



# THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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

Fall 2013

## Your Importance to God

by Bill Glover



Bill Glover

**F**ar too many of us tend to view ourselves as of little or no value to God—as nothing more than a hunk of flesh.

It is absolutely true that *of and by ourselves* we are of no real value either to God or ourselves. No matter how "important" any person might become through his or her own accomplishments, when that person dies, he or she is of no value to self or to God *unless he or she has learned and fulfilled the very purpose of human life!* "It is appointed to all men once to die and after that to face judgment" (Hebrews 9:27) and "He will come and bring salvation to those waiting for it." Even the most successful or notable person dies and ceases to consciously exist, and no amount of wealth or fame can change that fact or enable him to live on.

For example, consider the late Johnny Carson, a well known comedian. He achieved much fame and wealth, but none of that wealth or fame will do him any good at this point. He is dead and in his grave. If there is no Almighty Creator God, then he will merely cease to exist for all eternity, and his fame and success will net him absolutely nothing in any supposed "after-life." Throughout history, famous and wealthy people have striven to assure their own "immortality" through monuments, statues, endowments, and other forms of personal acclaim. Thus that "notable" person soon becomes nothing more than a distant diminishing memory that fades away. For example, the "great" pharaohs of ancient Egypt became nothing more than mummified corpses. And their corpses are not a very pretty sight to see. Any influence they might have once had has long since ceased.

Inadvertently, we can diminish our own personal value as we realize that death is the dividing line between the here and now and any possible "afterlife." A funeral service for the dead person takes on real significance in that it *should* call attention to this present temporary life and why we have life in the first place—to the questions of *who* we are and *why* we are. This goes to the very heart of the *purpose of human existence*. If there is no Almighty Creator God with a specific purpose for humans, then we can merely eat, drink, and be merry (cater to the desires of the flesh), for soon we die and cease to exist—*unless there is a divine purpose and plan for our lives* (1 Corinthians 15:23; Luke 12:19–21; Ecclesiastics 12:13–14).

### How Important Are You?

What about you and me? Just how important are we? We may be among the poor of this world. We may not have a great education in worldly matters. We may be among those who barely exist on this earth. Perhaps 1 Corinthians 1:26–29 describes us quite well. Perhaps you did not realize it, but God has seldom chosen and called the "mighty" and the "educated" of this world. God knows that a weak and powerless human being can take no credit for anything God does through him. Too often the wealthy, proud, and boastful human will hog the credit and claim greatness within himself. God makes it crystal clear that He chooses those who are *humble* and of a *contrite spirit* and who *tremble at His Word* (see Isaiah 66:2).

Thus, it is mandatory that we view our personal existence *from God's point of view*—not our point of view or by what we

possess or "accomplish." We who consider ourselves followers of Christ too often look at biblical personalities such as Abraham, David, Job, Daniel, and many others, and envision them as people on some kind of "spiritual pedestal." We regard these people as "great" and tend to minimize our own status before God. We reason, "Well, I am not an Abraham, a David, a Daniel, a Job, etc." But is that the way God views us? Does God have as negative a view of us as we tend to have of ourselves? Does God say, "Oh, I cannot use that person because he (or she) is poor, weak, frail, in poor health..."? STOP! Evaluate what I just said! Does God actually regard us as "unimportant" in the purpose He is working out here on this earth?

We can look about ourselves and see others whom we believe have more talent, money, power, prestige, etc. than we have, and we can begin to feel sorry for ourselves and even despair and become discouraged. If you have ever done this, then you are telling God that He does not know what He is doing by calling you! You are telling the great God of the universe that His Holy Spirit cannot work in you as effectively as it did in Paul, Job, Moses, David, Abraham, etc. You are *limiting a limitless God!* This is *not* the attitude God wants you to have toward Him and the purpose He has for your life!

### Our Selective Memory

Though the accounts found in the Bible were written and preserved for our learning and our benefit (1 Corinthians 10:11), we tend to view them through colored glasses by saying or at least thinking, "Since I am not a David, Daniel, Abraham, etc., then obviously I am not important to God." We tend to overlook or bypass the many "average" or even "below average" people who served God throughout history with great distinction. The eleventh chapter of Hebrews lists a number of people *from many walks of life* who served God with great distinction. Some of those listed in that chapter were rather "lowly" people *by human standards*. Yet, the Almighty God says that these so-called lowly people are on such a high plane with God that the "great" of this world are not even worthy to be compared with them (Hebrews 11:38). Many of these people, who are great in God's

sight, wandered in deserts and mountains (homeless!) and lived in caves and holes in the ground (see verse 39). Yet they were all GREAT before God, because God looks on the heart and character of the person and not on his outward appearance!

As you study the Bible, make a note of how many "average" people served God during these many ages. Keep in mind that Peter was *not* a college professor, but was a smelly fisherman who most likely used foul language. Did God say, "Oh, I could not possibly use such a vile person"? Read Acts 4:13 and notice that those "learned" people who heard Peter and John speak realized that Peter and John *were unlearned and ignorant men* (unschooled in man's schools), yet they were shocked and astonished at the words they spoke and the power with which they spoke. Though unlearned and uneducated in the schools of this world, Peter and John were imbued with the Holy Spirit and *given power* from God so as to perform the work of the mighty God they served. We could cite many examples of people who had little natural talent, money, position, or status in this life whom God used mightily to accomplish His will. Yet, having come from the

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# The Trumpet Shall Sound

by Horane Smith



Horane Smith

**T**he world waits for a time when technology will make life more interesting—human beings will live longer because of advances in medicine, revolutionary changes in transport, faster and quicker ways to communicate, improved ways to produce, prepare, and make more food more nutritious, and a burgeoning entertainment industry that will bring untold pleasures.

We are already witnessing before our very eyes, the benefits of such changes; with the click of a button, we can speak or communicate with anyone on the planet instantaneously. We can eat breakfast in London, England, and have dinner in Toronto, Canada, on the same day. That's our world today!

Here's one troubling aspect of all this. And I say troubling, only from this writer's perspective, because for the vast majority of people, everything is just fine and dandy. Human beings couldn't have desired to live in a better time than now—the postmodern era—with all the luxuries of life in the developed world, with every conceivable way to enjoy oneself with pleasures that are often forbidden from a biblical point of view. Our society has become so vain that it doesn't reflect on the hard, cold facts, that one day all of this will vanish into thin air. All of the pleasures and achievements are just vanity.

They have forgotten that millions die of hunger each year; wars continue, so too poverty, crimes, diseases, and all manner of ills that have been plaguing our society from the dawn of civilization. They have intensified in modern times, and continue to do so, despite efforts to curtail their effects on human survival. Undoubtedly, this is telling us that human governments have failed miserably to correct the social, economic, and political problems of the postmodern era. There's one answer to all these problems—Jesus Christ. The One who came and died for the sins of humanity to enable him to escape from permanent death into everlasting life. He tells us how to do that through His instruction manual for mankind—the Holy Bible.

The reality is, though, who cares about the Bible (written by man, they'll say), and in this "enlightened society," there is no place for such "literature" that supposedly preaches hate, discrimination, and violence.

The history of Israel has taught us that the more nations are blessed materially by God, the further they drift away from Him. When economies boom, who needs God? When more prosperity falls on the rich, and when the middle class gets a touch of it, who needs God? Unfortunately, the poor remain poor.

Greed! It's an unwritten law that the more we get, the more we want. This desire takes the place of God—it becomes a god—and so the human being continues to yearn for more and more and can never be satisfied. "Everyone's toil is for their mouth, yet their appetite is never satisfied" (Ecclesiastes 6:7).

While our world waits for "better times," something else is happening. Time is going by, and with each second, each minute, each hour, each day, it is nearer to that time spoken of in the Bible when the seventh trumpet shall sound.

"Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven saying the kingdoms of the world have become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ and he will reign forever and ever..." (Revelation 11:15).

As we approach the Feast of Trumpets and the beginning of the fall holyday season, God's people can reflect on their wait for change, not the kind of change our sin-sick world yearns for. There will be meaningful and everlasting change, not the temporary kind our society gropes after, but the change that will last forever. We look to that time when the seventh trumpet will signal an end to wars, crimes, diseases, natural disasters, and all sorrow and pain. Ω

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"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:19–20).

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# Living the Holydays: A Key to Achieving Our Destiny

*Mankind's legacy is filled with violence, disappointment, and failure. Much of it is due to humanity's inability to submit to God's authority. Our present world is nothing like what the Kingdom of God will be—because Jesus Christ will change it. The holydays offer a clear picture—a blueprint of what God is doing to recover mankind. They are key to comprehending how His changes will be achieved.*

by Bill Watson



Bill Watson

**I**n the beginning, God created mankind to be represented in both male and female genders for the purpose of reproducing and replenishing the earth (Genesis 1:26–31). God took the man, put him in the Garden of Eden, and told him to maintain it; and then instructed him about certain things, which included what *not*

how God is “buying back” His creation from the spoilage of sin, which is the cause for man’s separation from God. The holydays portray a certain *simplicity*, that if remembered, can remain a constant *reminder and motivator* for maintaining the understanding necessary to be successful in our pursuit of a relationship with God, and ultimately, eternal life!

## Maintaining the Clarity of Redemption

As most Christians know, Christ is at the heart of the movement—He is central to the program of salvation! *Without Jesus Christ, there is no church*, nor is there any redemption possible, because as we know, it’s through Christ that salvation is obtained! All of us know the very *first* holyday is the *Passover*. It provides a time when we should be remembering the *Lord’s death* (1 Corinthians 11:26). It’s by His death that we are able to obtain a position in God’s immortal kingdom; without it, we are all but dead men, doomed to perish (1 Corinthians 15:16–19).

Interestingly enough, the first holyday in the sequence of seven very meaningful annual observances, is *Passover*—it is first, right from the start, clearly connecting to Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 5:7), and unequivocally establishing Him as the foundational Rock the church is built upon (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 2:19–22).

Now all of us know the holydays are *built on actual events* that have already happened, or are destined to be revealed and initiated in the last days when God, by the return of Jesus Christ, intervenes in the world affairs of humankind. But this should not lead us to dismiss, in addition, the rich spiritual meanings these annual benchmarks reveal to every one of us—*explaining what we must do* to obtain this destiny being offered by God the Father, through Jesus Christ. There are multiple layers of *spiritual insight* contained in these holydays and additional *metaphors* that disclose a very concise definition to the *method* by which God is leading us to understand what it takes to qualify for His Kingdom as born immortals—and when understood, it’s incredibly simple, but *challenging to do*!

The *Days of Unleavened Bread* begin to spiritually *illustrate* the “challenge” set before each and every Christian’s pursuit for righteousness and entry into the dimension of immortality—the reason being, the imagery portrays the *requirement and expectation* of distancing oneself from sin. For those of us who accept Jesus Christ as our “Passover,” the Days of Unleavened Bread plainly picture our life’s purpose and obligation of now being dedicated to *withdrawing* from our former sinful ways—reflected *figuratively* in abstaining from leavened products, contrasted by favoring an *unleavened* way of life, with unleavened products, *figuratively* and/or *spiritually* speaking, illustrating a life—*behavior*—worthy of representing Christ-like characteristics in us.

However, the *second* part of this is the fact that for seven days, *unleavened bread depicts the Lord’s body*, as established during the Passover services the night before. Therefore, it becomes *equally important* to eat unleavened bread *everyday* to portray the understanding and concession that it’s not by our power, or our might, but by “Christ in us” that makes all things possible in pursuing a relationship with God (Philippians 4:13). And for clarity, the following holyday of Pentecost helps us to understand and *identify by what means* this is accomplished.

Clearly, the holyday of *Pentecost* becomes a pivotal point of understanding concerning the *process* of how God is bringing many sons unto glory. Identifying this ingredient—the Holy Spirit—as a part of your biochemistry is a crucial recognition of the actual submission and surrender of oneself; the reason being, because in order to obtain it, you must make a *declaration* of acceptance and agreement, portrayed in *baptism*, which is an important *will-ing step* for an individual to take, and has great meaning to both God and the person. Why? Because he’s choosing to do it of his own *free will*! Receiving the Holy Spirit has tremendous implication with respect to the honor you have toward God, the recognition of your personal empowerment *from Him*, not self, and it shows your humility by the submission of your personal sovereignty, thereby *validating your faith* in His saving grace and empowerment, because faith without works (behaviors of change) is dead (James 2:26).

to do as well (Genesis 2:15–17). However, we know Satan persuaded them otherwise—and by disobeying God, they were found to be in disfavor and forced to leave the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3).

This set the course we currently find ourselves on for about the last 6,000 years or so. The performance resulting from living apart from God and His laws has been a disaster, to put it bluntly. The macabre record of ghastly horrors, gruesome events, and grisly tortures and inhumane rulership by empires throughout history has weaved an unconscionable account of unbelievable proportions of death and destruction! Compared to the original intent God had in mind, mankind has so completely *missed the mark* (sin) of achievement, he has left God with no option but to take a more aggressive role in the affairs of humanity, similar to what was done in the time of Noah. Presently, we are on a *collision course* to rendezvous with that *corrective* prophetic destiny—and not surprisingly, the fall holydays, in particular, describe much of the details of these prophetic *smashing events*.

## How Did We Get to This Spot?

*Sin has underscored our present condition!* We are told throughout the Bible that our iniquities have separated us from Him (Jeremiah 5:25–31; Isaiah 1:4–17). Over and over we are reminded—whether through the lives of individuals in the Bible, or the nation of Israel—*SIN is the cause* for the failures of achieving what God had hoped for and was guiding mankind toward. We have disappointed Him repeatedly, when compared to what He originally hoped we would understand and ultimately achieve and be like. Unquestionably, this has impeded mankind’s relationship with God.

Sadly, humankind has become *vain in its own conceits*. Notice how the apostle Paul explains this: “For the invisible things of him [God] from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made [the physical], even his eternal power and Godhead [His very nature]; *so that they* [mankind] *are without excuse*: Because that, when they *knew God*, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools” (Romans 1:20–22).

However, regardless of man’s foolishness and enormous amount of rebellion, variance, and enmity against his Creator—God has reached out with a *program of recovery and reconciliation*—a plan of redemption—so that ultimately all human beings might be saved from the unequivocal decisiveness of death’s conclusive finality! This *plan of salvation* was designed and developed “before the world began” (2 Timothy 1:9; 1 Peter 1:19–20), so that you and I might be able to *avoid the death penalty* and live on into the Kingdom of God, *enjoying eternal life* as a born son of God in His family! This is our human potential—*our destiny*—that is outlined in the holyday cycle repeated every year for our edification and enrichment.

The holydays *outline God’s procedure* that is purposely designed to redeem mankind back into the good graces of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. These holydays are, for the most part, unknown by the vast majority of people here on earth. Those who are knowledgeable about them are primarily Jewish—and unfortunately, most of them *don’t really understand* the deep, rich *spiritual meanings* the holydays ultimately have to offer (write for our free booklet, *God’s Seasonal Plan*). Instead, they observe these holydays from a more historical point of view, but with a futuristic hope of returning to Zion, taking what they believe is their *rightful role* as leaders of the world.

Recognizing the *real and true value* of the salvific plan of God is not understood or comprehended by the many—instead, it’s a small minority of people who have had their eyes opened to the enormous significance of just

*Holydays, continued on page 4*



*Holydays, continued from page 3*

**But What About the Fall Holydays?**

As mentioned before, all of us know the holydays are based on *actual events* that have either already happened, or remain outstanding for the future. These holydays are “shadows” of things to come, which are instrumental to the fulfillment of God’s plan of salvation for mankind. The fall holydays are also in the script, pre-written to unfold as *actual events* if humankind does not repent and accept our Lord, Jesus Christ, as its model to live by. However, by the same token, they represent important and insightful metaphors, outlining specifics of details that underline significant points of spirituality for *salvation*, that if retained with emphasis in our minds, can be very helpful for maintaining *faithfulness* to Christ and the mission of Christian living.

*Rosh Hashanah*, the ***Feast of Trumpets***, comes to us with momentous meaning that notably features a spiritual *cardinal point of recognition* to all Christians: Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords. *He is the King of our lives!* We do well to consider that nothing should be put before our Lord in our lives. Anything that supersedes our involvement with Him and/or contradicts His values/boundaries for us is *idolatry!* It’s the better part of wisdom to be aware of how we live and prioritize our life’s tasks as we go about our business. Remember that Solomon, after a long life of self indulgence, concluded there was nothing more important regarding the “whole matter of life” than to just simply “Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.” The reason for this is answered in the next scripture when he said, “For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil” (Ecclesiastes 12:13–14).

After baptism, Christ is now living in us—He has made His abode in us (John 14:23), and we are now begotten by the Holy Spirit. This is the miracle of the “indwelling”—Christ in you (John 14:23; 1 John 4:4). However, there is a distinctive weightiness to a statement Paul makes when writing to the Church at Colosse. Notice: “To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is *Christ in you* [the indwelling], *the hope of glory*” (Colossians 1:27).

This reference to “the hope of glory” is a direct reference to the resurrection—making the direct connection to Christ the King, who has the authority over death, enabling Him to provide life to those who make Him King of their lives (John 5:25–29). But this requires the individual to eschew the devil in his lifestyle.

The ***Day of Atonement*** has an emphatic message to all Christians: *flee from the influences of the devil and his minions*. “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7). Denoting this element in our lives will go a long way in helping us to *limit the demonic influences and vexations* that we are surrounded by throughout our lives. We are told there is a “spirit of disobedience” that does influence and assuage the minds of mankind and does, indeed, work against God’s will in our lives (Ephesians 2:1–3). We must understand our fight is not against flesh and blood, but rather against wicked spirits in high places (Ephesians 6:12). The Day of Atonement plainly reminds us just how crucial it is the devil is OUT OF OUR LIVES—figuratively “in the wilderness,” away from us, spiritually speaking, if in fact we expect to remain untouched from his influences.

Otherwise, we will not be able to enter the Kingdom of God as portrayed in the ***Feast of Tabernacles***. There is an *undeniable value* in *knowing the goal* of what you are aspiring to, and why the previous holydays are so important. In other words, what is it all *for*—what’s the point? Understanding this—that the Kingdom of God is our life’s *most important objective*—is an underscoring advantage to maintaining the *outlook* and *relationship* necessary that comes from adhering to the meanings of the preceding holydays. The *Kingdom* should be central to our lives—a constant reminder of why we’re doing what we’re doing. Clearly, taking into consideration the mental outlook of Paul when he said: “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:18)—remembering this scripture is a valuable spiritual asset to our walk with Christ.

This state of mind, which allows one to go through life’s trials, life’s sufferings, as though it’s just part of the cost necessary to enter the Kingdom—the right of passage—is an incredibly advantageous outlook. Keeping the Kingdom of God as a focus is much like a cross-country runner who has the finish line well ensconced in his mind. He just runs the route dealing with whatever confronts him/her along the way—always maintaining the “can-do attitude.”

Many of our spiritual forefathers were much like this. They took on the role of a pilgrim—strong and determined, attention fixed on the future—knowing they were just passing through until they could obtain the *future promise* of their inheritance. Notice what the writer in Hebrews says: “These [those listed in the chapter] all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded [convinced] of them, and embraced [enfolded in the arms] them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country” (Hebrews 11:13–14). Do we plainly live as though we are seeking another country—a future kingdom? It would do us well to consider our ways and compare the things we’re doing with how they are supporting the will of God in our lives, affording

us entry into His Kingdom. Ask yourself: Is my lifestyle productive, or counterproductive for entry into immortality?

The ***Last Great Day*** is an assurance that God is indeed fair! It’s priceless to know that when we’re told no other name under heaven can save us from death, except that of Jesus Christ, that God in His infinite wisdom has made provisions to allow every human being to have the chance to hear about Jesus Christ, the Savior of mankind. Assuredly, we are told God will provide forgiveness, mercy, grace, and ultimately salvation to all who repent and embrace the fact that Jesus Christ died for our personal sins and is now acting as our atonement and intercessor before the Father, allowing us to be “passed over” by death.

This truth, which allows us to know *how God defines this recovery and reconciliation plan*, is priceless beyond comprehension. Knowing how to go about meeting His expectations as contained in the *spiritual truths* of the Passover, Days of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, Tabernacles, and the Last Great Day, is so very valuable—beyond comparison! This information can and will, if followed correctly, provide you with the key to the Kingdom of God, which is your inheritance. Notice: “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs [to the Kingdom]; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ [of the Kingdom]; if so be that we suffer with him [be willing to sacrifice], that we may be also glorified [resurrected] together” (Romans 8:16–17).

So, don’t be slack in your pursuit of the Kingdom of God. Thirst after righteousness, pursue godly character, and live to serve God and your fellow man as your main priorities. These are the things God wants us to consider as the most important responsibility of life—because there just isn’t anything more important!

Notice what Jesus says with regard to this point: “I say unto you, Take no [anxious, fret, worry, obsessive] thought for your life... The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field... how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Luke 12:22–31).

So, keep in mind the spiritual meanings of the holydays, too! Yes, they are *real events*, some of which have already occurred, while others remain prophetic—but that doesn’t dismiss the *spiritual values* that are *embedded* for our spiritual insight and enrichment—for they are such a precise acumen of understanding of what and how God is adopting many sons and daughters into Godly Sonship. So *use* this knowledge to exem-

**Prayers Often Answered In Unexpected Ways**

I asked God for strength, that I might achieve;  
I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey.  
I asked for health, that I might do greater things;  
I was given infirmity, that I might do better things.  
I asked for riches, that I might be happy;  
I was given poverty that I might be wise.  
I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men;  
I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God.  
I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life;  
I was given life, that I might enjoy all things.  
I got nothing that I asked for—but everything I had hoped for.  
Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.  
I am among all men most richly blessed.  
—An Unknown Confederate Soldier

**What Is the Devil Doing?**

The devil is not persecuting Christianity today as he did in the days of old—he is *professing* it. He is not fighting the churches—he is *joining* them. This is the strategy of the mock angel, Satan, disguised as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14). Ω

**Making the Evil Seem the Good**

In all he did, in all he taught,  
He kept this aim in sight;  
To get the deeds of darkness done,  
Disguised as works of light.  
He spread his poison, slow and sure,  
Through many a specious sect;  
And made the evil seem the good,  
Bamboozling God’s elect. Ω



# The Kingdom of God—What Will It *REALLY* Be Like?

*What is the Kingdom of God? What will it be like? Where will it be?—in heaven or on earth? What is the Millennium? Is it the same as the Kingdom of God? Millions scoff; others are in total ignorance of it. Only Bible prophecy reveals the plain truth about the wonderful world of tomorrow!*

by Lloyd W. Cary



Lloyd W. Cary

**W**hen Christ came the first time, He came as the meek and lowly Lamb of God whose mission was to die for the sins of the world. But when He comes the second time, He is coming as a mighty conqueror—as King of kings, and Lord of lords (Revelation 17:14; 19:16)—and He will wage *war* with the nations who oppose Him (Revelation 13:7; 17:14; 19:11). But before worldwide reconstruction can commence, Christ must deal with His enemies—and they are many. He must “destroy them which destroy the earth” (Revelation 11:18). The next holyday, the Day of Atonement, describes how our ultimate enemy, *the great dragon*, “was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” (Revelation 12:9).

### Christ—Our Warrior King

In Revelation 19:13,16, we see Christ returning as a mighty conquering warrior king: “And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God... And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.” He will then execute the supernatural seven last plagues, which will ultimately bring rebellious mankind to its knees. Here we see another glaring Bible opposite.

As shocking as it may seem to those who picture the Lord Jesus Christ as only a sweet, harmless, loving Lord Jesus who would never hurt anyone, the first thing He is going to do at His return is *KILL* multiple millions of people! Revelation 6:17 declares, “the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”

John writes: “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself. And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God” (Revelation 19:11–15).

### The Millennium Begins

“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever” (Revelation 11:15).

Once Christ, the Conquering King, destroys His enemies with the “brightness of His coming” (2 Thessalonians 2:8), He will establish world headquarters at Jerusalem, and then proceed to gather the peoples of Israel and Judah into Palestine to repopulate the land (Hosea 1:10; Ezekiel 37:21,22)—thus, Israel will be restored as a nation; the people “shall dwell safely all of them” (Ezekiel 38:8); and “Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls” (Zechariah 2:2–5). The Feast of Tabernacles will be reinstituted and enforced worldwide. Those nations who refuse to keep it will suffer the plague of no rain (Zechariah 14:16–19). At long last, all Israel—not just Judah—will be reconciled with God, and will become the model nation she was intended to be. Christ will at that time restore true worship, peace, and harmony in the land. The long-awaited Millennium—the prophesied thousand years of utopian peace, harmony, and global reconstruction—will then begin. “And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of the LORD from Jerusalem” (Isaiah 2:3).

### The Last Great Day

And finally, *after* the Millennium, comes the Last Great Day, a totally separate Feast day picturing the time when the rest of the dead (Revelation 20:5)—all those billions who never had the opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as personal Savior during their lifetimes—will be resurrected to physical life and have their first and only opportunity to enter into the Kingdom of God. Clearly the Feast of Trumpets pictures the time of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ in power and glory to begin His reign on the earth. Could any event in all history be more important, more pivotal, or more glorious than the return of Jesus Christ to rule the earth? Now, let’s take a closer look at what God’s Word reveals about the wonderful world to come—the millennial reign of Jesus Christ.

Many well-meaning but mistaken ministers try to intimidate their audience by giving them them a choice: “Where will *you* spend eternity, in heaven—or in hell?” Heaven or hell! What an alternative! Yet, those are the two prospects placed before millions of Protestants, Catholics, Jews, and Muslims. (For Catholics there is also a place called “purgatory”—a temporary holding place en route to heaven—proclaimed as a dogma by the Council of Florence in A.D. 1439.) Heaven or hell—is this all we have to look forward to? Is this what is predicted in your Bible? What ultimately lies ahead for mankind? You may be surprised and literally SHOCKED as to what your Bible *really* says!

Few, even those in traditional Christianity, give any thought to what the Bible says lies shortly ahead. Few understand what the Bible foretells about that period of time referred to as the Millennium, or “the thousand years” in Revelation 20:5–6.

### What is the Millennium?

Many have recited the prayer, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done *in earth*, as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10) without thinking it through. The good news is that this oft-recited prayer *will* soon be answered in a magnificent way! Jesus Christ will soon return to put down the present wicked system of things and replace it with the long-awaited Kingdom of God.

The word “millennium” is derived from two Latin words: *mille*, meaning “thousand” and *annus*, meaning “year.” *Millennium* simply means “thousand years.”

The Millennium *is* the promised Kingdom of God—those first thousand years of Christ’s world-ruling reign on earth at the time of His return. It is mentioned six times in Revelation 20:2–7 and is alternately referred to as the Kingdom of God (Luke 19:11), the Kingdom of heaven (Matthew 6:10), the Kingdom of Christ (Revelation 11:15), the regeneration (Matthew 19:28), the times of refreshing (Acts 3:19), and the world to come (Hebrews 2:5). At this time, Christ will be the undisputed Lord of lords and King of kings along with His resurrected spirit-composed saints who will reign in positions of co-rulership with Him (Revelation 1:6; 5:10; 19:16; Isaiah 61:6; Daniel 7:18,22). This time is described in detail in Isaiah 2:2–4; chapters 11, 12, 35 and elsewhere. This millennial period is the fulfillment of the Abrahamic, Davidic, and New Covenants, and will be completely fulfilled when the New Jerusalem and God the Father comes down out of heaven to dwell on the new earth (see Revelation 20:4; 21:1–3, 7, 10).

### The Kingdom of God

This period of time—often referred to simply as “the Kingdom”—was a central part of Jesus Christ’s message and is thus a major theme of the Bible. We read, “From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, repent: for *the kingdom* of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 4:17,23; 10:7; Mark 1:15; Luke 1:14; 4:43; 9:2; 19:11; John 18:36).

So *why* is this Bible truth so rarely understood, and *why* isn’t it commonly taught in most churches today? The early church fervently believed and taught Christ would return to rule over the literal nations on earth. They were sent out to preach this message (Luke 9:2, 60). Christians proclaimed this message faithfully. It was on their minds constantly. They believed it absolutely. They prayed for it fervently. At one point during Christ’s ministry, the apostles asked Him, “Tell us, *when* shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world [*aion*, age]?” (Matthew 24:3).

Again, just after Christ’s death and resurrection, and immediately before His ascension to heaven, they again wanted to know, “Lord, wilt thou at *this* time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6). Jesus told them it was not God’s intent that they should know exactly when this would happen; neither do we know today. He told them they should concern themselves with proclaiming His *message* to the world (Acts 1:7–8 and Matthew 24:14).

He instructed His disciples that He would die, but would be resurrected 72 hours later, and that He would go to prepare a place or position for them in His coming Kingdom (Matthew 16:21; Luke 22:28–30; John 14:2, 3). Initially, the apostles did not fully understand, believing the Kingdom would appear within their own lifetimes (John 20:9; Acts 1:6, 7). Later, when they received the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2), they realized the Kingdom was to be yet future. To enter into that Kingdom, they would first die, then be resurrected as spirit beings, for “flesh and blood cannot inherit God’s kingdom” (Philippians 3:20–21; 1 Corinthians 15:50).

*Kingdom, continued on next page*



Why Is So Little Preached About the Millennium?

You may rightly wonder, if these things be true, *why* is so little heard about the Millennium in the churches or religious circles of this world? *WHY—WHEN—DID MANKIND STOP BELIEVING THE MESSAGE JESUS BROUGHT?* Why is this, the central message of the Bible, no longer being preached? Instead, these Kingdom truths have been twisted, changed, and ignored. How unfortunate that most of mainstream Christendom’s churches have substituted that glorious hope with the ideas, philosophies, and theologies of *men* about heaven, hell, and the immortality of the soul! Because of much false preaching, countless millions of good, sincere, but deceived believers read their pagan notions of heaven and hell *into* the Scriptures instead of taking the Scriptures for what they plainly *say*.

On the contrary, most religious denominations today hold that the Millennium is *not* a literal 1,000-year period during which Christ will rule on earth, but a nebulous, fuzzy description of heaven. Not knowing the Bible well enough, most people pass over these scriptures with little thought, leaving such “deep matters” to the paid professionals. These plain, but often ignored scriptures are usually “spiritualized away” because they do not fit in with their popularized belief of departed souls immediately wafting off to heaven or hell at death. Some scholars teach that the Millennium is not an actual period of 1,000 years, but is only a long, *indefinite* period that may have started centuries ago and will continue to get better and better under man’s direction until we arrive at a virtual utopia. The *New Catholic Encyclopedia* reports that Augustine “advanced the theory that the millennium had actually begun with Christ’s nativity” some 2,000 years ago and is still continuing. (Be sure to request our article, *What Does the Bible Really Say About the Millennium?* and our CD, *Questions About the Millennium*.)

The very highly respected and voluminous French *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* defines “millennialism” as the “False belief professed by those who were awaiting a temporal reign of the Messiah, the length of which was sometimes considered by them to be a thousand years. . . . Since the fifth century, the millennium has no longer been spoken of, or very rarely, by a few cranky sects.”

“A few cranky sects”? Who’s calling who a *sect*? When we read the Bible *itself*, we see a completely different picture! Why such confusion? Just who or what are we to believe? Should we take stock of the commentaries, philosophies, and fantasies of *men*—or the very inspired Word of God?

Kingdom Truths Twisted, Changed, Ignored

Over the years, after the death of Jesus’ apostles, these clear biblical truths about the Kingdom of God and the Millennium became clouded over with philosophy and the traditions of *men*. Indeed, during the first century, the apostles exercised a restraining influence that helped to keep Christian doctrine pure. After they died, a great apostasy set in (2 Thessalonians 2:3–8; 1 Timothy 4:1–4).

How did that happen? Let the apostle Paul explain: “For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also, from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things to draw away the disciples after themselves” (Acts 20:29–30, NKJV). He went on to say, “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if *his ministers* [yes, Satan has ministers!] also be transformed *as* the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works” (2 Corinthians 11:13–15).

Christ warned repeatedly that we should “Take heed that no *man* deceive you. For *many* shall come in my name, *saying*, I am Christ; and [by this means; saying that Jesus is the Christ] shall deceive many” (Matthew 24:4–5, 11, 24; Mark 13:5–6, 22; Luke 21:8).

Many surviving second- and third-century writings show that a great false church arose, mixing paganism with the true doctrines of first-century Christianity and soon led the whole world astray (Revelation 12:9). Among many other doctrinal changes, this also affected what was taught regarding the Kingdom of God, or the Millennium, for “... the god of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (2 Corinthians 4:4).

The good news is that Jesus Christ will soon return to put down the present wicked system of things and replace it with the Kingdom of God.

Here’s the Best News You’ve Ever Heard!—

What It Will *REALLY* Be Like in the World Tomorrow!

What will life be like on earth in God’s promised brave new world? The limited mind of man can scarcely fathom the glory and splendor of what life will be like for mankind during this time. For now, we see only in part, as through a glass darkly (1 Corinthians 13:12). This future thousand-year reign of Christ on earth—described in Isaiah 35 and elsewhere—will be a time of wonderful peace, joy, and blessing, the utopia men have hitherto only dreamed about!

One of the first things King Jesus will do is to put Satan and his demons out of commission—locked away in an abyss of inactivity. No longer will those evil, fallen angels be lurking behind the scenes, fomenting trouble, goading mankind into acts of disobedience to God (Revelation 20:1–3). What a relief!

During this time, the nations will become exceedingly prosperous. Undoubtedly, many advanced technologies will be discovered for the benefit of those who are on the earth.

The Millennium will be a time of perfect, beautiful weather, a veritable tropical paradise. There will no longer be extreme shifts in the weather to fear—droughts, floods, storms, hurricanes, or tornados—for God will maintain proper climate control year round (Joel 2:23).

After centuries of pollution and war, the land will be healed, restored, and enjoy her Sabbaths. God’s commandments will be strictly adhered to (Psalm 111:10; 119:44; Isaiah 2:3). God will once again bless the earth, returning it to its former glory of Eden. “For the LORD shall comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody” (Isaiah 51:3). The waters will come alive with every type of fish and become 100 percent pure for drinking, and the land will blossom with an abundant harvest. This will be a time of tremendous agricultural blessing. The earth literally will not be able to receive its bounty (Joel 2:24–26).

Millennial life will be active and productive (Isaiah 65:21, 22). God will change the nature of man so that he will greatly enjoy his labors (Isaiah 65:21–23). No more will a man dread going to his livelihood on Monday morning. He will be perfectly suited for the profession he has chosen and will do it with joy. Vibrant health will be the rule of the day. Lifespans will be increased. Those who are sick or afflicted will be miraculously healed (Isaiah 65:20). This great society will also be characterized by one universal language (Zephaniah 3:9).

The world will enjoy the absolute peace of God and be completely safe. Crimes such as murder, rape, and theft will be non-existent. Thoughtfulness and consideration will be the norm and social status. Vanity, jealousy, lust and greed will be a thing of the past.

All war materials and weapons will be destroyed. “And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills. And all nations shall flow unto it and many people shall go and say, come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths.” Imagine what it will be like being taught by Jesus Christ Himself! “For out of Zion shall go forth *the law*, and the word of the Lord *from Jerusalem*. And He shall judge among the nations and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation. Neither shall they learn war anymore” (Isaiah 2:2–4). With Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords, no one will need worry about nation rising against nation and kingdom against kingdom, for He will be our sole protector. No longer will man study war, but will covert their weapons into instruments of farming.

Does this sound too good to be true? We need not speculate, because the Bible plainly tells us, and what it says is thrilling, almost beyond belief to modern ears!

Take the Bible Challenge

We challenge you. *Quick!* Go get your Bible! Blow off the dust. Now, casting all human reasonings, church creeds, and traditions aside, let us lay out in outline form, verse by verse, *what the Bible actually says* the Kingdom of God will be like. Then, don’t believe us—believe your own Bible! Take the Bible *LITERALLY* where it is at all possible. Don’t try to reason your way around it or “spiritualize” it away. If symbolic, figurative, or typical language is used, then look for the *literal* truth it intends to convey. This is the surest and safest way to truly understand your Bible.

Do not allow yourself to dismiss these scriptures simply because you are not familiar with them or are accustomed to a different belief system. Do not permit your minister, priest, or rabbi to use smooth words, shallow answers, or vague dismissals to reject or “spiritualize away” these **PLAIN** scriptures! Instead, diligently search out these scriptures in your own Bible and ask God for understanding.

Throw aside all preconceived ideas. Insist on *Bible* answers! Copy the Bereans who “received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11).

Following, in briefest form, is an outline of future world events, and it is the best news you have ever heard! For brevity’s sake, only the highlights are listed here. (Perhaps you might like to mark, color-code, or chain reference these in your Bible for future quick reference.)

Here, from the pages of your own Bible, is what the Millennium—the Kingdom of God—will be like.

*Kingdom, continued on next page*

**1. Christ’s Kingdom Is Received From God:**  
The Lord God shall give to Him the throne.  
There was given to Him dominion and a Kingdom.  
I will give thee the heathen.  
For the kingdom is the LORD’s: and He *is* the governor

Luke 1:32–33  
Daniel. 7:13, 14  
Psalm 2:8  
Psalms 22:28

**2. It is To Be Established When Jesus Christ Returns to Earth:**  
When the Son of man shall come in His glory.  
Christ shall judge at His appearing and kingdom.  
He is coming on a white horse as King of kings.  
A parable: Christ went to receive the kingdom and return.  
In the regeneration the Son of man shall sit on the throne.

Matthew 25:31  
2 Timothy 4:1  
Revelation 19:11, 16  
Luke 19:12–27  
Matthew 19:28

**3. It Will Be Established In Power and Might:**  
He will smite the nations and rule them with a rod of iron.  
He will smite the earth with the rod of His mouth.  
The Stone [Christ] will smite and replace the image.  
He shall fight against those nations.  
In flaming fire He will take vengeance on the disobedient.  
Christ will destroy the wicked with His brightness.  
The Lamb shall overcome those who make war with Him.

Psa. 2:8,9; Rev. 19:15  
Isaiah 11:4; Job 4:9  
Dan. 2:34, 35, 44, 45  
Zechariah 14:3–5  
2 Thess. 1:7–10  
2 Thess. 2:8  
Revelation 17:13–14

**4. Israel Will Be Regathered, Converted, Exalted:**  
Bring again people of Israel.  
Put a new spirit within you.  
Exalted above the Gentiles.

Amos 9:14,15  
Ezekiel 11:17–20  
Isaiah 61:4–6

**5. Christ’s Kingdom Will Supercede and Replace All Earthly Kingdoms:**  
The kingdoms of this world will become Christ’s.  
Christ will be King of kings and Lord of lords.  
Christ’s Kingdom shall never be destroyed.  
Jerusalem will be the throne of the Lord.  
The Kingdom shall be given to the saints of the Most High

Rev. 11:15  
Rev. 17:14; 19:16  
Daniel 2:44  
Jeremiah 3:17  
Daniel 7:18, 22, 27

**6. The Worldwide Extent of Christ’s Kingdom:**  
Satan and his influences shall be put away.  
Jesus Christ to be King over all the earth  
All nations will keep the Feast of Tabernacles.  
Gentiles shall seek Him.  
Uttermost parts of the earth.  
All nations shall serve Him.  
The Stone Who will fill the whole earth.  
All people, nations, languages shall serve Him.  
All dominions to serve and obey Him.  
Christ’s Kingdom exalted above nations.  
Earth shall be full of glory.

Revelation 20:1–3  
Zechariah 14:9  
Zechariah 14:16  
Isaiah 11:10  
Psalm 2:7–9  
Psalm 72:8–9  
Daniel 2:35–44  
Daniel 7:14  
Daniel 7:27  
Micah 4:1–3  
Isaiah 11:9

**7. The Eternal Duration of Christ’s Kingdom:**  
The throne of His Kingdom to be established forever.  
There shall be no end to His peace and government.  
God’s kingdom shall stand forever.  
His dominion is everlasting.  
The saints to possess the kingdom forever and ever.  
Of His kingdom there shall be no end.  
Christ’s kingdom to last forever.  
Kingdoms of this world to be Christ’s forever and ever.

2 Samuel 7:13, 16  
Isaiah 9:7  
Daniel 2:44  
Daniel 7:14  
Daniel 7:18  
Luke 1:33  
2 Peter 1:11  
Revelation 11:15

**8. The Structure of Christ’s Kingdom—  
Christ, King of Kings, Will Reign In Jerusalem:**  
Christ’s Kingdom to be exalted above the nations.  
Israel’s returned and praised among all people  
The Son of man shall sit on the throne of His glory.  
Christ it sit upon the throne of His father, David, forever.

Micah 4:1–4  
Zephaniah 3:20  
Matthew 25:31  
Luke 1:32–33

**9. The Church Will Be Glorified With Him:**  
We shall be joint-heirs with Christ  
We shall also appear with Him in glory.  
We will have power and sit with Him on His throne.  
As kings and priests, we shall reign on earth.  
We shall reign with Him a thousand years.

Romans 8:17  
Colossians 3:4  
Rev. 2:26; 3:21  
Rev. 1:6; 5:10  
Revelation 20:6

**10. All Nations That Are Left Will Serve the King of kings:**  
All nations and kings shall serve Him.  
Nations to go to Jerusalem to be taught of His ways.  
Those left of all nations will worship the King.

Psalms 72:8–11  
Isaiah 2:2–4  
Zech. 14:9,16

**11. The Temple Will Be Rebuilt**  
The temple described in detail.  
Animal sacrifices temporarily reinstated  
  
Burnt, sin, meat, trespass, and peace offerings

Ezek. 40– 48  
Ezek. 40:42–43;  
44:11  
Ezek. 43:19–27;  
45:17

**12. The Character and Blessings of Christ’s Kingdom—  
Christ Will Rule With Righteousness and Justice:**  
With righteousness.  
With righteousness shall judge.  
Walk in his paths.  
In righteousness He doth judge.

Psalms 72:8–10  
Isaiah 11:3–5  
Micah 4:2  
Revelation 19:11

**13. God’s Laws, Sabbath, and Holy days to Be Strictly Enforced:**  
God’s law kept forever and ever.  
The Law shall go forth from Zion.  
All nations to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.  
All flesh shall worship God from one Sabbath to another.

Psa. 119:44, 160  
Micah 4:2  
Zech. 14:16–19  
Isaiah 66:23

**14. There Will Be Worldwide Peace Among Nations:**  
There will be an abundance of peace forever.  
Israel will no longer be a prey to the heathen.  
Men shall beat their swords into plowshares.  
No end to the increase of His government.  
The work of righteousness shall be peace forever.  
Men shall learn war no more.  
He shall cut off war and speak peace unto the heathen.

Psalms 72:3,7  
Ezekiel 34:28  
Isaiah 2:4  
Isaiah 9:7  
Isaiah 32:17  
Micah 4:3  
Zechariah 9:10

**15. No More Sickness:**  
Inhabitants shall not say, “I am sick.”  
The blind, deaf, lame, dumb, healed.  
The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard.  
God shall wipe away all tears and pain.

Isaiah 33:24  
Isaiah 35:5,6  
Isaiah 65:17–19  
Rev. 7:17; 21:4

**16. The Nature of Animals Changed:**  
A little child shall lead formerly fierce animals.  
The wolf and the lamb shall feed together.  
God will make covenant with the wild beasts of the field.  
Christ will establish a covenant of peace with all beasts.

Isaiah 11:6–9  
Isaiah 65:25  
Hosea 2:18  
Ezekiel 34:25

**17. The Fertility of Earth Will Be Restored:**  
The desert shall blossom as the rose.  
The wilderness shall be as a pool of water.  
Peace, singing, abound; no more thorns or thistles.  
Desolate lands rebuilt; earth to become a Garden of Eden.  
The plowman will overtake the reaper.  
There will be a restitution of all things.  
The creature shall be delivered from bondage.

Isaiah 35:1,2,6,7  
Isaiah 41:18–19  
Isaiah 55:12–13  
Ezek. 36:33–35  
Amos 9:13–14  
Acts 3:20–21  
Romans 8:19–22

**18. The Environment Will Be Made Friendly:**  
Protective covering cloud and flaming fire upon Zion.  
There shall be showers of blessing.  
There shall be bountiful harvests.  
The wilderness and solitary place shall be glad.

Isaiah 4:5–6  
Ezekiel 34:26  
Ezekiel 34:27  
Isaiah 35:1

**19. Who Will *Not* Inherit the Kingdom:**  
Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom.  
The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom.  
Immoral persons shall not inherit the kingdom.  
The unrepentant sinners shall not inherit the kingdom.

1 Cor. 15:50  
1 Cor. 6:9–11  
Gal. 5:19–21  
Rev. 21:8, 27; 22:15

**20. The Whole Earth to be Filled With the Glory of the Lord:**  
The whole earth shall be filled with His glory.  
Earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord.  
The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory  
of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

Psalms 72:19  
Isaiah 11:9  
  
Habakkuk 2:14

Amen! What a world! Now *read this list over again!* Let it really “soak in.” We need to “prove all things” by the infallible Word of God (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

**Let’s Be Honest With the Scriptures!**

So we ask again, does the Bible *really* tell of immortal souls spending eternity in heaven, hell, or purgatory as mentioned at the beginning of this article—or, instead, does it predict that God will bring a literal thousand years of peace and utopia *TO THE EARTH*? What a paradox! You be the judge. When people finally lay aside all manmade creeds and traditions and actually **READ THE BOOK**, they always find what the Bible says and what people are *told* the Bible says are two different things!

Down through the ages men have endeavored unsuccessfully to bring peace and harmony to this world, but the Word of God declares, “And the way of peace have they *not* known” (Romans 3:17). It will require a supernatural force—the strong, but loving and merciful hand of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, to bring peace and harmony to this sin-sick world and release it from the curse of sin that has held it captive for thousands of years. What a *wonderful*, glorious future for mankind! Will *you* be ready?

To understand more about God’s plan for man, be sure to send for our booklets, *God’s Seasonal Plan* and *How To Be A Real Christian!* They are *free* for the asking.

Ω



# THE FALL HARVEST

by Lonnie C. Hendrix



Lonnie C. Hendrix

**“All the world is God’s own field, Fruit unto His praise to yield; Wheat and tares together sown, Unto joy or sorrow grown; First the blade, and then the ear, Then the full corn shall appear: Lord of harvest, grant that we Wholesome grain and pure may be.”—*Come, Ye Thankful People, Come, or Harvest Home*, written by Alford and Elvey in the nineteenth century.**

The words of that old hymn evoke images of the spiritual harvest referred to in the Holy Bible. This imagery is employed over and over again in Scripture, but is used to greatest effect in the descriptions of the holydays. We learn early in those Scriptures that there were two harvests each year in the Promised Land. Moreover, we know that ancient Israel was largely an agrarian society which looked to these events (the two harvests) as being vital to their survival as a people. Hence, it is no great wonder that God would use such an important feature of their lives to draw their attention to His plans for them and us.

In the book of Exodus, we read: “Each year you must celebrate three festivals in my honor. First, celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread...Second, celebrate the Festival of Harvest [Wave Sheaf and Pentecost], when you bring me the first crops of your harvest. Finally, celebrate the Festival of the Final Harvest [Feast of Tabernacles] at the end of the harvest season, when you have harvested all the crops from your fields. At these three times each year, every man in Israel must appear before the Sovereign, the Lord” (Exodus 23:14–17, (*New Living Translation* throughout). This language is repeated later in the same book (Exodus 34:22). Having established a clear connection between these festivals and harvest times, we might well begin to ask ourselves exactly how these things relate to God’s plans for the Israelites in particular, and mankind in general.

In trying to understand this connection, it is important to remember some things about harvesting that are not as apparent in our technologically advanced and largely urban world as they would have been to an agrarian and rural society like that of the Israelites. First, it should be noted that any major harvest requires *preparation*. This is a consequence of the fact that there is usually a small window of opportunity in which to harvest the crop. After all, the harvest is contingent upon the crop being mature/ready and the weather being cooperative with the effort. Moreover, the farmer must have the means (equipment and workers) to harvest the crop and the means to store it or get it to market.

Thinking in these terms, some parallels between the physical act of harvesting and God’s plan to save mankind from sin and error are readily apparent. Scripture makes clear that a great deal of thought and planning went into God’s formula for the salvation of mankind (Matthew 25:34; Ephesians 1:4; I Peter 1:20; and Revelation 13:8). Like the growth and maturation of plants, the development of godly character also takes time. Like any good farmer, God has also prepared for this harvest of souls. He has employed millions of workers (angels) to assist Him in that harvest (Hebrews 2:14). Most importantly, God has the resources and the ability to bring His harvest home (Philippians 1:6).

Thus we begin to see why God equated His plans (and the holydays which are representative of those plans) with the harvests. Christ once told His disciples, “The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields” (Matthew 9:37–38). In fact, Christ used this analogy over and over again during His earthly ministry. We have the Parable of the Soils (Matthew 13:1–23), the Parable of the Vineyard Owner (Luke 20:9–18), and the Parable of the Wheat and Tares (Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43) referenced in the quotation from the hymn at the beginning of this article.

In fact, the scriptural allusions to the harvest are too numerous to mention in the space of one article! Christ once told His disciples: “I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn’t produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. Yes, I am the vine: you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:1–4). It is clear that God looks at His entire plan as a kind of harvest of redeemed souls.

Christ, however, was not the only one who recognized these parallels. His disciples saw them as well. Paul called Jesus the first of the firstfruits (1 Corinthians 15:20, 23). This was clearly a reference to the wave sheaf offering outlined in the Old Testament and connected to the first harvest (Leviticus 23:9–14). Likewise, James and John referred to God’s saints as firstfruits of the harvest (James 1:18; Revelation 14:4).

So we come at last to the fall harvest. How does this harvest relate to God’s plan to save humanity? Scripture tells us that there will be a great

harvest of souls during the millennial reign of Christ and His saints (Revelation 20:1–5). The people who will be a part of that harvest will not have to contend with Satan, because he will be imprisoned during that entire period! Then, at the conclusion of the thousand years and after Satan’s final defeat, *everyone* who has ever lived will be resurrected and given an opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as their savior (Revelation 20:11–15). What a great harvest that will be! I want to be there—how about you? Ω

## Vastness

by Vivian Hall



Vivian Hall

**L**ooking at the sky the other day, a lady said, “Wonder if the clouds have names?” That opened to me many wonderings. How exactly is our existence interchangeable and related? Is it probable *all* parts of creation are related in some manner?

Often we humans forget how detailed our God actually is. Things have a purpose and interact. Things were *not* made by happenstance or afterthought.

Many of us are so focused on “what will be,” we fail to see what *is*. Many things were created before mankind. Dirt, grass, birds, trees, fish, water, even animals were some. Things made are foundational to and for us, and benefit our lives. These are not “Plan B” or “Oops!”

Never forget, God is *awesome* and *unlimited*. We can set *no* boundaries for our Redeemer. First Corinthians 2:9 reminds us God is outside and beyond expectations: “It has not entered into the heart of man things God has prepared.”

We are limited; God is limitless.

Read again how God asked Job where he was when things were created and brought to be! I was not there. You were not there! We have no tapes or photos of those events. We are told it looked like this or that. Some have convinced themselves that they know.

We change the natural order to suit our purpose and think our assessment acceptable. We even adjust our own laws—and then we are amazed when we have adverse effects! Ω

## God Did Not Ask My Permission!

The Mighty God did not ask me  
If He could separate land and sea!  
He did not seek my approval to separate dark from light!  
I gave no approval or even say “It’s alright.”  
When God set the sun, the moon, and each star,  
I measured no distance for Him to tell how near or far,  
Sunset one, two, three, four, and five  
I was not present nor on day six  
When Adam and Eve were made alive!  
When on day seven when God rested  
I had not yet been born.  
Nor later when the battle of Jericho was fought and won.  
Way, way back in history  
I had not come to be.  
Thus I have not had input.  
He did not ask me.  
My permission was not needed for a single thing.  
What I think I know is based upon what I have heard and seen!  
My best, my worst is based upon things before my time.  
What knowledge I assembled is based on things not mine!

Vivian Hall

## A Mother’s Love

A mother was asked, “Which of your 13 children do you love the most?” She replied, “The one who is sick until he gets well, and the one who is away until he comes home.”





THE FEAST OF TEMPORARY SHELTERS

by Lonnie C. Hendrix

“Remember that this seven-day festival to the Lord—the Festival of Shelters—begins on the fifteenth day of the month, after you have harvested all the produce of the land...On the first day gather branches from magnificent trees—palm fronds, boughs from leafy trees, and willows that grow by the streams...For seven days you must live outside in little shelters. All native-born Israelites must live in shelters. This will remind each new generation of Israelites that I made their ancestors live in shelters when I rescued them from the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God” (Leviticus 23:39–43, NEW LIVING TRANSLATION throughout unless otherwise noted).

Each year, thousands of God’s people flock to the Feast of Tabernacles to live in motels, hotels, cabins, or campgrounds for a week; but have we really understood the significance of this temporary sheltering that we do each year? Why does this festival require us to live in a place that is not our home? Why are we required to live in structures that were never intended to be permanent residences? In short, what does the symbolism of this activity mean?

We all understand that the Feast of Tabernacles portrays the Kingdom of God, but how does that relate to living in temporary shelters? The Scripture indicates that the Israelites were told to do this *so they would not forget* they had lived in tents after leaving Egypt and before reaching the Promised Land. In the book of Hebrews, we read: “It was by faith that Abraham obeyed when God called him to LEAVE HOME [emphasis mine here and throughout] and go to another land that God would give him as his inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going. And even when he reached the land God promised him, HE LIVED THERE BY FAITH—for he was like a foreigner living in tents. And so did Isaac and Jacob, who inherited the same promise. Abraham was confidently looking forward to a city with eternal foundations, a city designed and built by God” (Hebrews 11:8–10). In short, Abraham and his descendants were looking toward a better and more permanent home.

A little further, we read: “All these people died still believing what God had promised them. They did not receive what was promised, but they saw it all from a distance and welcomed it. THEY AGREED THAT THEY WERE FOREIGNERS AND NOMADS HERE ON EARTH. Obviously people who say such things are looking forward to a country they can call their own. If they had longed for the country they came from, they could have gone back. But they were looking for a better place, a heavenly homeland. That is why God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them” (Hebrews 11:13–16). Do we begin to see the connection to our own circumstances as Christians?

Like the Israelites of old, God has called us out of Egypt (this sinful society), and has led us out into the wilderness (John 6:44). We are different and peculiar compared to the people around us (1 Peter 2:9). Like the Israelites, we are heirs of the promises made to Abraham (Galatians 3:29). Finally, we are also like the Israelites in the sense that we, too, are looking for a Promised Land (the Kingdom of God). Like the patriarchs of old, we are truly strangers and pilgrims on the earth as it now exists—the one deceived and influenced by Satan the devil.

There is, however, another meaning to this symbolism that is less general and more personal. Although it is unpleasant to contemplate, each one of us has an appointment with death (Hebrews 9:27). Somewhere in the back of our minds, all of us understand that this life we are currently enjoying is temporary; it will not last forever. We are subject to time and chance. Paul once told the saints at Corinth, “that our physical bodies cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. These dying bodies cannot inherit what will last forever” (1 Corinthians 15:50). He went on to tell them that “our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies” (1 Corinthians 15:53).

Sometime later, Paul wrote another letter to the Corinthians. He told them that the light of Christ was shining in their hearts, but he described that treasure as residing in fragile clay jars (2 Corinthians 4:7). He talked about how Christians must face many trials and perils because of their association with Jesus Christ, but that this resulted in them having the hope of eternal life (2 Corinthians 4:8–15). He continued, “That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day. For our present troubles are small and WON’T LAST VERY LONG. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! So we don’t look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever” (2 Corinthians 4:16–18).

In other words, Paul understood that Christians are currently living in temporary shelters (human bodies), and that they are looking forward to the time when they will be living in a permanent home (spiritual bodies). In this instance, I think that the *King James Version* does more justice to Paul’s words. Continuing in his second letter to the saints at Corinth, we read: “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For

we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life” (2 Corinthians 5:1–4).

Peter also understood this concept. In addressing the saints toward the close of his ministry, he wanted to remind them about the truths he had previously conveyed to them. He wrote: “Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this *tabernacle*, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me” (2 Peter 1:13–14, KJV). Peter understood that this life is not permanent, and that he was going to die. He also knew that his present body could not inherit the Kingdom of God, and that he would have to shed that body and receive a new one in the resurrection.

Thus it is evident that Paul and Peter understood these truths; but do *we* fully grasp them? Do we really understand what we are portraying when we celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles? Brethren, it is clear that we are underscoring the temporary nature of our present circumstances, and we are demonstrating our longing for a permanent home. As God’s people, it is imperative that we fully understand and accept the fact that we are foreigners and nomads on this earth. We are truly looking for a city that is not built by human hands, but by the hands of Almighty God! Ω

Power, continued from page 16



Be Alert to Satan’s Control of Our Minds

Spiritual warfare takes place in the human mind. It involves recognizing when a thought does not agree with God’s truth. Satan seeks out opportunity when we are at our most vulnerable to speak into our minds. It is at these times Satan is ready to exploit us. Ephesians 4:27 says, “give no opportunity to the devil.” The key is to distinguish between God’s thoughts, your thoughts, and Satan’s thoughts. We test the spirits by examining these thoughts against the Word of God. 2 Timothy 3:16 says:

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”

Give Satan No Opportunity

The key to retaining your power as a Christian is to give Satan no opportunity. Satan has no power over you except the opportunity you give him. Satan is an opportunist. He seeks out opportunity to rob us of the power God has given us by offering us opportunities that appeal to our carnal nature.

What We Must Do

The fact is, we are responsible for what comes out of our mouths, because God has given us the spirit of self-control and the power to discern what is of Him and what is of the devil. We must constantly discern the source of our attitudes, feelings, motives, and impulses. The Apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:25–31 says:

“Therefore, putting away falsehood, let every one speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his hands, so that he may be able to give to those in need. Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for edifying, as fits the occasion, that it may impart grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”

Finally, we are admonished in Proverbs 4:23–27 to:

“Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life. Put away from you a deceitful mouth, And put perverse lips far from you. Let your eyes look straight ahead, And your eyelids look right before you. Ponder the path of your feet, And let all your ways be established. Do not turn to the right or the left.” Ω



# Who Was Cain's Wife?

by Bill Russ



Bill Russ

**I**n today's world, many have become overly dependent on scientists and scientific theories for an understanding of the origins of man. Often, what the Bible says about man's origin and early history is dismissed and discredited. A case in point is this question: Who was the wife of Cain? Rather than look to Scripture for answers, many of us would rather rely on Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* or the theories of modern evolutionists for information on the ancestries of man. Of course,

Darwin's story of the "descent of man" does not coincide with the biblical account of the origin and early history of humankind; nor do the hypotheses and theories of today's evolutionary biologists.

We live in a nation where we exercise more freedom than the Creator God has given us. We exercise what we believe is a God-given right to decide by our own standards what is right or what is wrong. This enables us to teach and believe false concepts such as evolution. We live in a country where most of its citizens are considered Christian; yet, we have a hard time defining the biblical meaning of the word "Christian." The meaning of *Christian* is very simple; it only means to be a follower of Jesus the Christ. If we followed the example of our Lord and Savior, we would be able to get an answer to the perplexing (and frequently raised) question regarding the identity (and even nature) of Cain's wife.

The account in Genesis does not correspond with what we are taught in school, on television programs, or even in our history books. A television program I used to enjoy watching was primarily on U.S. and world history. The program presented straightforward history without all the embellishments. Now the whole program is basically about UFOs, aliens, Bigfoot, and other theories that cannot be proven. Generally, there is no proof that these things exist at all, except in the minds of those who want an alternative explanation—one that is radically different from the one offered in the Holy Scriptures—on human origins. So we are bombarded with theories on these things, though evidence that they even exist is lacking. Yet, some of the same people who seriously consider those theories think the story of Cain's wife is just a myth, or at best a parable, but not a historical account.

This is a question that many ponder but relatively few will try to answer, and even fewer have the answer. The society that we live in today has been inundated with a flood of false teaching and misinformation. Most were taught in school the theory of evolution without being told it was only a theory, and a very speculative one at that. Modern man, like his ancestors, has been deceived by a fallen angel who most know only by the name Satan or the devil. Most educators today, in our schools as well as our churches, do not believe or teach that Satan is a literal, personal being whose number one objective is the demise of all humanity.

Some years ago, an older gentleman who had fathered about twelve children and was approximately the age of my parents, asked me a question. "Where did Cain meet his wife?" he asked. He did not understand what the word "knew" in Genesis 4:16 meant: "And Cain *knew* his wife." He had never been taught its meaning in church. When I informed him that the statement, "Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch," meant that he had sexual relations with her and she conceived and had a son, the elderly gentleman was startled. He could not believe that such language or meaning was in Holy Scripture.

## Be Ready to Give an Answer!

Being a Christian carries with it an awesome responsibility. We are to be ready to answer questions from people who may become believers. Some of the questions may seem utterly ridiculous, but we are mandated by Scripture to be able to give an answer for the hope that we have within us. "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15–16, NKJV). To give a plausible answer, we have to be familiar with the holy Scriptures. Have you ever been asked a question that you did not feel qualified to answer? Or have you ever heard a question directed at someone who should have been able to answer but was unable or unwilling to do so?

At work one night—I believe it was dinnertime—someone "out of the blue" asked who Cain's wife was. At the table was a licensed Protestant minister who was in his natural state at dinner or lunch—his nose in his Bible, pausing from his reading only long enough to take a bite of food. At the table were two others who were always spouting off about their knowledge of the Bible. When the question on Cain's wife was asked, the minister, who was

called "Preacher," never looked up from his Bible, and the other two became extremely quiet, looking down at the table. All three completely ignored the question. To some professing Christians, this question cannot be answered without disqualifying the book of Genesis as a meaningful historical document. They believe that it only goes to prove how inaccurate the Bible can be when it is put under close scrutiny. To other Christians, the question of who was Cain's wife is too complex for them to explain or to even understand.

I normally did not get involved in their Bible discussions, not wanting to be labeled as a know-it-all. But after what seemed like a long time had passed, I answered the question, and they were all amazed that a maintenance man who did not discuss the Bible at every opportunity like some of them did could answer the question with clarity and understanding.

How many in the world of Christianity can truthfully answer this question? We live in a time of multiple translations and other aids to help in our study of the Holy Scriptures. I know 1 Peter 3:15–16 (quoted above) is not the scripture most would think of in answering a question about the wife of Cain. But all questions that open the door to ideas that are in conflict with the teachings of Scripture should be answered correctly. A biblically sound answer may lead the one asking the question to become a believer.

## Adam, the Father of Humankind

Acts 17:26 states that God "has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth." All of humanity comes from Adam. Even Eve came out of Adam. God created Adam by fashioning him from the dust of the earth. He breathed into his nostrils, and man became a living soul (or air breathing creature). On the sixth day of re-creation God had formed man out of the elements of the earth; in breathing life into Adam, the living God created a living man.

Now the Bible tells us that before God made Eve of material taken from the side of Adam, there was a special creation of all the beasts of the field and the birds of the air. After these creatures were formed, Adam gave names to all of them (Genesis 2:19–20). But Adam soon discovered that "there was not found a helper comparable to him" (verse 20). This shows that man, as God's image bearer, is unique in all the physical creation of this vast universe.

The popular belief is that man descended from a primate. In this special creation there were guerrillas, orangutans, monkeys, and baboons, but none was a suitable mate for Adam. There is a law that God established at creation that life begets life *after its kind*. Man, in his ignorance and his refusal to follow the Word of God, teaches and believes that humans descended from some primate, an idea based on some physical similarities. But man is not a primate! He has more in common physically with a swine than he does with any of the primates. So if it is similarities that we are looking for, it will be just as reasonable to say man descended from a pig. If that's the case, then if you eat a ham sandwich you are eating one of your relatives.

We are not told in Scripture how intelligent Adam was, but we *are* told that God's creation was "very good" (Genesis 1:31). Man was a perfect creation able to talk and communicate to the point of naming all the animals that God had created. We can reasonably assume that both male and female animals were presented to Adam to name and to see there was no creature comparable to him—none that had his power of speech or with whom he could be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. Adam would not discover such a creature until God made the woman and brought her to him. "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh," Adam said. "She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man" (Genesis 2:23). Finally, a creature comparable to him—a suitable mate, a companion! "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh" (verse 24).

## Long Lives, Many Children!

Adam was 130 years old when he fathered Seth, making it very possible that Cain and Abel could have been around 100 years of age or older at the time of Abel's death. Adam and Eve were created mature and fully functioning adults, so it is fully reasonable Cain and Abel were born in the first five years of their parents' life. How much time passed between the death of Abel and the birth of Seth? Could it have been soon after Cain went out from the presence of God? Or had many years passed? It is reasonable to think that Abel had not been dead for very long when God gave Adam and Eve a son to replace him. I don't know about you, but if you are going to replace something of mine, I would like it done while it was still fresh in my mind, not many years later.

After Cain and Abel were born, but before the birth of Seth, it is highly likely that Adam and Eve had many more children. If Adam and Eve did



not have other offspring, who was it that Cain feared would kill him? The only people on earth were part of the family of Adam and Eve. They had many years to have sons and daughters, and it is highly likely that Cain married one of his sisters before he killed his brother Abel. During the first 130 years of Adam’s life, before the birth of Seth, there could have been *multiple generations* by this time. Even the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve could have had children of their own, and it is highly possible that even their children’s children had children. There are families today consisting of four to five generations, and this is accomplished without anyone living to be 100 years of age. And, unlike Adam and Eve, we have to *grow* to maturity

**Being a Christian carries with it an awesome responsibility. We are to be ready to answer questions from people who may become believers (1 Peter 3:15).**

before we begin bringing sons and daughters into the world.

It is problematic for some to believe a man would marry his sister. Today, we frown on marriages between brothers and sisters who have only one biological parent in common, and even on marriages between step-siblings. But in the early days of humankind, there was no law forbidding such marriages. Who else were they to marry? If a man was not allowed to marry his sister, then after the death of Adam and Eve, the human family would have come to an end. Abraham, the father of the faithful, married his half-sister; this was not against the law of God. It was not until the time of Moses that God, through Moses, gave the law forbidding marrying close kin (see Leviticus 18:9).

The Bible is the sure word of truth about the origins of man. We were created in the image and likeness of God; we did not evolve from primates! All of humanity came from Adam and Eve. A man after God’s own heart, King David, was inspired to write these words of inspiration that we should take into our minds, words that will help us to understand that even the wife of Cain was fully human in every way: “And I praise you because of the wonderful way *you created me*. Everything you do is marvelous! Of this I have no doubt” (Psalm 139:14, *Contemporary English Version*). emphasis added). Ω

## Ministerial Conference in Review

August 2 – August 4, 2013

**On August 2 beginning at 7:00 PM, the combined regions of the southeastern and northern ministries of the Church of God International were invited to a Regional Ministerial Conference held at the Holiday Inn Airport, in Cincinnati, Ohio. Approximately 34 people were in attendance.**

Regional Coordinators Mike Nolen and Bill Watson hosted the proceedings which included 16 hours of meetings commencing on Friday night, all day Sabbath, and ending Sunday at noon. The conference was well attended, with most of the wives present throughout the weekend’s discussions.

Friday night was devoted primarily to Jeff Reed explaining what the church is presently doing with our media efforts. This included discussions about the Internet and our marketing initiatives on the worldwide web. It also covered some of the background concerning the changes on our website, as well as informing everyone as to how Internet television, such as Google TV, Roku, and Apple TV, will work in conjunction with selected television networks that will be retained internationally, along with public access stations in the United States.

There was quite a lot of interest concerning the many topics that came up in the discussions of the nuances, and how this compares to the former emphasis of using television. Everyone seemed to have something to say about what they thought, and found it very interesting as to the cost effective advantage the Internet has over television, when comparing the “cost per response” of these two mediums.

The next morning, Bill Watson presented details about the Ministerial Apprentice Program (MAP). Time was taken to provide an overview of how the program is set up and how it works. New MAP manuals were handed out to all the ministers, and are now available from the home office in Tyler, Texas if you would like to obtain one.

Mike Nolen followed up with a presentation that was focused on courtesies and considerations toward each other in the ministry. Mike went on to explain with a power point presentation that our “interac-

tive-interaction” demands from each of us that due courtesies and considerations be extended to each other if we expect to develop the trust necessary for developing strong and healthy relationships.

Charles Groce proceeded with describing the relationship the Ministerial Council has with the field ministry. He covered areas that detailed how and for what purpose the Ministerial Council should be used. The church’s structure was explained, which afforded everyone a level of clarity about the boundaries the Ministerial Council operates within.

George Ramocan presented a power point presentation on church growth. He explained that growth is expected in both the areas of quality and quantity. He divided his presentation up into two broad categories: evangelism and nurturing the congregation. There were many interesting ideas that were brought up and discussed afterward in a give-and-take session. All were agreed—we have our work cut out for us.

Afterward, Mike and Bill shared in moderating a session on how do we manage our personal blog and/or web sites. This subject was primarily an open discussion for comments, opinions, and views about how to handle these sites when a minister happens to post something he personally believes, but is not necessarily accepted by the church. When does *personal* scholarship “trump” the considerations and courtesy we should extend to each other for minimizing/eliminating the risk of generating confusion or controversy among the brethren or each other? Surprisingly, the majority of comments were very considerate to the greater body, rather than insisting on forging one’s personal view on something that may cause controversy or confusion among the brethren.

Saturday night a surprise dinner was held in honor of Mr. Ben Chapman’s 50 years of ministerial service. His lovely wife Lois brought him to the dinner under the impression it was just a ministerial dinner due to the meetings. It was at the dinner that Charles Groce, moderator of the function, announced it was in his honor. Ben’s expression of surprise was priceless! He was presented with a plaque and certificate in honor of his 50 years of serving our Lord in his ministry. It was quite emotional at times as Charles masterfully took him down “memory lane,” reminding him of certain benchmarks of his ministry, which included Charles’ own baptism by Mr. Chapman, as well as Ben’s ordination by HWA in England, back in 1963.

On Sunday, Mr Alan Gruber, a grief counselor from the Hospice Group of Cincinnati, provided a power point presentation on how to counsel the dying among us. This was a very interesting subject from a man who grief counsels the dying for a living. Everyone was riveted by his advice and suggestions. It was a very helpful session, and all seemed to be quite appreciative of it.

It became obvious the theme for the weekend was how the *Church of God International* is positioned for the future development of its leadership—what is expected of us to enhance the quality of that leadership and our own relationships with each other—and how the leadership is administered for the purpose of growing the church.

All in all, it was a very rewarding weekend with renewing our friendships and making new ones with each other. It was so enjoyable that it was tentatively discussed to set the date of mid-July 2014 for a conference with the entire ministry of the *Church of God International*. So tentatively, keep the middle of July 2014 open for the possibility of this event. Ω Submitted by Bill Watson

**“I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18)**



**Charles Groce presenting Ben Chapman with a plaque and certificate in honor of his 50 years of service in the ministry**



Importance, continued from page 1

southern United States, I have known gray-headed, snuff-dipping grandmothers who had lost their natural teeth, yet became powerful and effective witnesses for God in their communities despite their former weaknesses and frailties.

Consider a Prostitute

To adequately consider the type of person God uses, we need to first carefully study Romans 8:20 and its meaning. Here God states powerfully that “the creation [all humankind] was subjected to frustration [the futility of human life without God and His purpose] not by its own choice but by the will of the One [God] who subjected it in hope that the creation itself [all humankind] will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.” You and I did not choose to be born *as we are*, but God intends to take us as we are and then *transform us into what He wants!* It is God who works in us. It is not our natural abilities that will net us God’s blessings and salvation!

Every human being ever born fits into this description and category. Out of the *billions* of human beings who have been born, the Mighty God selects a few individuals during this present lifetime to train and qualify for His family (study Matthew 13:10–17; John 12:40; Romans 11:7; 2 Corinthians 3:14; and 4:4). Christ taught clearly that *no one can come to Him unless and until God the Father calls that person* (John 6:44). As Romans 8:19 states, the whole creation is anxiously waiting for the spiritual sons of God (that’s us!) to be delivered from the confines of this weak mortal flesh (see also verses 21–22). Then, as verse 23 states, even we who are called and chosen now (God’s “firstfruits”) groan and travail within ourselves as we strive and wait for the redemption of our mortal bodies. Our calling is not an easy one, but what God offers us is definitely worth the struggle.

But let us now consider a prominent prostitute whom God used mightily and whose life is recorded in the Bible. This prostitute is none other than “Rahab the harlot,” mentioned in the book of Joshua. Rahab had heard of the miracles wrought on behalf of Israel, and *had become convinced* that Israel’s God was the true God (Joshua 2:10–11). When she met the spies, she decided, at the *risk of her own life*, to cast her lot with the Hebrews and their God. We find that she eventually married into a leading family of Israel. Therefore, *unknown to her at the time*, she became an ancestress of Boaz, of David, and of Jesus Christ. What has God planned for you? (Study 1 Peter 2:9–10).

Do you believe Rahab ever entertained the slightest notion that Israel’s *Messiah*—Jesus the Christ—would come through her lowly background? She was a “nobody” in a country going nowhere with no future. Yet, she became the ancestress of the Christ. This is truly a *success* story that should encourage us all!

Compare your status with Rahab the prostitute. Yet look at what God did *by and through her* once He gave her the chance to join His “called-out ones”! It is clear that, *like Abraham*, she *believed God* once He revealed Himself to her. Carefully study James 2:25, where God reveals that her *trust* in the God of Israel was *counted as righteousness to her the same as Abraham’s trust in God was counted as righteousness for him* (compare Galatians 3:6–11; see also Hebrews 11:11). Rahab’s belief and trust in God not only spared her human life (and the lives of her family), but enabled God to use her as an ancestress to the Christ. It also enabled her to be counted as one of God’s elect and named among the saints of God. Do you think for a moment that her life would have become what it did if she had said, “Oh, I am nothing but a lowly prostitute and just worthless. God could never use the likes of me.” Would God have used her as He did if that had been her attitude? How can God use you or me if we develop such a negative attitude?

The clear message from the Bible is that God is taking weak and frail and sinful human beings and purging and refining them so that they can go from this temporary human existence into *glorified sons of God, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ* (Romans 8:14–17). If you are a weak, frail, and flawed human being, then you are definitely a candidate God can use to develop into one of His children in His Kingdom—His Family. What God wants from each one of us is a yielded and submissive attitude and spirit that *trembles at His Word* (Isaiah 66:2).

What God does *not* want from us is a doubting, fearful, and negative attitude (see James 5:3–8). Then, as verse 9 states, the person in humble circumstances is to take the right kind of spiritual pride in his high position (his *high calling* from God). As verses 10 and 11 show, the rich should realize that their earthly riches will all perish and are of no value spiritually. Then, as verse 12 shows, we who *stand the test* will receive the CROWN OF LIFE—immortality in the Kingdom of God.

Once Rahab was given the chance to accept the God of Israel, she renounced her former life and country and followed God. That is exactly what God expects of each of us. He calls us at this time regardless of our status or condition in life. Let us take special note of the fact that God inspired James to use the example of Rahab in the same light as Abraham (study James 2:20–24). Then verse 24 shows clearly that Rahab’s faith—her

belief, trust—in God *placed her in the same category as Abraham*. Because of his faith, Abraham was called “God’s friend” (verse 23). Obviously, Rahab also became “God’s friend” because of her faith. Did not Jesus state that we, too, are called “friends” (John 15:12–17)?

If you are a friend of God, if your faith is counted as righteousness (as were Abraham and Rahab’s faith), and if you are a child of God, an heir of God and joint-heir with Christ, then *why would you ever allow discouragement to get you down?*

It is certainly probable that before God called and used Rahab, she most likely considered herself of little or no value. Her life consisted of selling her body for enough money to buy food and clothing—a *dead-end job with no future!*

What About You?

What about you? Is your faith in what you are as a mere human being? Or, are you concentrating on Almighty God and the purpose He has for your life? Do you actually see that it is God working in you both to will and to do His pleasure (Philippians 2:13)? Now read verse 14: “Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless [counted as righteous] and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you [are supposed to] *shine like stars in the universe.*”

God does not rate one human being above another. Christ died for *all*, regardless of their status in life, their race, or their country of origin. I am privileged to work with brethren in Kenya, Africa, and am overjoyed to remind them that they have access to that great God of the universe no matter how meager their circumstances, and that it is not in this temporary human life that we have hope, but in that *glorious life that is to come* in and through Jesus Christ. I believe this to the very depth of my being, but must trust God to reveal these great truths to His people through the Holy Spirit. I am only a flawed human being, and must rely on God to grant those He is calling to grasp and understand these spiritual things. I can close my eyes and envision those few brethren there in Kenya hungering and thirsting for the words of God. I trust that all of you reading this also hunger and thirst for these truths and that you will see that you personally and individually have so much to be thankful for in this calling.

We may be considered weak, flawed, and foolish by the “intelligent” people of this earth. But our wisdom is from God. We have been blessed with the understanding of the truths and purpose of the Almighty Creator God. The rich and the mighty of this world are not worthy to be compared with what God is doing in and through us. Remember that it is *not* God who considers us foolish. God has already invested millions of years in this purpose of equipping us for His family. *If God’s Holy Spirit is enabling you to grasp and understand what I am saying here, then you are extremely important to God. You are important enough that He sent His Son Jesus Christ to die a horrible death to pay for your sins (and mine) so that we together can become members of His family. That is how important you are to God the Father and to Jesus Christ.*

If you allow yourself to become discouraged and begin to disdain your calling, then you may be repudiating God and Christ and what they are doing for, in, and through you. If you allow yourself to become discouraged and live in despair, then you need to throw yourself on God’s mercy and implore Him to help you grasp the *magnitude* of your calling. An example of this type of disdaining attitude is found in the bad example set by Jonah (see the book of Jonah). Jonah obviously never did get the picture. He never was satisfied with his calling and his responsibility from God. He did not like it when God showed mercy on the people of Nineveh. Most likely he resented the fact that God forced him to carry out this mission even after he had made it plain to God that he did not like the task. The lesson for you and me is that there is no indication in the entire Bible that Jonah ever repented of his lethargic, complaining, and negative attitude toward God and His mission or his lack of compassion for the people of Nineveh. God clearly shows that the “unbelieving” are in the same category as the cowardly, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic (sorcery), idolaters, and all liars (Revelation 21:7–8). Note that such people qualify for the lake of fire, which is the second (final) death. Thus, if we hope for salvation

and eternal life, we must overcome these human tendencies toward negativism, defeatism, discouragement, and despair. We are to ask God for the help we need! Thus, as God states through James, we demonstrate our faith by and through our actions, as did Abraham, Rahab, and all the others (James 2:20–24). A person cannot claim to have this type of faith unless his actions back up his claim. As verse 20 states, “Faith without works is dead [useless]!”

What is your attitude toward the tremendous calling God has given to you? Do you truly appreciate the fact that the great God of the universe has taken a hand in your personal life? Do you actually realize that God is giving you the opportunity to JOIN HIS FAMILY AS A SPIRIT BEING?

Importance, continued on next page

Do you believe Rahab ever entertained the slightest notion that Israel’s *Messiah*—Jesus the Christ—would come through her lowly background?

The clear message from the Bible is that God is taking weak and frail and sinful human beings and purging and refining them so that they can go from this temporary human existence into glorified sons of God, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ (Romans 8:14–17).



*Importance, continued from previous page*

Have you grabbed hold of this calling with all your might? How long has it been since you carefully studied the eleventh chapter of the book of Hebrews to see how your foregoing spiritual brothers and sisters accepted their calling and excelled in it? Do you truly appreciate that the great God has rescued you from your empty and meaningless human life by giving you the chance to enter His family (see 1 Peter 1:13–19)? How are you showing your appreciation for this calling? Do you *see God* in your calling, even though you might not be considered “important” by other humans?

**JUST HOW BADLY DO YOU WANT SALVATION?** If you carefully and prayerfully study the scriptures contained in this article, you will readily see what God requires of you and me.

You are *extremely important to God* even if you personally do not realize this importance at this moment. You may live in a hut in Africa, or a run down farm in Australia, or a slum in New York. But you are still just as important to God as was Abraham, Daniel, David, and all the others. God placed Rahab the prostitute in the same category as He did Abraham, as we have seen. He said that Rahab’s faith—her trusting belief—in God was counted as righteousness with God. Your faith in God will also be counted as righteousness with God, as was the case with Abraham and Rahab.

Why then do you become discouraged and despair of life? Why then do you complain that your struggles are just too much for you to handle? Could it be because *you* are trying to carry the load *by yourself* rather than allowing Christ to carry it for you through the power of the Holy Spirit? If you are discouraged and frustrated with your calling, then obviously you do not see how important you are to God and thus do not fully understand your calling. You need to go to that private place of prayer and fall down before God and ask Him to give you that understanding and that faith to trust Him. The holy people of old met the tests they faced because they realized that any suffering in this physical life that involves our calling is not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be given to us who grow and overcome (Romans 8:18–27). You should also carefully study Romans 8:14–17. You should understand that God foreknew you as a person and that He wants you to be in His spirit family—that He called and converted you and sanctified you and will *glorify you* as a *child of God* (see Romans 8:28–30).

What shall we think then? If God is for us—and *we have seen that He is*—then WHO CAN STAND AGAINST US OR DEFEAT US (Romans 8:31–34)? Who, then, can separate us from the love of God? Is there any power in heaven or on earth that can take us out of God’s hands (Romans 8:35–39)? All the beloved people of God of old were still living by faith when they died (Hebrews 11:13). As a result of their *living by faith*, God was not ashamed to be called their God (verse 16).

The great God of the universe is holding out to us a reward and a future that totally defies human description or understanding. Abraham saw this so clearly that he was willing and able to immediately go where God led him without question or hesitation. Jesus said in John 8:56 that Abraham desired to see Christ’s day (the salvation that comes through Christ), and *he saw it and was glad*. Abraham was able to grasp a vivid image of what God was holding out to him and was able to totally respond to God. Do you personally envision the salvation God holds out to you as did Abraham?

Daniel saw it so clearly that being thrown into a lion’s den did not cause him to lose faith. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego saw this calling so clearly they were willing to face that fiery furnace and come out without a singed hair on their bodies. Yet, on the other hand, God allowed literally thousands of others to be martyred through horrendous deaths as He equipped them for this great reward—so they could receive a “better resurrection” (Hebrews 11:32–38). Some were so destitute (if you think *you* have a meager existence) they wore sheepskins and goatskins;—were destitute, persecuted, and mistreated—wandered in deserts and lived in mountains and caves and holes in the ground (verses 36–38). But they were all commended for their faith in God (verse 39).

I encounter people who admit to me they are barely able to hang on—and they do not do that very well. Some try to cut off all contact with those who can help them spiritually in their efforts to survive and overcome. Brethren, if you are converted—if you have God’s Spirit (Romans 8:9)—then you will understand that we are all in this struggle together. We are brothers and sisters to each other, and Christ is our elder brother who lived this life and understands our struggle and has promised never to allow us to be tested beyond what we can stand (see 1 Corinthians 10:9–13). He intercedes for us (see Hebrews 7:22–25; 2:17–18; 3:1–3). God does work through human instruments to help other humans. You perhaps could use a little guidance from a fellow human being in going to God through Christ (our High Priest) to receive grace to help in that time of need (see Hebrews 4:14–16).

My sincere prayer is that each one of you reading this can and will understand just how important you are to Almighty God, and that you will be able to go to Him and trust Him for your needs.

In closing, let me ask you point blank: JUST HOW BADLY DO YOU WANT SALVATION? If you carefully and prayerfully study the scriptures contained in this article, you will readily see what God requires of you and me. God does not change. What He required of holy men of old He also requires of us.

Romans 12:1 explains this in brief by saying that we are to present our bodies to God as living sacrifices. Elsewhere in the Bible we learn we are to live by every word of God. We are to live as Jesus lived. We are to grow and overcome in our daily lives. We are to put God first and foremost in our lives and in our thoughts. We are to learn to go to God to overcome our nagging human problems. God will provide everything we need, but we must go to Him in faith, believing that He will keep His promises (James 1:2–8).

Let us all resolve to throw off all the weights and shackles that drag us down and too often defeat us.

God be with you! Ω

*Bill Glover lives in Eugene, Oregon with his wife Esther. A 1957 graduate of Ambassador College, he was ordained to the ministry in 1961. Mr. Glover worked at the church’s headquarters in Pasadena, California for 14 years. He is co-founder of The Living God Ministries. Mr. and Mrs. Glover have 8 children, 29 grandchildren, and 22 great-grandchildren.*

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### New Outreach For the Work

**S**pecial greetings to all of you! We hope you are doing well and finding some time to relax with your family and friends over the summer months.

There is some exciting and promising news we want to share with you regarding our ongoing efforts with evangelism. As you know, over the last decade, the *Armor of God* television program has been our primary means of “preaching the Gospel and making disciples of all nations.” This has been complemented with church visits, special Bible Study weekends, limited public access television, and the ongoing service each of you provides with your weekly preaching and ministry. It’s been a “God- blessed” effort, one that continues to make a difference.

In recent years, our discussion for reaching “the world” has included consideration of the growing impact and accessibility of the Internet. We sensed this might be the way to go, but because of resources available to us (financial and manpower), we remained primarily with television. And to that cause, we are indebted to the many people working and supporting the *Armor of God* program, for their devotion and dedication to producing the *Armor of God* telecast so faithfully year after year. Many thousands of people have been benefited by the telecast, and as a result have come to know the truths of God’s Word they never knew—and for that we are grateful to God for the opportunity to preach the Gospel with clarity.

No doubt, television brought us into many thousands of homes—but because of our limited exposure to major channels, we were also left out of many thousands of homes. But that is about to change. In a recent meeting, the Board of Directors evaluated our public media effectiveness and decided that now is the time to take our evangelism in a different direction—away from broadcast television and on into the worldwide web. We will maintain our television presence internationally, along with Internet television syndication.

As you know, earlier this year we added Jeff Reed to our staff. As part of his responsibilities, he has passed along information about the seemingly unlimited potential there is to reach a global audience through the Internet. He has also demonstrated that he has the “know how” to give our ministry and church greater exposure to millions of more homes via the utilization of Facebook, YouTube, and such things as “Google Ad Words.” To accomplish this, we have decided to allocate funding to develop our CGI presence on the worldwide web. Therefore, we are discontinuing our contract with the *Word Network* no later than the end of September. Production of the *Armor of God* program will remain Bill’s responsibility, where his experience, creativity—and now combined with Jeff’s engineering, Internet marketing, and videographer skills—will transform the *Armor of God* into a “high-definition” production of programs, specials, and documentaries. These productions will be made available on our web page for distribution via DVDs and letter offers. All will remain free for the asking to our viewers.

From all we’ve considered and evaluated, this is an “open door” that will allow us to continue in a greater way doing what God has blessed us to do. Though it may take some time for us to establish a more prominent web presence, we are confident of the outcome.

Feel free to share this news with those you serve. We will also include this letter/announcement in the *News of the Work* and in next month’s letter to our donors and subscribers. Please join us in praying for God’s direction with this promising means of fulfilling His will.

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# Church News

**T**he London Fellowship Group was honoured to have Mr. George Ramocan, the Consulate General of Jamaica, currently stationed in Canada, a long-time elder serving the CGI, and currently pasturing the fast-growing Toronto congregation, as our guest speaker.

His sermon was timeless. His message enlightened us as to the fact that, even if we commit a grievous sin, as David did, and repent and confess that sin, we may still pay the penalty, but by confessing and repenting, we will gain God's mercy and save our eternal life.

Our regulars were ALL in attendance, and our numbers swelled to 22, including visitors and guests.

Mr. Ramocan was able to stay and fellowship after the service, enjoying our regular fare of coffee, sandwiches, and desserts, with a special treat of pizza!

We wait patiently for God to give us the increase.

*Submitted by Leland and Loretta Jasper*



**George Ramocan addressing the London Fellowship congregation**

## Newsletter from Church of God International:

Dear Friends and Brethren:

**S**acrifices and offerings of various kinds have been a part of religious practice since time immemorial. Cain and Abel brought offerings to God (Genesis 4:3-4). Upon leaving the ark after the flood, Noah "built an altar to the Lord... and offered burnt offerings on the altar" (9:20). Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob offered sacrifices to God (22:13; 31:54; 46:1). In the ancient world, sacrificial offerings were considered a normal and essential part of worship.

In the time of Moses, God gave instructions for the establishment of a priesthood and elaborate sacrificial system. The five types of sacrifices were 1) burnt offerings, 2) meal offerings, 3) peace offerings, 4) purification offerings, and 5) reparations offerings. Leviticus 1-7 provides a detailed description of Israel's sacrificial system.

Charles Groce, in a message entitled *Lessons From the Sacrifices*, points out that the Old Testament sacrifices were gifts that the offerer brought to God to express gratitude, devotion, and complete surrender to God. The sacrifices, Charles notes, were both regulatory and revelatory. They gave form to the nation's corporate worship, while continuously reminding the Israelites of the holiness of God, the nature and enormity of sin, and the need for access to God and forgiveness of sins.

Charles describes each of the five types of sacrifices and explores the valuable lessons we can learn from a study of them. The sacrificial system came to an end, but the lessons it brought are still valid today. Request your free copy of Charles' sermon (available on CD), and see how an ancient system of worship brings to light timeless truths.

Thank you for your prayerful support for this ministry. We hope to hear from you soon.

*Vance A. Stinson*

## From the Home Office

Thank you for your comments and suggestions regarding the *News Of The Work* (NOTW); please keep them coming. We will continue to forge ahead with ideas and innovations to improve our communication and information flow.

We have several items online ([www.cgi.org](http://www.cgi.org)) for your review. Please share this information with those you serve. Thank you.

We would also like to share with all of you a couple of comments we have recently received. These comments really remind us of how great a blessing it is to have the opportunity to provide so many with the principles of truth found in the pages of the Bible. Please keep praying that God would bless all our efforts and endeavors as we seek to serve Him.

*Denise G. from TX* writes: "Thank you for all your inspirational teachings."

*Wanda T. from Colorado* writes: "I want to thank you so much for the work you are doing. I know what you teach is the truth, and I am so grateful to have this opportunity to learn it. I have received some literature from you, and I thank you very much."

## Infuse Magazine

*Infuse* magazine is looking for more writers for the magazine. The *Infuse* magazine is an awesome opportunity to share the Word of God with many young people who desire to strengthen their relationship with God. Please contact *Infuse* Editor Adam Boyd at [wboyd56@yahoo.com](mailto:wboyd56@yahoo.com) for more information.

## Infuse Retreat 2013

The CGI Detroit congregation hosted *Infuse*, and a great time was had by folks of all ages. This was one of the best attended *Infuse* retreats in years, and everyone is looking forward to getting together at the Feast and next year's retreat! A more detailed write-up will be included in an upcoming issue of the *Infuse* magazine and *The International News*.

*Mike James*

**Just out!** Be sure to request your free booklet, *A World In Transition*, by Bill Watson. This is the long-running series from *The International News*, now in booklet form.

## Coming up in the next issue of The International News:

A complete write-up with pictures of the honorary occasion of Mr. Ben Chapman's 50 years in the ministry ("Already?" he said.)

**What's going on in your local church area?** Having combined services? Public Bible studies? Potlucks? Church activities? Celebrations? Memorials? Visiting ministers? Birth or death announcements? Plans for getting *The Armor of God* on a free Public Access television station in your area? Let us know, and perhaps we will publish it under "Church News." We'd love to hear from you!

*The editor*

## Planning Ahead:

This is just a reminder that, all too soon, it will be time once more to limber up your digits and fire up your imaginations!

**November 15th** is the **DEADLINE** for the next issue of *The International News*.

Please remember, this is *your* newspaper; we couldn't publish it without *you*! It is an old but true proverb that "Many hands make light work!" We really do need *your* input.

Please send your articles, fillers, obituaries, births, pictures, Church News, Feast Reports, etc. to [vancestinson@cgi.org](mailto:vancestinson@cgi.org) or [lloyd Cary@gmail.com](mailto:lloyd Cary@gmail.com) (or better, to *both*). We hope to see you soon... *in print*!

Thank you in advance.

*The editor, The International News*



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Church News

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The Women’s Retreat Held at Christmount

Submitted by Morgan Lytle



“The Spirit-Led Woman” Southeastern Retreat 2013

**B**eautiful mountain views, lush greenery, and flowering plants were the backdrop for a wonderful June weekend at Christmount, in Black Mountain, North Carolina. The majesty of God’s awesome creation was visible all around us. With plenty of sunshine and great temperatures, the location could not have been better suited for our women’s retreat.

With “The Spirit-Led Woman” for a title and “Fruit of the Spirit” as its theme, we felt God leading us in every aspect of our weekend, which began with the joyous arrival of the ladies who were attending. Our first group activity was our evening meal in the dining hall. With many greetings and lots of smiles and laughter, we enjoyed a meal prepared just for us. After the meal, we met in the multi-purpose room for the weekend’s opening presentations by two ladies from North Carolina, Dianne Sain and Audrey Bost. The topic of their interactive presentations was “Engaging Spiritual Treasures.”

Our Sabbath day began in the dining hall, with breakfast first on our agenda. With three Texas ladies scheduled to speak throughout the day, we began with morning presentations prepared by Lisa McComb and Brandy Webb. Lisa’s presentation was titled *Loving Well*, and Brandy shared a presentation titled *Beauty Does Matter*. Lunch was another opportunity to fellowship as we enjoyed the afternoon meal prepared by the staff at Christmount, followed by a worship service with a sermon presented by Mike Nolen on *The Bride of Christ*. The mid-afternoon to early evening hours were open for fellowship while enjoying the numerous hiking trails, enjoying the view from a rocking chair on the balcony, or simply resting. At dinner time, we gathered together once again for a delicious meal, followed by our evening session with Nancy White presenting *What Is a Proverbs 31 Woman?*

Sunday morning came too soon, and after enjoying our final meal together, we made our way to the multi-purpose room for our final session. Our presentation for Sunday, *Proving the Mind of God Through Science*, was given by Ina Stevens of South Carolina. We brought the retreat to a close with an opportunity for everyone to express their thoughts on the most positive points of the weekend, giving us all another opportunity to get to know each other just a bit better before we said good-bye.

Throughout this very spiritually uplifting weekend, we were blessed with musical selections specially chosen by Vivian Rust to go along with each presentation topic. We were also very blessed to have Heather Poma and Vivian Rust share their individual vocal talents with some very beautiful special music.

The weekend of June 28 through June 30, 2013 was a unique opportunity for 26 women in God’s church to join together in fellowship, to share with one another, to serve one another, and to build and strengthen friendships. I thank each and every one who participated!

The Spirit led us and the Fruit was plentiful! Ω

*Submitted by Pam Nolen*



Update on Toronto Workshop

**A**fter Sabbath services on July 20th, the *Family, Discipleship, and Prayer and Mercy Ministries* presented to the membership, a workshop on *Christian Hospitality*. This workshop was designed with role play to raise the level of awareness and examine how to practice Christian hospitality as we grow in spiritual maturity.

Pastor Horane presented an overview of Christian hospitality: its meaning, examples from the Bible, and the Christian duty to show hospitality. He highlighted the Greek for the word “hospitality”—*philoxenos*, meaning “loving strangers”; and 1 Peter 4:7–11, which calls on us to “show hospitality without complaining.” He concluded that Christians must sacrifice their time and resources in acts of hospitality to advance God’s work.

A heart of love was determined to be the key ingredient for practicing biblical and hospitable behaviour, and prayer is required to obtain that love through the Holy Spirit.

*Submitted by Elizabeth Archampong*



# The Power to Defeat Satan

by Pastor George Ramocan

**T**he Bible is clear that the Christian walk involves a war against Satan, the enemy, who seeks to destroy our souls. Ephesians 6:12 tells us:

“We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”

The Bible is equally clear that God has equipped the saints with an even greater power to defeat the enemy. It says in 2 Corinthians 10:4:

“For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.”

It takes spiritual weapons to bring down spiritual strongholds. Spiritual weapons include godly love, forgiveness, obedience, and longsuffering. With these weapons we defeat evil with good.

God knocked down the wall of Jericho, only after Joshua and the children of Israel obeyed His voice to walk around Jericho for seven days—once every day for six days, and seven times on the seventh day (Joshua 6:1–20).

**Defeating The Enemy**

In a physical war, the enemy seeks to control key targets like bridges, roads, airfields, and television and radio stations. Whoever controls these key targets will win the battle.

In a spiritual war, the key targets the enemy seeks to control are the heart and the mind. The enemy uses weapons like the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:16–17).

Your heart is the seat of your emotions, and your mind is the seat of your thoughts and reason. If the enemy gets control of these positions, you have lost the war. The mind and the heart work together. “As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.” You must therefore guard your heart and mind from the enemy. This is the meaning of self-control.

**The Battle For Your Mind**

Every thought that enters our minds has three possible sources:

1) Our thoughts can originate with *ourselves*. God created us with the ability to produce thoughts independent of any other source. They are our thoughts.

2) Our thoughts can come from *God*. God speaks into our minds by His Spirit which teaches, reminds, counsels, and reveals the will of God to us. An example of this is seen in Ezra 1:1. When God was ready to return the captive Jews in ancient Babylon to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple, He put it in the mind of Cyrus, king of Persia, to proclaim the freedom of the Jews. Ezra 1:1 says: “... the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom...” God stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, causing him to do His will. Recall that Cyrus was not a man of God; he was not an Israelite; he was the King of Persia or Babylon. It is God’s authority to speak to whomever He will.

3) The third source of our thoughts is the *enemy*. The forces of darkness also speak to us by appealing to our human nature of SELF-centeredness, lust, greed, vanity, jealousy, envy, resentment, competition, strife, bitterness, and hate. An example of this is seen in Matthew 16:22–23 after Jesus revealed that He came into the world to die. Peter took Jesus aside and began to rebuke Him.

“Never, Lord!” he said. “This shall never happen to you!” Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men.”

Jesus wasn’t calling Peter “Satan.” Jesus was speaking directly to Satan, who stirred up Peter to say what he was saying. Peter was a channel through which Satan spoke to Jesus. Jesus, who knows the spirit world, replied directly to Satan.

**Test the Spirits**

It is therefore important to “test the spirits to see whether they are from God ...” (1 John 4:1–3).

*Power, continued on page 9*



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