We wonder and ask: Has the great God singled me out to lose all worldly goods? Am I under condemnation for some sin? Do I have this dread condition because I am to be an example to others? The answer to any of these questions could be *Yes*. The answer could be *No*!

This I personally know: I have lost money because I have been careless. I have been reprimanded for unacceptable job performance. I have been sick because of something I should not have eaten, but did. I have become sick for lack of rest. I have experienced many adversities because of actions I took or failed to take. Other times, I have had problems without knowing why. At times, I have just been sick without a known cause. Even the patriarch Job asked God, “Why me?”

The righteous get sick. The godly suffer and die! My focus changes when I zero in on *salvation* and less on events. I then question less.

Through the prophet Jeremiah, God says, “I will correct you in justice, and will not let you go altogether unpunished.... Why do you cry about your affliction? Your sorrow *is* incurable. Because of the multitude of your iniquities, because your sins have increased, I have done these things to you.... I will restore health to you and heal you of your wound” (Jeremiah 30:11, 15, 17). Rather than ask, “Why me?” ask, “Why *not* me?” God will give a way of escape.

Recently something happened that caused me to do and say the unusual, and name names and state events. My son, Clifton Buchanan, serves in the Houston, Texas area. He has been in the Ministerial Apprenticeship Program with CGI for a number of years. Not long before the spring holidays, his small daughter and I watched him fall from a ladder while working at home. It was heart wrenching to see and not be able to stop the accident.

I knew he was hurt. I cried out to God to please help. He had bones broken in both arms. I am thankful it was not worse. Not once did I cry, “Why me, Lord?” My voice rose in anguish and pain asking instead, “Why not me, Lord?” God has been merciful and performed a great miracle. In two weeks, Clifton went from immobility to full use of both arms. For all who knew and prayed, Clifton’s wife Demetra, child Mykala (3 years old), and I thank you! God truly helps His children.

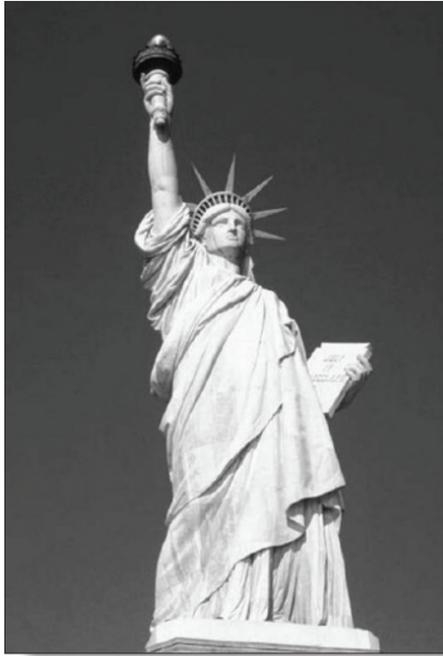
In conclusion, know this: Never put a hungry lion in the den with a praying, godly man! God will lock the lion’s jaws and he will not be able to eat!

Ω

“God is about the business of making Himself a family! That is His purpose! That is why we are here! That is why we exist!”

“Rather than ask, ‘Why me?’ ask, ‘Why not me?’ God will give a way of escape.”

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Statue of Liberty

has infected the British to a larger degree), is indisputably incompatible with what is described to emerge upon the world's geopolitical stage. And the pressure is on both the U.S. and Britain to conform and concede to this *struggling and very troubled socialistic model* (like iron and clay) which is rooted in the historical patterns that are being explored, tested, and experimented with by the European Union, the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Court. These are very real and influential political, monetary, and judicial forces that Britain and the United States have been resisting and contending with, on issues that seem insistently relentless with intent on merging the nations of the world into a single, confederated Socialistic Order!

Prophetic Events to Consider, Coming Our Way

There are far too many prophetic events in our future to mention here in this short article, but one is of particular interest because it represents *the beginning of the end*. The Bible describes it as the "abomination of desolation" (Matthew 24:15–25). Many of us who are familiar with history know that in approximately 167 B.C.E., Antiochus Epiphanies conducted a previous "type" of fulfillment concerning this event, when he invaded and occupied Israel and the temple in Jerusalem. It was at this time that he set out to desecrate the temple by offering swine's blood on the altar, dedicating it to the Olympian Zeus. This was a small "type" of the abomination of desolation.

However, notice what takes place in the *latter time* again, but this time on a much larger, more prominent scale. Daniel writes, "...for the words are closed up and sealed [regarding this prophecy] till the *time of the end*... and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand. And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate [abomination of desolation] set up, there shall be..." (Daniel 12: 9–11)—and then he continues to describe some days of significance. But did you notice? *Daniel claims the daily sacrifice will be stopped*, and this will begin to commence the ultimate, end-time "abomination of desolation!"

Obviously then, it's evident sacrifices will be conducted in the last days, thereby also implying a temple, or at least an altar of some significance being erected, where the Jews in Palestine will conduct these sacrifices; and the cessation of those sacrifices commences this *latter day* abomination of desolation, along with armies surrounding Jerusalem as Jesus also described in Luke 21:20–22.

Additionally, Daniel mentions that a king of the north, which is this socialistic Babylonian System, moves into the "glorious land" (Palestine), and occupies the area, pushing southward to "...stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape" (Daniel 11:42). Nor will Libya or Ethiopia (verse 43). Also, after he invades and occupies these areas, there will be threats from the east and north of Palestine (most likely China, Russia, and other Asiatic countries) that will trouble him (the socialistic confederation of ten kings, the beast, and false prophet) to the extent he will execute a preemptive attack on these nations (Daniel 11:44). Ultimately, this will be where he meets his end (Daniel 11:45). Jesus Christ will conquer this tyrant and others in the valley of Jehoshaphat at the battle of Armageddon (Joel 3; Daniel 7:17, 27; 8:25; Revelation 16:16–21), but not before this Babylonian System causes a *time of trouble* like never before in the history of the world (Matthew 24:15–22; Mark 13:14–20; Luke 21:20–28).

This is quite a prophetic scenario the Bible describes, and is certain to result in a lot of destruction and human suffering. However, we mention it here because it pictures a *markedly explicit distinctive contrast* with what we presently have throughout our world today. Yet, it's also important to recognize that it confirms there are some major upheavals ahead for the

them to fit in and become sociocrats of the system (Revelation 13: 16–18), while persecuting and killing those *Christians* who refuse to conform to this system of governance (Daniel 7:21,25; Revelation 13:7; 17:5–6; 18:20; 20:4). This will not be a pleasant time for the people on earth, and in particular, people of the Christian faith.

As mentioned in *Part Three* of this series, a major obstacle right in the middle of these unrelenting, lumbering *socialistic world trends*, which are building momentum, is the United States of America and the United Kingdom to a lesser extent. It's becoming clearer as we go forward—the representative form of government presently enjoyed here in the United States, and including Great Britain somewhat (although currently, socialism

current Israeli Jewish State, indicating that when these disturbances happen, *it is the beginning of the end!* This invasion of the land of Palestine (Judah), identified as the "abomination of desolation" (Matthew 24:15–25; Mark 13:14–25; Luke 21:20–26), is a *major sign* that many of the events now about to happen *here after*, are in fact the ones literally described in the Bible!

Furthermore, it's also a curious thing to consider, why isn't the *remnant of Jacob* (Israel) mentioned? We are told he would be a lion among the Gentiles in the world (Micah 5:7–8), that the tribe of Joseph (Israel) in the "latter day" (Genesis 49:1) would be a fruitful bough with affluence and material blessings running beyond his borders, while others grieved him and shot at him in his strength (Genesis 49:22–26; Deuteronomy 33:13–17). However, there is absolutely no mention of Israel at this point in the "time of the end" (Daniel 11:40). Oddly though, the land of Palestine is mentioned, *geographically*, as the "glorious land" (this is where the Jews are currently), and is described as being invaded and occupied (Daniel 11:40–45) in the *end time* (remember Jesus Christ mentioned that, too). However, there is no mention of the house of Jacob, Israel, tribe of Joseph, Manasseh, or Ephraim. The silence pertaining to these cultures *at this time* and not mentioning them during this invasion of Palestine (today's modern Jewish state) in the *latter day*—is deafening!

So, where is the nation of *latter-day Israel* (not the Israeli Jews) during this time of world calamity? And why, as you would expect, aren't they protecting the "glorious land" where the Israeli Jews are, instead of allowing it to be invaded and occupied by the king of the north (Babylonian Mystery System), which also, by the way, continues to proceed and run roughshod throughout the Middle East? This is certainly an unusual situation to say the least, since the present policies of both the U.S.A. and Britain have them committed to protect this Jewish nation-state. So where are they? Especially if this "latter-day Israel" is this *prophetic powerhouse* the Bible claims it to be in the last days!

Clearly, knowing the historical and current protective nature and policies the United States and England have toward the Israeli Jews, this question demands an answer! How could they (the U.S.A. and Britain) allow them (the Jews in Palestine—the glorious land) to be invaded, conquered, and finally occupied? Where are they? These are questions for you to ask yourself in light of biblical prophecy! Where is the United States and Britain? Why aren't they protecting the Jews at this time?

It's undeniable—the Bible describes these events and world conditions and precisely explains the land of Palestine will be occupied by this Babylonian resurrected Greco-Roman kingdom of the north which settles in the Middle East, fulfilling its destiny with prophecy. And it's unequivocally apparent—the United States and Britain are "missing in action"—**WHY AND HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE AT THIS TIME?**

Answering Some Questions

With this in mind, it's imperative we begin recognizing the socialistic initiatives that are in progress around the world and stop denying the development of this reality surrounding us. Political leaders of the world are intent on orchestrating unilateral cooperation when addressing the issues facing the world today—and this presently includes certain political factions embedded within the United States and England. America and England are under enormous pressure from the world community of nations to compromise their sovereignty and contribute their resources and national objectives by *spreading their wealth* to a "World Order."

Presently, there are many things in play; but there are also *many problems!* The European Union is challenged also, with currency issues and debt, which is jeopardizing their currency, the euro. The E.U. is also contending with individual nation-states inside the union who are financially distressed and wrestling with debt and bankruptcy. Presently, Germany is conflicted over "bailout money," but reluctantly contributed to a massive €32 billion bailout of Greece, hoping to stop a financial contagion from causing a destructive chain reaction within the European Union. Greece, in particular, has had some very serious problems, as does Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece, and Spain (PIIGS). It remains to be seen how all of this will resolve and what will happen to the euro and European Union of present. However, the current financial crisis *has the potential* of greatly restructuring and reshaping Europe's currency issues and its political relationships within the Union.



London's Big Ben

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Also, Iran (modern-day Persia) is complicating world conditions with its determination to obtain nuclear weapon-grade uranium/plutonium. They're not cutting back or reducing their efforts, nor are they showing any intimidation from the international community's trade sanctions, which are designed to reduce their pursuit of *weapons of mass destruction*. Instead, contrary to stopping this initiative, it has increased their motivation, where most likely they will have the capability of weapons-grade nuclear material within two to four years (or sooner, as it is now 2010)—unless, of course, something prevents them from accomplishing this goal. When and/or if this occurs, the potential of war in the Middle East will escalate. The danger of an arms race may occur in that part of the world, while aggravating and thereby compelling the Israeli Jews to possibly do something independently (perhaps a preemptive attack of some sort?) apart from the United States.

We could speculate about many scenarios (North Korea, Syria, Egypt, Turkey, terrorism, etc.), and what might or might not happen, *but here's the point*: the geopolitical climate is in flux. There are many "balls in the air." Anything could happen to ignite the potential powder kegs that are spread throughout the world. Admittedly, we have many possible "lightening rods"—many potential conditions that could lead us down the path of circumstances necessary to coalesce the nations that will finally fulfill what has been previously read, described, and explained from our Bibles—and the future doesn't seem to indicate things will get any better.

Now with that said, obviously we should be able to understand that the *present* geopolitical climate, or nation-state arrangement, is *not positioned* as described in the Bible at the end. However, that's not to say circumstances couldn't *explode tomorrow*, changing the world forever, as happened on July 28, 1914 (World War I), December 7, 1941 (World War II), or September 11, 2001 (terrorist attack on the U.S.A.).

Therefore, knowing that world conditions still need some *serious re-arrangement and modification* if they're going to match what our Bible describes, it becomes painfully clear when considering the threats and perils presently surrounding us, that we should not and *cannot* risk underestimating the times in which we live. *We must remain vigilant*—and physically, emotionally, mentally, and most importantly, *spiritually* prepared, to do the best with what we have, and materially reduce our expectations—because anything could change at any given time, making conditions and circumstances brutally more difficult and different from what we in the "free world" have generally been used to since the end of World War II!

Without a doubt, there are some monolithic geopolitical events on the horizon that portend to be extremely *earth shaking*, and will assuredly affect the world in which we live in ways we cannot imagine. The global financial meltdown is only the beginning of our troubles. It's apparent that potential conditions are now beginning to come together, which will begin to accommodate the necessary chain of events to lead the world into the circumstances required to move the global community into some of the most stupendous geopolitical changes the world has not seen since the first half of the twentieth century! Comparably speaking, the descriptions of those changes and destruction to come plainly illustrate that *we haven't seen anything yet!*

What Major Cataclysmic Event Is On the Horizon?

In light of some of this plain evidence and the unanswered questions we may have about this information, let's review and consider Revelation 6:1–6 with some *renewed emphasis*. This is the chapter where we read about and become initially introduced to the four horseman of the Apocalypse. It's here where we are told about the fourth horseman described in verse 8 as follows: "And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell [*hades*, grave] followed with him..."

Now notice what's next: "...And power was given unto them [Death and Hell, or *hades*, the grave] over the *fourth part of the earth* [25 percent of



Weary pilgrims on the deck of the Mayflower

the world's population], *TO KILL* with sword [second seal, war], and with hunger [third seal, famine/pestilence], and with death [fourth seal], and with the beasts of the earth."

Did you notice what we just read? *Read it again!* Now let's consider what's really being said here. Clearly, a *war* is described, which results in the destruction of 25 percent of the world's population! Consider this—that equates to about 1.75 billion human casualties, based on a current world population of about seven billion. This translates to a death toll of more than 20 times in excess of World War II (based on 50–75 million total casualties in World War II)! But notice another very interesting point beyond this fourth seal: the *fifth* seal describes a Christian martyrdom, which is followed by the *sixth* seal, described as great signs in the sky! And while you're trying to comprehend the magnitude of these cataclysmic events, *keep in mind this sobering fact: Christ doesn't return yet!* These are just the fourth, fifth, and sixth seals—not the trumpet plagues! There remains much more pain, suffering, and annihilation yet to come! This is just the *beginning* of sorrows (Mark 13:8). Remember what our Lord said, "But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; *but the end is not by and by*" (Luke 21:9).

Also, consider this additional biblical fact: there are two more major *world wars* beyond this one mentioned in Chapter 6, which are described in Revelation 9. These are the *fifth trumpet* (first woe) and *sixth trumpet* (second woe). These two trumpet wars result in another invasion with weapons that cause pain and suffering, but not necessarily death (Revelation 9:1–12), followed by another war resulting in the obliteration of one-third of the remaining three-fourths of the world's population (Revelation 9:18). This would leave approximately half the earth's population remaining at the time of the *beginning* of the seventh trumpet, which heralds our Lord's return and the final battle of Armageddon in the valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:11–17; Revelation 16:16–21).

These events should be seriously recognized and kept in mind *within this context*. Let me reiterate: the *present* world and geopolitical arrangement of the community of nations is *not* currently matched up with what is described in our Bible as this ten-nation confederation, led by an autocrat (tyrant) who runs a very affluent Babylonian system of commerce (Revelation 18), in conjunction with a religious leader described by John the apostle as a false prophet (Revelation 13:11–18). It's apparent then, that some kind of huge, gargantuan, *shake-up* is ahead of us, resulting in the removal of the major obstacles that obviously are blocking much of this from happening.

Let me remind you: one of those major obstacles just happens to be the birth-righted cultures of the *United States of America*, and to a lesser extent, the *United Kingdom!* And when the *removal* of these two major balances of powers occurs, there simply won't be any place for "Christian freedom lovers" within this coming Babylonian, Greco-Roman Socialistic System that emerges out of all this. If you're a *true Christian*, you will find yourself in conflict with this Socialistic Greco-Babylonian System.

Notice the advice God gives to all *real Christians* about this coming system and any who receive this "mark" that is required in order to become a working constituent of this government. "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her my people [be you separate], that *you be not partakers of her sins*, and that you receive not of her plagues" (Revelation 18:4). Furthermore, we are told this government

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U.S. Constitution



United Nations meeting room

requires you receive this “mark” in order to make a living (Revelation 13:16–18), and it’s those who *don’t* receive this mark who are to rule and reign with Christ for a thousand years in the Millennium (Revelation 20:4). Obviously, this “mark” will cause those who accept and receive it to *compromise God’s laws* and the *testimony of Jesus Christ* in their lives for social peace and acceptance with the government system. It will be crucial for Christians *at that time* (and it’s important to recognize, *it’s at that time!*) to choose *not* to participate in this Babylonian Mystery System and then simply accept the consequences of their resistance. Otherwise, they may forfeit their birthright to eternal life!

Will the U.S. Be Neutralized or Eliminated?

This is an interesting question that is gaining serious consideration, because some within the Christian Evangelical and traditional Protestant movements, along with some Sabbath-keeping groups, are advancing the teaching that the reason the U.S.A. and Britain are not mentioned during the times we have been reviewing, is because they are *part of* the Babylonian Greco-Roman System. But is this possible? Do the patterns of history describing how God dealt with Israel and Judah portray Him to allow them to sin and abandon Him without correction?

We are told if we want to know the future, we should understand history (Isaiah 41:21–22). If this is the formula or principle for developing the proper worldview, then notably, the *rise and fall* of the original nations of Israel and Judah is the template God is working with and is patterned after. Therefore, why should it be any different for the cultures of those *latter-day* Israelites and Jews who have abandoned God as their ancestors did? The point is, it wouldn’t be any different!

With this as a premise, if we’re going to understand the question

“If the Bible is indeed God’s complete and exhaustive Word—and it is—then why wouldn’t it mention the larger nations of consequence in the latter days and times?”

concerning the future of the United States and British cultures, we must first understand this undeniably clear fact: many people, and alleged Christians too, want you to believe the writings of the prophets are all fulfilled—that there is no present twenty-first century *literal application* to their writings. There are Christians today called Preterists, who claim the prophecies written by the prophets in the Old Testament have *all* been fulfilled long ago, and the only value they have is in the historical sense. They will even go so far as making the pronouncement that Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, and even the *whole book* of Revelation, along with Daniel’s prophecies too, are all historical, and were fulfilled when Titus invaded and occupied Jerusalem in A.D. 70 when Rome ruled, declined, and then finally fell. They will also assert that all the texts pertaining to Israel are only directly linked to the *original* nations of Israel and Judah. They will claim anything beyond that is pure speculation or conjecture, and is not remaining true to the text.

Can this be true?—especially when certain prophecies are plainly prefaced with “in the last days,” “latter days,” or “end-times”—or contextually, when the prophecy makes absolutely no sense to the people and/or conditions currently unfolding at the time of the writing. Can this be true? Are we expected to simply ignore these indisputably plain and clear questions of *critical thinking*?

These queries deserve serious examination, particularly in light of the fact that we know the Bible is a comprehensive document revealing the plan of God from the beginning to the end (Revelation 1:11; 22:13). From that

perspective, it would assuredly include the mention of the greatest nations in the history of the world, since it clearly includes smaller nations of less consequence down through history, wouldn’t you think?

And yet, many will insist and emphatically assert that nations such as Russia, China, Europe, or the British Commonwealth Empire and United States are *not mentioned* in the Bible, but Libya, Jordan, Ethiopia, Egypt, Syria, or Israel of old are; and yes, unquestionably, they are! However, *that’s the point*: if the Bible is indeed God’s unequivocal complete and exhaustive Word—and it is—then why wouldn’t it mention the larger nations of consequence in the “latter days and times?” Well, the truth of the matter is, the Bible *does* disclose the identities of these end-time nations and what will befall them if they insist on continuing as “children of disobedience” (Ephesians 2:1–3). And these insights are contained in the writings of the Old Testament prophets, regardless of what the Preterists may think or say!

The key to understanding this is viewing things as God does, through the *lense* of Israel. Without developing an “*Israelite worldview*,” we cannot understand the *story of man* as God intended. Remember, the Bible could be considered the story of one man’s family—*Abram of Ur*, and the promises given to him by God. That requires a certain perspective, which in the course of this knowledge of salvation identifies the nations that presently carry the name of Israel and Judah, which is distinctly different in the “latter time.” We must understand there is a “latter day” *Israel* and a “latter day” *Judah* that plainly exist in the *end time* when the Messiah returns, because the story of Israel is consistent throughout the entire Bible.

This understanding is paramount if we’re going to grasp the prophetic significance of following the thread of Israel’s story throughout the history of mankind. To understand the *significance* of the story of Israel and the validation it provides that God is involved with the salvation process of His plan through the prophetic promise of the Scepter, which is Christ, through the tribe of Judah (Hebrews 7:14), is to understand how He’s *literally involved* with reproducing Himself and bringing many human sons and daughters into this redemption through Christ. World events and conditions, in combination with life’s circumstances in general, play major roles in the *crucible* of the Christian conversion experience. Without these events, the salvation process would not develop mankind spiritually, especially since world conditions have had such a major effect and impact on the Christian movement and its development within the cultures of humanity via the many tribulations and challenges down through the eras that have influenced Christian lives personally.

With that in mind, what mankind is heading into will be like no other time in his history (Matthew 24:21–22; Mark 13:19–20; Luke 21:22–24). The physical events and resulting conditions, which will include martyrdom for some (Luke 21:12–19; Revelation 6:9–11; Daniel 7:21,25), are going to be enormously intense *Christian character-building opportunities* for these latter-day Christians, especially throughout the former Commonwealth countries of England and the United States of America.

So What’s the Point?

The point is, this brings us back to the earlier question, mentioned in *Part Three* of this series: *What if?* What if it’s true that the United Kingdom’s Commonwealth nations and the United States are in fact the cultures identified as the end-time nations carrying the name “Israel,” and more appropriately, the present Jewish Israeli state in Palestine is actually latter-day “Judah?” *What if that’s true?*

With this perspective in mind as an acceptable premise of truth, let’s assess some writings of the prophets and frame their warnings in light of this *Israelite worldview* by using the *principle of duality*. Then, perhaps, we might be able to answer the question about the United States’ future with regard to what really happened to these cultures; and furthermore, why they’re not mentioned in the description of the Middle-Eastern invasion, preventing the king of the north, this end-time Greco-Babylonian System, from invading, conquering, and occupying the latter-day Israeli Jewish state in the glorious land (Palestine), described in Daniel 11:40–43. Ω

...TO BE CONTINUED...



Euro symbol

Why Was Jesus Christ Born?

Many people have asked this question. Some think He simply came for only one specific reason: to die for mankind, as Savior of the world. And of course, this is a major reason. But was it the only purpose for His physical birth, or were there additional reasons that if understood, would enrich our Christian outlook and faith?

by Bill Watson

Upon Jesus' arrest and return to Pilate after His meeting with Herod, Pilate asked Him: "Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a King. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?" (John 18:37-38)?

This communication between Pilate and Jesus is a very interesting exchange of words. It discloses two very important items concerning the purpose of Jesus Christ's *physical birth*. First, it plainly confirms He was born to be a King. But secondly, that He came into the world for the purpose of bearing "*witness unto the truth*." This caused Pilate to rhetorically remark: "What is truth?"

This is understandable, since truth is subjective when there is questionable *definitive knowledge* about a subject. Unless the knowledge surrounding the subject is considered the legitimate basis of defining the *absolute truth*, then and only then is it validated; otherwise, if it's questionable, whatever the topic might be, it remains doubtful and thereby debatable. This was at the heart of Pilate's comment, and therein lies what underpins the cause of doubt Pilate and so many of us have today—what *absolute truth* can we rely on that is central to this information about the real reasons and value of Christ's physical birth and sacrificial death?

Jesus said, "Everyone that is of the truth hears my voice." In other words, His voice, what He said, is truth! He was claiming the words He said and things He did were a witness to and for the truth. He was informing us that He came to *reveal knowledge that is true*—to establish some *absolutes* by *revealing* specific knowledge. This was achieved throughout the course of His preaching ministry; but these activities and statements also naturally illustrate evidence for extra reasons regarding Jesus' birth; and these activities and discourse are *recorded for us in the Bible*. This information generated by these dynamics, conditions, circumstances, and interaction with those He contended with add insights for His coming that extend beyond His sacrifice, which unquestionably was a primary objective of His incarnation; but definitely, as we will see, was *not* the *only* purpose for His visitation.

Substantive Truth About Life and God Is Revealed Knowledge

Throughout the New Testament, and in particular the gospels, Jesus Christ's life and teachings are explained. It's in the course of these narratives where we begin to understand the additional reasons for His incarnation. Unfortunately, because of the disbelief of accepting Jesus Christ of Nazareth to be the person He claimed He was, many of the truths His life and ministry *reveal* are not embraced, or even so much as believed. Sadly, this has led to much of the "spiritual darkness" mankind has experienced over the centuries.

Conversely, the rejection of this *revealed knowledge* contained in the Bible has been advantageous for the "powers of darkness" and those with the "spirit of disobedience" (Ephesians 2:1-3; 6:12-13). This underlines the cause for much of humanity's overwhelming

problems. The hesitation and suspicion of accepting both Old and New Testaments as the *basis of revealed knowledge for the truth* has also contributed enormously to the chaotic challenges humanity has experienced down through history! Admittedly, if mankind would *accept the Bible* as the *revealed knowledge of truth* it's intended to be, many questions about life and God would be answered that have consistently remained *unanswered*. Clearly, this would generate some natural benefits as a result, if formally acknowledged.

For example, an infusion of human purpose would occur around the world due to this *sanctioned knowledge of truth*. Mankind would immediately begin to enjoy enhanced degrees of freedom from so many destructive behaviors like war, murder, racism, deceit, disease, divorce, vandalism, thievery, delinquency, and many more counterproductive and negative lifestyles and worldviews. There would be a recognizable difference in the quality of human life throughout the world, if for no other reason but due simply to the improved mutual respect and appreciation of our God-given human differences. We would learn to sincerely serve and care for each other, as we would want others to serve and care for us. This is the royal law (James 2:8-9)!



Christ was born to be a King (John 18:37)



But sadly, the vast majority of the world doesn't recognize, endorse, affirm, or welcome the Bible to be the unquestionable and infallible Word of God. Most will not honor the information contained in it as the *absolute revealed truth* it is; and this is unfortunate! If only we would accept and embrace these truths surrounding the extended reasons for Jesus Christ's human incarnation, our lives would take on new meaning. We would become unique beneficiaries, possessing *true knowledge* that surpasses all understanding (Philippians 4:6-7), and it would allow us to comprehend the deeper richness of what it really means to be set free by the truth (John 8:31-32).

So let's take a moment and see how we can benefit from this *revealed knowledge* by reviewing some of the *additional reasons*, written in the Scriptures for Jesus Christ's visitation as a human being to this planet some 2000 years ago. And let's consider how it would make a difference in our *personal* outlook and lifestyle, if we would be-

lieve, accept, and uphold them. Remember, the only way you will begin to adopt them is to read them. Take some time to *study* the following categories and the attached texts. It's the only assured way to gain insight and clarity of the value and benefits of these additional reasons for Jesus Christ's incarnation. The salvation program, which is a process, has many parts; in Christ, they have all been fulfilled and completed (Matthew 5:17; Romans 4:10; Galatians 3:24-29)!

Additional Reasons For Jesus Christ's Incarnation

1) He died for mankind as a propitiation for sin (1 John 2:1-2). Upon accepting His sacrifice as a personal gift, we are now covered by His shed blood (Hebrews 9:11-22), and no longer guilty of sin, deserving death (John 3:16-18; Romans 6:23). We are free from the death penalty! Because of this, He tells us to be of "good cheer" (John 16:33). This should provide us with a *peace of mind* that surpasses human understanding (Romans 8:6; Galatians 6:16; Philippians 4:7).

2) He came to qualify as a personal High Priest (Hebrews 6:20). Jesus Christ is the confirmation of the *prophetic promise* that was made to Abraham. It was this visitation which fulfilled the promise to Abraham assuring his lineage to be the seed that would come to provide the means by which mankind would be redeemed (Genesis 12:3). This priesthood is unlike any before, and was purposefully made superior and different from the Levitical priesthood (Hebrews 7:1-17). This experience that Jesus Christ went through to qualify for this position has made Him a sensitive High Priest who can identify with our human frailties and infirmities (Hebrews 4:14-16; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Isaiah 53:1-12). He is our brother and friend, and is offering us to be co-heirs with Him (Hebrews 2:6-13; John 15:12-17).

3) Jesus Christ's coming also revealed He has power over death (John 5:25-29; Matthew 27:52-53). It was He who would provide eternal life (John 17:1-3). Jesus clearly illustrates this when confronting Martha, Lazarus' sister, about the resurrection (John 11:21-26). In addition, He has been delegated authority over all things by *the Father* (John 3:35-36; John 6:52-59; Philippians 2:5-11), and has the authority to give everlasting life (John 6:47). Death has no claim on our lives. We have been cleared of all transgressions, and should *no longer fear death* (Hebrews 2:15-18; 2 Timothy 1:7; Romans 7:24-25; Romans 8:1-4, 10-11).

4) Jesus Christ provides mankind a condition of grace (Ephesians 2:8-9). This allows humanity to avoid condemnation. Notice, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus..." (Romans 8:1-2). However, this is not to be interpreted as a *license to sin*. Instead, it's a calling that demands and requires "change" or *conversion*. Notice, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? *God forbid*. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein" (Romans 6:1-2)? Read the rest of Romans 6. It's quite the illustration of God's expectations for humanity—*each of us personally*—considering the price that's portrayed in the passion and sac-

Continued on next page

rifice of Jesus Christ. God expects results (behavioral changes) that are worthy to be considered as the righteousness of the law (Romans 8:3–10). It is the Christian duty to follow Christ's example (1 Peter 2:21; 1 John 2:6; Galatians 2:20–21; 5:24–26; 2 Corinthians 5:15).

5) Jesus Christ came to be the firstborn of many brothers and sisters, paving the way for the God-Family to multiply (Colossians 1:12–18). Christ was sent to further illustrate that God the Father is building a family and that He (Christ) is the firstborn Son to the Father (John 10:34–36; Hebrews 1:4–12; Romans 8:14–17; Philippians 2:11; Ephesians 3:13–19; 1 John 3:1–3; Hebrews 2:10; 12:7–10; Philippians 2:15; Galatians 4:1–7; 2 Corinthians 6:17–18). The Bible is clear on this point: We are the sons of God and are destined to be co-heirs with Christ of all the Father has given Him (Romans 8:17; Hebrews 1:2, 14; Galatians 3:29; Titus 3:7; James 2:5; 1 Peter 3:7). This includes eternal life as literal *spirit-born* family members of these Deities Who are reproducing themselves. We are promised that this *love of the Father* categorizes us as “sons of God”—which if we repent and accept Jesus Christ as our Savior, will afford us to “be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is” (1 John 3:1–3)!

6) Jesus came to illustrate mankind can be “born again” as a literal embodied spirit being. In the discussion with Nicodemus late one evening, Christ explained this stunning truth! This conversation was designed to clarify for this “ruler of the Jews” (John 3:1) the distinction of what flesh and spirit composition is (John 3:5–8). Apparently, Nicodemus, who understood the context to be molecular, physical, fleshy (John 3:4), became confused. He wasn't quite clear on just what Jesus was actually saying. This is obvious by his surprised response (John 3:7). He clearly became incredulous at times (John 3:9). But the message was made plain and simple when Christ emphatically told him, “...no man hath ascended up to heaven, but...the Son of man which is in heaven” (John 3:13). Paul illustrates this truth throughout 1 Corinthians 15. This chapter is known as the “resurrection chapter.” The reason is simple—it's all about how God intends to change our mortality to immortality (1 Corinthians 15:50–55). The Bible states very plainly, “So also is the resurrection of the dead. ...It is sown a natural [physical, fleshy] body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural [physical, fleshy] body, and there is a spiritual body” (1 Corinthians 15:42–44). We will see God, Job assures us: “in [or apart from] my flesh shall I see God” (Job 19:26–27).

7) Jesus came to reveal the Father. It was plainly stated that no man has ever heard or seen the Father (John 1:18; 6:45–46; 7:28–29), but Jesus came to reveal Him (Matthew 11:27; Luke 10:21–24). There was confusion surrounding this detail concerning the Godhead. However, with the truth Jesus *revealed* concerning this matter, we are afforded clarity that the Old Testament didn't provide. Scriptures like Daniel 7:9–15 and Psalms 110, which imply duality, are now, in light of the *revealed truth* of the New Testament, clarified regarding the relationship of these God Beings, and just how *Elohim*, this uni-plural Hebrew word, is to be comprehensively understood.

8) Jesus also came to disclose that He was the God of the Old Testament. It was Jesus Christ who led the Israelites out of Egypt (1 Corinthians 10:1–4, 9). It was the divine Person who became Jesus Christ who appeared to and spoke with the ancients. Also, in the course of a public debate, Jesus is brutally direct in stating the fact that He existed before Abraham was born. The Jewish religious leaders considered this blasphemy, because Christ was indicating He was superior to Abraham and was assigning Himself

to be deity. This was what caused them to get so upset (John 8:52–59; 10:24–42).

9) Jesus Christ also revealed that He is the Creator. Prior to His human birth, he was considered the Word of God, who created all things as directed by the Father (John 1:1–3, 10,14). It was He, who on behalf of the Father, gave Himself for His creation (John 10:24–31; John 14:8–14). Christ is clearly identified as the Creator of all things and has been given the right to inherit all things in the future—and has been assured there will be no end to His kingdom (Colossians 1:13–20; Hebrews 1:1–3; 2:9–10; Ephesians 3:9; Isaiah 9:6–7).

10) Jesus Christ also came to qualify and claim He is a King and will reign on earth. He answered Pilate correctly and directly. There was no hesitation in His answer. He said He came for that purpose—to announce that He was a King and was born for that reason (John 18:37). He also mentioned in this exchange that His kingdom was not of this world, and it isn't. It's a spiritual kingdom that will rule and reign upon His return (Acts 1:10–11; Matthew 24:29–31; Mark 13:24–27; Luke 21:27–28; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Revelation 19:11–21). It will also be a time when the Christians who qualified to be resurrected will be awarded their rewards (Revelation 11:15–19; 1 Peter 3:9–14; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18; 1 Corinthians 15:51–58). The Bible is explicit about the Kingdom of God on earth. The Old Testament is filled with descriptions of this coming utopia that will at first last for a thousand years (Revelation 20:4). But, it is also ultimately intended for the long term, to be a Kingdom that will last for eternity and never end (Isaiah 9:6–7). It is described to be on earth, *NOT* in heaven, and we Christians will reign on earth with Him (Revelation 2:26; 5:10; Isaiah 2:1–5; Daniel 7:17–18, 26–28; Joel 3:11–20; Micah 4:1–5; Zechariah 14:1–9).

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11) Jesus Christ came to prepare the earth for the Father's arrival. In the last chapters of the book of Revelation, we are told about a *new heaven* and a *new earth*, which is intended to be the new habitat for the Family of God. This futuristic world condition is distinctly described in Revelation 21 and 22. The most profound understanding about these two chapters is that it explains the Father will move from where He is currently, to “tabernacle” with mankind *on earth*; that the Father is going to make earth His heavenly abode! The implication is that planet earth will become the *center of operations* for the universe. It will be where the Temple of God, the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, with the members of the Family of God, will reside.

12) Jesus Christ came to destroy the works of the Devil. Last, but certainly not least, the Bible is quite clear on this point: Christ came to destroy the works of the Devil (Hebrews 2:14–15; 1 John 3:8). It's important to realize that we cannot have *restitution of ALL things* (Acts 3:20–21) until Satan the Devil and his minions are blamed, judged, and punished. This will occur for a short and

temporary time at the beginning of the Millennium (Revelation 20:1–3), but Satan will be released *AFTER* the thousand years are finished (Revelation 20:7). The Bible describes how he will set out to repeat his evil ways and immediately go out to deceive the nations again (Revelation 20:8), attempting to initiate another insurrection as he originally did with the angelic community (Revelation 20:8–9; 12:9). However, God will prevail, and Satan will finally be disposed of and removed out of the “camp” (the Kingdom of God)—but this time, for good (Revelation 20:10; Jude :12–13; Isaiah 14:12–15). Satan will be captured, restrained, and prevented from ever having any more influence within the realm of God and mankind. This will vindicate the plan of God and the salvation process that results in God reproducing Himself. This completes the task of accomplishing the final item of business to be conducted before the Father arrives with the New Jerusalem described in Revelation 21:10–27.

The Benefits Of Embracing Revealed Knowledge

These eleven additional reasons, over and above Item 1, are definitely not intended to marginalize any of the significance regarding the magnitude of scope and priceless value in Jesus Christ's personal sacrifice for humanity. Undeniably, it is the greatest achievement that has ever been accomplished in the history of the universe: the Creator God becoming a man so He can undeservingly and selflessly suffer death, making a means to redeem His creation, so they can share in His eternal existence as sons of God, co-heirs with Him in a Kingdom without end! That is a stunning destiny, and if only mankind could comprehend this as the truth for which it is, as their single-most common understanding for life, undoubtedly the world we live in would be astoundingly different!

The truth contained in the Word of God is designed to allow us to better understand our Creator and His purpose for us (John 15:26–27). Within this *revealed knowledge* are the secrets of life and how to understand the Godhead, which remains for most, a mystery. But for those who accept and embrace these truths, they are assured eternal life and an intimate relationship with God, understanding how He intends to accomplish the redemption of His creation (Ephesians 1:3–14; 3:1–15; Colossians 1:23–29; 2:1–3; 1 Timothy 3:15–16).

The added reasons for His visit, as stated above, should enhance and improve our insight and sense of value about the magnitude and scope of His visitation. Those who understand these truths are really blessed, and have a unique opportunity to be set free from the cares and concerns that trouble all of us who “contend with the flesh” (1 John 2:15–17), not the least of which is death. We are instructed that it should be viewed as having no claim on our life, because we have the assurance of a High Priest who has been empowered to have authority over death. He has the power to provide eternal life to whom the Father chooses (John 10:28; 17:2–3; Romans 5:21; 6:23; Titus 1:1–3; Hebrews 5:5–11; 9:11–15). There is great mental, emotional, and spiritual freedom from the captivity of this “fear of death” upon accepting this *revealed knowledge*.

So, be of “good cheer”—Christ has overcome the world and has qualified to be the rightful King of kings and Lord of lords of this planet (Revelation 19:16). He is on a countdown to come back and claim those who are His. So, what about you? Will you be ready for the change He offers when He returns with the rewards He's been authorized to give? It's time you consider this question and give it some serious thought, awakening from your spiritual sleep, because the night is far spent (Romans 13:11–14). Ω

A Glimpse Into The Future

“You will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” Exodus 19:6

by Jean Jantzen



Jean Jantzen

Have you ever wondered about your job as priest in the world tomorrow? I’m curious and excited enough to want to shed some light on what I may be doing for at least a thousand years. I want to share some of the clues I found in the Scriptures that give indications of what God has in store for us as priests and leaders.

The book of Ezra divides very naturally in line with the ministries of two men: Zerubbabel, in chapters 1–6, and Ezra, in chapters 7–10. Both of these men led the captives of Babylon back to Jerusalem. Zerubbabel, interestingly enough, was a descendant of David. He is of the kingly line. Ezra, descended from Aaron the priest, is likewise a priest. Clearly outlined here is the need for the work both of the king and of the priest in accomplishing restoration. The work of the king is to build, or in this case, to rebuild. The work of the priest is to cleanse. Ezra began to establish the law among the people as the basis for their daily lives. Both are essential in the work of restoring someone who has fallen into a sinful state, and as we know, in the Millennium there will be kings and priests and a world desperately in need of restoration.

The Biblical Definition of Priest

“A chosen officer or prince with the capacity to draw near to God and minister. He alone is responsible for offering the divinely appointed sacrifices to God, for executing the different procedures and ceremonies relating to the worship of God, and for being a representative between God and man” (www.bible-history.com/eastons/P/Priest/).

Priests Recognizable by Clothing, Sanctification, and Public Ceremony

When we look at the Old Testament, there are some interesting indications of our future job. In Israel, priests were easily identified by the people by the special garments they wore. (Remember the story of the woman healed by touching the hem of Jesus’ garment in Mark 5:25–30.) Also they had a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD, “and it shall be upon Aaron’s forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things...that they [Israelites] may be accepted before the LORD” (Exodus 28:38). It was acknowledged by the people that priests had been sanctified and set apart by God for a specific purpose. There was quite a public pomp and ceremony lasting seven days when Aaron and his sons were consecrated as priests. Then God said, “And I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar: I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to me in the priest’s office. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the LORD their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I am the LORD their God” (Exodus 29:44–46).

Read Exodus 29. We catch a glimpse of the significance of the elaborate ceremony that will take place in Jerusalem inducting us into the office of priest—something like the investiture of the Prince of Wales—similar to a coronation, only what?—a thousand times better! We will be known by our pure white garments of righteousness. Imagine someone touching our garment and being healed. How awesome! We will then direct the people to God (Psalms 132:9; Isaiah 61:10). When Christ’s Kingdom is established on earth, Jesus will dwell among the people.

A Priest is Holy

Look what it says about Jesus as high priest: “For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from

sinners, and made higher than the heavens” (Hebrews 7:26). We can see that when we are raised to meet Christ, we will be holy and fully prepared for the job ahead. For Paul says, “If a man therefore purge himself...he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work. Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart” (2 Timothy 2:21).

A Priest Reconciles, Restores, Succors, and Teaches

We also know that the whole world will be in a sinful state when Christ returns, and in need of restoration. That is why the saints are a “chosen generation, a royal priesthood” (1 Peter 2:9). “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” (verse 5). The priests will have a big responsibility in the world tomorrow—they have access to God, serving Him personally while also ministering to others, drawing the people closer to God, and as we can see in Hebrews 2:17–18, “...to make reconciliation for the sins of the people [and]...succor them that are tempted.”

Succour means: c. 1225, from Anglo-Fr. succors “help, aid,” O. Fr. sucures, from M.L. succursus “help, assistance,” from pp. of L. succurrere “run to help,” from sub “up to” + currere “to run” (Online Etymology Dictionary, © 2001 Douglas Harper). So the priest will not only offer assistance, but will rush to rescue and relieve those who are tempted.

“Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am...” (Isaiah 58:9).

Talking about the world tomorrow, Isaiah tells us: “...the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives...to comfort all that mourn” (Isaiah 61:1–2). So the priest’s job is all-encompassing, as we can see. “For the priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts” (Malachi 2:7). They will teach the law of God. That’s what Ezra’s job was when he came out of captivity and went back to Jerusalem—to show the people their sin, to pray for them, and to educate and guide them in God’s way.

It is an exciting prospect to know we will be instrumental in helping the people turn to God and to have happy, successful lives in the world tomorrow. Listen to Isaiah’s inspiring words—and we are going to play a big part in it.

“For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee. And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left” (Isaiah 30:19–21).

Concerning the restored nation of Israel during Christ’s millennial reign, God says: “...O house of Israel, but for mine holy name’s sake...I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them” (Ezekiel 36:22–27).

We need to yield ourselves as a living sacrifice to God in this age, so we can be ready to teach others in the next age. Pray that God will make us ready for the enormous and exciting job ahead. Ω



Church News

In loving memory...



Carol Sue Mayfield

Carol Sue Mayfield

Sue was born on January 23, 1949, to C. L. and Myrtle George of Livingston, Texas. She died on the morning of June 15, 2010, after a long and courageous battle with cancer.

Left to cherish her memory are her father and step-mother, C. L. and Evelyn George of Troup, Texas; her mother, Myrtle George of

Jacksonville; daughter, Sherie Cruz, and husband John of Frankston; brothers, Rodger George of Chicago, Illinois, Paul Sadler of Troup, Mike Sadler of Jacksonville, and Phil Sadler of Florida; grandchildren, Amanda Davilla, Stephanie Cruz, Steven Cruz, Justin Lee, Jordan Cruz, Caleb Cruz, and Christopher Cruz; and great-granddaughter, Mackenzie Davilla.

Sue was a member of the Church of God International and was an employee of the church's home office in Tyler. She went to work for the church in the late 1980s. For the last several years she was the church's mail manager. She was a faithful employee, always dependable, a conscientious worker. Even after receiving the devastating news of her condition, and even through the debilitating effects of chemotherapy, she continued to do her job—and do it remarkably well. She continued working as long as she could. After she left work, she hoped she would be able to come back, at least for a while, and resume carrying out her duties. She was a valuable employee and a dear friend, and the office staff and members of the Tyler congregation will long remember her as such.

When her condition was first diagnosed, her doctor estimated Sue would live about a year to a year and a half, but she was still with us some three years later. No doubt, the additional time was, in part, due to her strong will and determination. She would set her mind on certain upcoming events and plan to be there for those events. For instance, she wanted to live to see her great-granddaughter Mackenzie turn one year of age. And she did. She wanted to live to see Mackenzie take her first steps. And she did. Finally, she wanted to live long enough to see her granddaughter Amanda celebrate her next birthday. Sue died a few days before Amanda's birthday—but she was still able to make the party. Amanda's birthday party was held early—in Sue's room at the hospice in Tyler. That was on Monday night, June 14. Sue passed away peacefully the following morning.

Sue was open and honest. There was no pretense about her. She was not shy. Her friends and associates always knew where she stood on any matter important to her. She also had a great sense of humor. Her laughter was a familiar sound at the office, a sound staff members miss hearing.

Sue was a caring person. Though she was dealing with a health crisis of her own, she still found time for others who were in need. She was deeply thankful for the tremendous outpouring of love and concern she received from the many brethren who called and sent cards and notes telling her they were praying for her.

On the Night to be Much Observed (March 29, this year), she wrote a poem to express her thankfulness and then read her poem to the brethren who had come together for this special night.

Sue has fought the good fight and kept the faith right up to the end. And now there is laid up for her a crown of righteousness, which she will receive in that great and glorious day of Christ's return. All of us who knew her look forward to seeing her again. Ω

Here is Sue's poem:

God Does Hear

God's people were in bondage a long time ago.
Then He decided it was time to let them know
He remembered His promise He had made
To their fathers way back in the day.

He sent Moses to make His case,
For His people to be set free.
Trial after trial Pharaoh finally agreed.
So they left Egypt but in much haste.

Tonight we celebrate and remember that great event,
And know He hears the prayers when they are sent.
We just hope it won't take 400 years,
To answer our prayers and wipe away our tears.

Remember now to always pray,
For each other every day.
Because we never know when God will say,
It's time for help to be sent their way.

So thank you all for the prayers you sent.
In spite of what the doctors say,
I'm still here in any event.
Because God will do things in His own way.

Thank you and I love you all.

Sue Mayfield

What in the World is God Doing?

God's Seasonal Plan Reveals All!

Isn't it strange that man's fascination with the spiritual realm seems to deliberately overlook the rich typology seen in God's annual Sabbaths given to ancient Israel? Ironically, the mind of God is revealed in them. Now you can know!

Be sure to send for our FREE literature, *God's Seasonal Plan* and *The Fall Festivals*. If you are new to God's holydays, you'll be enlightened and amazed! If you are familiar with them, you will be given even deeper understanding. Send for them now, *today*, before you forget.

Church of God International

PO Box 2525
Tyler, TX 75710

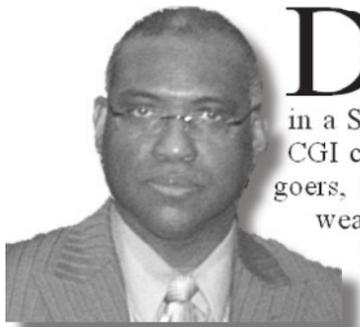
Or call
(903) 939-2929
www.cgi.org



"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7)

Church News

Attendance of 75 and 51 Visitors For Jamaican Lectures



Ian Boyne

Despite inclement Kingston weather conditions, 75 and 51 visitors attended the first and second lectures respectively, in a Summer Campaign Series by the Jamaican CGI congregation. Jamaicans, including churchgoers, typically don't venture out during rainy weather when they have a choice, which makes these attendance figures very good.

Lecture I—Saturday, July 17, 2010

Traveling from as far away as the parishes of St. Ann and Clarendon in central Jamaica, 75 visitors joined the 222 regular CGI worshippers in the Sagicor Auditorium on Saturday, July 17, 2010, for a focused, balanced, and dynamic lecture on whether the Sabbath should be kept, by Pastor Ian Boyne.

This opening lecture for the series followed a strategically organized debate, earlier that week, on Mr. Boyne's popular television show, *Religious Hardtalk*, between Mr. Boyne and noted Jamaican theologian Clinton Chisolm on the issue of whether the Sabbath is binding on Christians today.

The evangelism campaign series is planned to capitalize on the regular Sabbath meetings also as a means of training members in evangelism techniques and reinforcing them in the fundamental doctrines of the faith. In addition to an uncharacteristic invitation by Mr. Boyne on his TV programme (he generally doesn't use his journalistic privileges for personal interests), members will invite friends and family members throughout this series of presentations. Campaign flyers were also distributed as another means of inviting interested persons to the weekend lecture.

In his lecture, Mr. Boyne focused on addressing the main arguments against Sabbath keeping rather than merely giving texts that would seem to support it. He concisely summarized these arguments, showing that many of them were variations on the basic view that since the Old Covenant was no longer in force, law keeping was therefore not a requirement for salvation. He then made short work of this objection, showing that the same argument would also apply equally to the other requirements for holy living that every Bible believer still observes. The standard answer to this, of course, is that the requirements for Christian living were restated in the New Testament, which he responded to.

In addition, he challenged non-Sabbath keepers to justify their rejection of a commandment on the basis of Old Covenant abolition, when it was given and made a requirement even before the ratification of the Old Covenant. Rather than demanding that Sabbath keepers justify their continued obedience to the Sabbath law, objectors should instead provide justification for abandoning a command that was mandated outside the context of the Old Covenant, he stated.

A lively question-and-answer period followed the presentation in which one man commended the presenter for delivering one of the best Sabbath defenses he had ever heard.

Lecture II—Saturday, July 24, 2010

The second lecture in the Summer Campaign Series hosted by CGI Jamaica was attended by 51 visitors, along with 197 regular Sabbath service attendees (a total of 248) on Saturday, July 24, 2010, in the Sagicor Auditorium, New Kingston. This session was a follow-up on the previous week's lecture in which Pastor Ian Boyne addressed objections against and gave arguments for the continuing relevance of the seventh-day Sabbath for New Testament Christians.

As he had promised, Mr. Boyne tackled the contentious issues arising from Colossians 2:16, among other matters, but not before recapitulating some of the more important points covered last week in the opening lecture, including the major objections against Sabbath keeping. These included:

- Sabbath was given only to the Jews.
- Sabbath is done away since Old Covenant is done away.
- Sabbath is done away since temple and sacrificial systems are abolished.
- New Testament Christians are now under the administration of grace, not law.

He summarized the reasons why the major arguments against Sabbath keeping which focus on the abolition of the Old Covenant system of laws

couldn't be used without advocating a general antinomian position. After all, any position that insists that the law is done away would have to concede that the law against adultery, stealing, envy, etc. were also "done away," since the law doesn't just refer to the Sabbath. The many seemingly contradictory statements in the New Testament about the law—some seemingly favorable and others not—should caution objectors of Sabbath keeping against adopting a broad brush approach to understanding the matter of law.

Mr. Boyne explained that it is possible for the Old Covenant to be abrogated while some of its laws are maintained under the New Covenant. He also addressed the issue of New Testament Sabbath restatement by boldly presenting Hebrews 4:1–11 as a strong case for Sabbath restatement in the New Testament.

He also reiterated his claim that the Sabbath institution, along with marriage, preceded their being given within a covenantal context between God and national Israel. Sabbath was given before there was any nation. Additionally, Exodus 16:23–30 clearly shows that the Sabbath existed as a binding requirement outside a covenantal context. The fact that it existed prior to and independent of any covenant between God and Israel suggests that it can also have binding force after the Old Covenant and exist independent of it. It was a universal institution which transcended narrow cultic relevance. Isaiah 56:6–8 also clearly shows that God had always made provisions for non-Israelites to keep the Sabbath.

In dealing with the objections from Colossians 2:16, Pastor Boyne stressed the importance of understanding the cultural and historical background of Paul's often misunderstood references to Sabbath, holydays, and new moons in the text. He spared no effort in showing that rather than condemning Sabbath keeping, Paul was warning sincere Christians not to allow the judgments of ascetic philosophers to cause them to abandon their biblically sanctioned festivals. He also emphasized the limitation of the law generally, in the justification of believers. No amount of Sabbath keeping or scrupulous law observance can justify us before God, he said; only by our faith in Christ can we gain justification.

Lecture III—Saturday, July 31, 2010

Ian Boyne Challenges 38 Visitors on Holydays

In the third presentation of its Summer Campaign Lecture Series, the Jamaican CGI congregation hosted 38 visitors who attended to hear Pastor Ian Boyne's lecture on why it is biblically and logically indefensible to keep the seventh-day Sabbath and not the annual holydays. In the period generally scheduled for the monthly last Sabbath second service, 255 persons assembled in the Sagicor Auditorium, keenly anticipating the lecture, following upon the exciting lectures on the subject of keeping the Sabbath, the two previous weeks. The number of visitors for a third part follow-up was very good by historical records in the Church of God.

At the core of the lecture was a compelling challenge to Seventh-Day Adventists and Church of God (Seventh Day) visitors to justify their rejection of the annual holydays using the very arguments Sunday keepers advance against Sabbath keeping. Mr. Boyne's logic was ineluctable, and his arguments unassailable as he used scripture after scripture to show that Sabbath keeping and holyday keeping stand or fall together. It will not do to insist that the seventh-day Sabbath was instituted at creation and was intended as a universal commandment for all mankind for all time, while the holydays were only given to Israel much later and were related only to their national history, Mr. Boyne asserted. In the first place, it doesn't make sense to hold to a premise that the violation of a law only constitutes sin if that law was given at creation, he reasoned. The commandments against eating pork and the command to tithe were not given at creation, yet both Adventists and Church of God (Seventh Day) members still observe these laws as binding. Further, it is disingenuous to say that holydays should not be kept by non-Israelite New Testament Christians because they were only given to Israel. Mr. Boyne explained why: In Leviticus 19:33, 36–37, the reason given for loving aliens in their midst was because they were themselves aliens in Egypt, specifically. Generally, all the laws given in the chapter, including honouring parents (verse 3), not having idols (verse 4), and loving one's neighbour, were to be obeyed because God said, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt." The question arises then, is it OK to hate strangers, dishonour parents, and have idols because we were not slaves in Egypt? Obviously not. Despite God's giving of this basis for obeying these commands, all Sabbath observers believe in keeping these laws as universal commands. What this shows is that a law can be valid for Chris-

Continued on next page

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tians today even though it was originally given within the context of Israel's history. Neither is it a valid objection to say that the holydays were strictly associated with the offering of animal sacrifices, which are clearly abolished now. The fact is, that the weekly Sabbath was also an occasion for offering sacrifices as is patently clear in Numbers 28:9-10. The rhetorical question of how Sabbath keepers could use Luke 4:16 to show Sunday keepers that it was Jesus' custom to keep the Sabbath, while ignoring the overwhelming evidence of John 7 that showed Jesus kept the Feast, even at risk to Himself, was left for everyone present to answer. Mr. Boyne provided numerous scriptural references showing that both the disciples and early church were not just aware of the holydays, but also practiced them. He also presented potent scholarly references to build a cogent case that masterfully proved the annual holydays and the weekly Sabbath stand or fall together.

As one non-aligned commentator said afterward, "From this presentation, I don't see how Seventh-Day Adventists and others can be consistent in their insistence that Sabbath is binding while not keeping the holydays. If they use these arguments to show that Sunday should be rejected and Sabbath kept, then they must be consistent and accept holydays on the same basis." Ω

Submitted by Glenford Smith

The Tie That Binds—Pentecost 2010

The sleepy hamlet of Alexandria, Ontario was home to a VERY special Pentecost celebration in 2010. This small town located approximately half-way between the Canadian cities of Montreal, Quebec and Ottawa, Ontario played host to an historic festival observance. Eighty brethren from the United Church of God (UCG) congregations in Montreal, Quebec and Ottawa, Ontario, as well as the Church of God International (CGI) congregation from Ottawa, Ontario gathered together to commemorate the anniversary of the New Testament church and the giving of the Holy Spirit.

The ladies of all three congregations transformed the banquet hall at the Glengarry Sports Palace into the place where God's people gathered to partake of a feast of both spiritual and physical food. Gentlemen from the three churches looked after the technical aspects of the set-up and showed that God's Spirit is indeed a spirit of cooperation.

Song services were led by UCG deacon Richard Moulton, who with the help of French translator, Christian Caron, selected common hymns found in both the UCG and the CGI hymnals, as well as the French UCG hymnal. What an inspiring start to the service to hear three congregations singing praises to our Father in heaven in two languages. After an opening prayer given by CGI deacon Jim French, Joseph Moulton, an elder from the UCG Ottawa group, gave the first split sermon. He reviewed the history of God's Holy Spirit throughout the Bible and how God has chosen to give it to a select few at any given moment in time. This reminder reflects the gratefulness we should feel toward our calling.

Following a brief offertory message, UCG member Achille Vitale and CGI member Lissa Palmatier sang a duet entitled "Faithful One." While they sang, the offering was collected together, showing that we are ultimately giving to God. After this, the UCG choir presented a beautiful selection entitled "In His Time." They were accompanied on piano by Marianne Connell, on recorder by Carole Trotter, and on guitar by Dave Hebert.

The second split sermon was presented by CGI elder Murray Palmatier, who spoke on the two reasons God gave His Holy Spirit to His people. Christ told us that it was both a comforter (to be used to change us internally) and power to witness this message (to bring this message of change to others). After Pat Delfino gave the closing prayer, brethren were able to renew old friendships and build new ones while partaking in the scrumptious meal prepared for us.

Fellowship lasted well into the early evening hours. Brethren from all three congregations were wondering aloud when we could do this again. While all of God's Feasts are annual blessings reminding us of God's plan, this one was certainly EXTRA special. God's Spirit is certainly one that builds bridges of unity when we get out of His way. Ω

Toledo, Ohio Church Picnic

The Toledo, Ohio Church of God International congregation had a very memorable Sabbath on July 17, taking opportunity to hold services and enjoy a picnic in an air-conditioned shelter house at Mary Jane Thurston State Park in Grand Rapids, Ohio, overlooking the scenic Maumee River. The sermonette was brought by Mr. Bob Thomas, who posed the question of whether we can tell who is a Christian by looking at them; and the sermon was brought by Lloyd Cary, speaking on "What It Means to Follow Christ."

About six inches above the speakers' heads, a gigantic moose head was mounted on the wall. One member in the audience quipped, "Great ventriloquism there, Bullwinkle!"

After services, picnic coolers were opened and a fantastic spread of culinary delights appeared. A special thanks to our special chef, Richard Majewski, who grilled the meats for everyone, going above and beyond the call of duty! Ω

Miss Coleen Ann Guintu Baptized!



Hi there, Brethren, in the International community! Last July 10, Saturday, after the Sabbath service in the afternoon, we had a new addition to the growing Family of God, Miss Coleen Ann Guintu. Assisted by Mr. Romie Guintu, we baptized Coleen at the swimming pool of the Metropolis Mall, Alabang City, where we also hold our regular Sabbath services. The Alabang church brethren enjoyed fellowship and snacks after the ceremony.

It is always a great source of encouragement and inspiration when we see the young generation enter into a covenant with the Father and the Lord Jesus, to see that the faith is not lost, and continue to flourish in their hearts. And nothing is more joyous than to be a participant, a witness, and a channel for the introduction of a new daughter in the presence and the Family of God. Ω

*Submitted by Rene D. Corpuz
Church of God International—Philippines*

The next deadline for submitting articles, church news, and pictures for the International News is November 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/>

A Crash Course on Prayer

Is your prayer life what it should be? No—*of course not!* None of us pray as often or as fervently as we should. We all need a little “prompting” now and then. If you have been in God’s church very long, you have heard many sermons on prayer. There is a reason for that. As a Christian, earnest, heartfelt, persistent prayer is one of the most *difficult* things you will ever do! It is strenuous because it is spiritual, and by nature the carnal fleshly mind is the enemy of God (Romans 8:7).

In its simplest form, prayer is communicating with God, talking to Him and listening to Him. Prayer brings us into the very presence of God. David said, “*O Thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come*” (Psalms 65:2). If we are to grow in grace and knowledge, prayer is not an option!

Why pray? To receive *answers* to prayer, we must first pray—and pray in the right manner. God our Father desires fellowship with us, just as we do with our children. We can occasionally pray “on the go,” but we must also have quiet, private, quality time in His presence to be truly at-one-ment with Him. We need to set apart a specific time daily to spend alone with God.

There are many reasons we neglect to pray: doubt, indifference, “too busy,” attitudinal problems, or some secret sin in our lives. These are obstacles we must overcome. For help in these areas, we suggest you send for our FREE booklet, *How to Be More Effective in Your Prayer Life*.

We draw close to God through prayer. He promised that He will draw near to us when we draw near to Him (Zechariah 1:3). Ideally, we should live in an attitude of prayer, constantly being in communion and fellowship with our heavenly Father every hour of the day.

The key factor in praying to get results is to pray according to God’s will. He is not obligated to answer contrary to His will. His will is revealed in His Word, the Bible. Either directly or by principle, the Bible contains the answer to every problem that confronts us. Search for the answer to your problem, then take it to God in prayer. When we pray according to His will, He hears us and answers our prayers. When we believe and pray in line with His Word, we can expect our prayers to be answered.

Obedience to God’s Word is a prerequisite: “And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, *because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight*” (1 John 3:22; see also Luke:6:46; Matthew 7:21–23).

The next step to praying effectively is to pray in faith. Jesus said, “Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, *believe* that ye receive them, and ye shall have them” (Mark 11:24). Faith is simply believing what God says is true. We must believe we receive when we pray. God’s Word says He has given to *every* believer the measure of faith (Romans 12:3). Praying in faith is merely having confidence in God’s willingness to use His power to answer our prayers. We exercise and develop that faith by spending time in God’s Word. He wrote it for *you!*

Once we have prayed in faith, we must stand our ground until the answer comes. Sometimes His answer is *Yes* and sometimes it is *No*. And sometimes it is *Not yet; wait awhile*. Be persistent. Remember the parable of the importunate woman and the unrighteous judge (Luke 18:1–7).

Jesus said that His Father would grant whatever we ask when we ask *in His name*. Although not politically correct, your Bible says true Christianity is absolutely *unique*: “Neither is there salvation in any other: for *there is none other name* under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). Jesus is the name that is above *every* name. When we pray through Jesus’ name according to the Word in faith, we immediately get the Father’s attention. When we pray in Jesus’ name, God will quickly respond to us.

Unforgiveness is a huge hindrance to having our prayers answered. Jesus said if we do not forgive men their trespasses, our Father will not forgive our sins: “And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses” (Mark 11:25–26). When we have been hurt or offended, we should run to God. Ask Him for comfort and healing. We must walk in love and forgiveness to have our prayers answered.

So continue in fellowship with God. He created us to be in fellowship with Him. Prayer is a necessity. We will never get to the place where we don’t need God. We are dependent upon Him whether we know it or not. Our greatest desire should be to learn of Him and to know Him more and more intimately, “For with God *nothing* shall be impossible” (Luke 1:37).

Prayer is the doorway into the mightiest release of power that is known to man. Stay connected to God through prayer and obedience so He can bring His will to pass in your life. Ω



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