

Watch January 1995

[Just What is GATT and What Will it Do?](#)

Recently, a lame duck congress managed to "fast track" through both houses the agreement on "GATT." Little coverage was given in the media. Millions of Americans know little or nothing about it. The government trumpeted to the public that GATT would mean more jobs for Americans; that it would create a level playing field in global commerce; that it would greatly increase America's ability to export to other countries. Is all this euphoria really true? And what of the "World Trade Organization" which will be created by member nations in Geneva? Here is the shocking truth about GATT and the WTO, and what Bible prophecy says about the future.

[Why the Laying On Of Hands?](#)

Described as a foundational doctrine of the New Testament church, it is performed after baptism, in prayer for healing, and in ordination. Why? What does the ceremony signify?



[VISION/News Trends](#)

[Why Study the Bible?](#)

Beginning with this issue, we offer you a new way to study your Bible. Using this magazine, your own Bible, a cassette tape recorder, and a notebook, you can radically increase your knowledge and understanding of the Bible. Read on to see how it works.



[What I say to, I say to everyone: Watch! \(Mark 13:37\)](#)

[Jesus Christ Did Not Come To Bring Peace](#)

Shocking? Yes, it is! Millions suppose Christ came to "save the world." They believe He came to die for the sins of mankind, yet do not know what sin is. Millions think He came to establish the "Christian religion." Almost no one knows why Christ really came to this earth, even though Christ plainly says so! He came to qualify as the King of kings and Lord of lords; to disqualify the present evil world ruler, Satan; to preach the good news of His coming world-ruling government; to call and train His disciples to proclaim that message; to build His church, or His group of "called-out" ones; to commission His church to perform the work of preaching the gospel and caring for the flock; to qualify to become our High Priest; to die for the sins of mankind; to be raised from the dead three days and three nights later; to ascend to His father in heaven, where He awaits the time of His return as conquering King.

[WORLD WATCH](#)

A monthly review of current events from the perspective of biblical prophecy.

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Jesus Christ Did Not Come To Bring Peace

by Garner Ted Armstrong

Peace on earth good will toward men." How many times have you heard it? At Christmas, millions of church-going, professing Christian people attend church services, concerts, performances of Handel's stirring "Messiah." Millions decorate their homes, their lawns, or even their rooftops with scenes of the Christ child in a manger; with wise men, shepherds, Mary, and the angels.

They suppose they are doing this in honor of Christ's birthday, which they erroneously believe was on December 25. History proves Christ was born in the autumn, very likely on the First Day of the Feast of Tabernacles, not in the middle of winter.

God's Word shows Christ was "tabernacling" (dwelling only temporarily) in human flesh (John 1:14); that He came to this earth for many important purposes.

What were the real reasons for the very Person of the Godhead Who said, "Let there be light," and "Let Us make man in Our image," to become human flesh? Study carefully the entire first chapter of the Gospel according to John for proof of Christ's pre-human state.

Did Jesus Christ come to give us a new and different religion? Did He come to bring peace? Did He come to save the world? Did He come to revive the synagogue? Did He come to heal everyone He could, cast out every demon He encountered, teach every person He met, and convert as many as possible?

No, believe it or not, Jesus Christ did not come to save the world_then! Had Jesus Christ decided to "save" the world, He would have done it. Instead, He told His disciples: "Think NOT that I am come to send peace on earth: I came NOT to send peace, but a sword [a symbol of violent death; symbol of war!].

"For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

"And a man's foes shall be those of his own household" (Matthew 10:34-36).

Are you mature enough; is your mind open, and enquiring enough to really think about that scriptural passage? Do you believe it? Christ said it. He meant it. He did not come to bring peace during His physical lifetime of "tabernacling" in human flesh.

But what of the oft-repeated phrase, "peace on earth"? It is a blatant mistranslation in the King James Bible of 1611. Most marginal references clear it up: The Oxford KJV margin says: "Or, on earth peace among men of good will, or, on earth peace among men in whom He is well pleased" (Luke 2:14).

Christ Himself tells you He did not come to bring peace to this earth. Eventually, He will, but that time is in the future.

This Is Not God's World

Many people hope for a time of great ecumenism, a time when all men of good will, working together, can bring about a vast Christian revival which will influence governments, and bring the world peace at last.

The Bible prophesies no such thing.

Instead, God's Word says that Satan the devil has deceived the institutions of this world (Revelation 12:9); that he is the "prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2), and the present "god of this world" (II Corinthians 4:4). As such, Satan is the architect of this world's institutions, its governments, its societies, and its religions.

The world is in total spiritual darkness, deceived by Satan. Jesus Christ did not attempt to penetrate the veil of darkness and deception that clouded most men's minds.

Christ's disciples, wondering why Jesus spoke in puzzles and riddles to his audiences, asked Him why He did this. Millions have supposed Christ's parables were to make the meaning plain by giving His audiences cozy little stories to illustrate His point.

But Christ told them: "It is given unto you [His disciples] to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given...therefore I speak unto them in parables [puzzles]: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

"And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias [Isaiah], which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and should understand with their heart, and should be CONVERTED, and I should HEAL them!" (Matthew 3:10-16).

Do you understand what Jesus plainly said?

Christ was telling them He was making a conscious decision to speak in puzzling terms, LEST those people should understand, and become converted! He quoted Isaiah's prophecy which said the masses would have become deceived; that their ears would hear words, but not understand the deep, spiritual intent; that they had closed their eyes to God's truth!

Not only did Jesus say He had come to a world of spiritual darkness and deception, He plainly said He was not sent to the whole world then, only to Israel!

Read it, in your own Bible. Jesus was approached by a Gentile woman, a Canaanite, who desperately begged Him to heal her daughter, to cast out a demon. But Jesus did not so much as answer this poor woman! He "answered her not a word" (Matthew 15:23).

Are you prepared to believe what your own Bible says, instead of what mainstream evangelicals have always supposed or what you have always assumed?

What your Bible tells you is that if the Canaanitish woman had not shown an example of unusual tenacity, Jesus Christ would have turned a deaf ear to her appeals; He would have gone His way, and paid no attention whatsoever to her desperate cry for relief for her daughter! Even the disciples wanted to be rid of her. "And His disciples besought Him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.

"But He answered and said, `I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the House of Israel.'
"Then came she and worshipped Him, saying, `Lord, help me.'

"But He answered and said, `It is not meet [proper, fitting] to take the children's bread, and cast it to dogs'" (Matthew 15:23-26).

At this point, had the Savior of all mankind said such a thing today, in our "politically correct" society, this dark, swarthy woman would have fiercely bridled: "What!?! You're referring to me and my kind as DOGS? What are you, a racist, white male, homophobe, bigoted religious fanatic?"

Sure she would.

Think about it.

His analogy said that parents of children who were sitting at the dining table would hardly take food from their plates, and toss it to their pets! The meaning was clear. He was only sent to the "lost sheep of the House of Israel," and it was not yet time for God's grace to be extended to the Gentiles.

But the Canaanitish woman did not react the way millions of her female countrywomen might react today.

Instead, she persevered, "Truth, Lord [notice the agreement! notice the respect!], yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table."

"Then Jesus answered and said, unto her, `O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto you even as you will.' And her daughter was made whole from that very hour" (Matthew 15:27,28). God's Word proves that Jesus Christ did not come to save the world then! Yet, millions assume He made every effort to heal, rescue, save, convert every human being He came across. They think, quite falsely, that He was engaged in a desperate saving mission, preaching, teaching, appealing, healing_trying to get the people saved!

They only think so because they are complete biblical illiterates.

Christ Did Not Come To Do Away With God's Law

Millions have supposed Christ came to do away with the law! They imagine, because of the deceptive propaganda of liberal churchmen over the centuries, that Christ set Himself against what they suppose were the harsh, unyielding, "legalistic" old laws of the "Father God of the Old Testament," that He came to abrogate that old law, the Ten Commandments.

They think He came to give us some "new" commandment having to do with "love." In the minds of millions, this "love" each of us is to have toward our fellow man is all that is necessary, once we "receive Jesus," profess His name, and "believe" on Him.

Today, millions "believe on Jesus," but they do not BELIEVE Him! They do not believe what He said!

He said: "Think NOT that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill" (Matt. 5:17). Christ lifted the law to a spiritual plane; applied God's Ten Commandments in a spiritual sense, showing that the law was broken even by thoughts of the human heart, and not by the breaking of the letter of the law only.

Of course, millions of people, including countless thousands of churchmen, have no special quarrel with nine of the Ten Commandments. Millions believe it is well and good to honor one's parents; to avoid stealing, or murder, or lying. But the Fourth Commandment? For real biblical insight into God's law, write immediately for your free copy of our booklets, *The Ten Commandments*, and *The New Covenant_Does It Do Away With God's Law?*

Christ spoke continually about God's Ten Commandments. He upheld the law against murder and hatred (Matthew 5:21); said it was a sin, breaking the command against murder, to call a brother by a hateful name (Matthew 5:23); said the commandment against adultery was intact (Matthew 5:27); observed the Passover (John 2:13,23; Mark 14:1-16); observed the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day of the Feast (John 7:10-14; 7:37).

Paul wrote, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit: "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good," and concluded: "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin" (Romans 7:12,25).

John wrote: "And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. "He that saith, 'I know Him,' and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (I John 2:3,4).

"By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments.

"For this IS the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:2,3).

Jesus Christ said: "The Sabbath was made for man [He did not say, "the Jews"], and not man for the Sabbath:

"Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27,28). Which day is the "Lord's Day"? The Sabbath.

Christ said: "Why call ye me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46), and told His disciples: "Not everyone that saith unto me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21).

No, Christ did NOT come to "do away with the law"! Yet, millions of blinded, deceived, biblical illiterates suppose He did!

Christ Did Not Come To Establish A New Religion

Millions suppose Christ came to do away with all things "Jewish," and to establish a new, and very different, religion_that of "Christianity."

But, as we just saw above, Christ continually upheld, by His teaching and by His example, the law of God! And why not? For, after all, He WAS the Divine Agent of the Sovereign God in heaven Who gave Moses the law!

Read it! "In the beginning was the Word [Greek: Logos, or "Spokesman"] and the Word was with God [Greek: Theos, equivalent to the Hebrew Elohim, which is a plural word], and the Word was God.

"The same was in the beginning with God.

"All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made...He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name...and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:1-14).

Any fifth-grade child can understand this plain statement of Scripture! The One Whom we know as Jesus Christ WAS the One Who said "Let there be light"; Who said "Let us make man in our image"; Who sent Moses into Egypt; Who wrote the Ten Commandments with His own finger; Who called Abraham; Who dealt with the patriarchs and prophets.

Now, think what this truth does to the false theology of millions who think Christ came to "do away" with the law and the "Old Testament"! Notice further: "God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

"Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, Whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds" (Hebrews 1:1,2).

Jesus Christ IS THE GOD OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. Not that there is no reference to both Father and Son in the Old Testament, for there is. However, your Bible plainly tells you that Jesus Christ of the New Testament is the Member of the Divine Family of the Old Testament Who DID THE CREATING!

Did Christ, as millions suppose, change God's truth, abrogate the Divine law, do away with any requirement to obey God?

"For I am the ETERNAL [Jehovah], I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed," God said.

Jesus said, "Ye shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven, and ye yourselves cast out" to the Pharisees. How? Did people "get saved" under Moses back then? But Moses was not even born when Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lived.

Did God somehow CHANGE the manner in which men may please Him, serve Him, believe Him, obey Him? He says not. "Jesus Christ, the SAME, yesterday, and today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

No, Christ did not come to establish some "new religion"! He chided the Pharisees for their burdensome human traditions which they had added to the laws of God, while upholding the law. He said: "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?...Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,

"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.

"But in vain do they WORSHIP me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:2-9).

Jesus said it is possible to worship Him, to laud Him, to praise Him, to sing about Him, to "believe on Him," to adore Him, to love Him, and to feel all kinds of worshipful emotions about Him, and to do it ALL IN VAIN!

How?

By "appropriating" Christ, by claiming to "believe on Him," and by "accepting" Him as Savior, but REFUSING TO OBEY Him! Millions worship their fantastic concepts of Christ, but reject the Ten Commandments of God (which that same Christ wrote with His own finger), claiming they are "done away."

Thus, they have substituted the hundreds of years of churchianity, of Catholic and Protestant tradition, for the truth of God from His Word.

Continued Next Issue

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Just What is GATT, and What Will It Do?

by Garner Ted Armstrong

The "General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade" was a gigantic document, representing a stack of paper as tall as a man.

It weighed three hundred eighty-five pounds. Do you suppose staffers in the hundreds of offices of members of the House of Representatives staggered down hallways, carrying five or six copies, delivering them to the desks of our elected officials?

That's right. Three hundred eighty-five pounds! The "General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade," or GATT, is twenty-six thousand pages of text. It was crafted by hundreds of lawyers from over one hundred and twenty nations over more than seventeen years!

It is written in technical, legal jargon, covering hundreds of subjects having to do with such things as patents, trademarks, consumer protection, agriculture, the environment, trade, shipping, investment, service industries, banking_ anything and everything that pertains to global trade among nations.

Do you suppose each one of the members of the House who voted on this gargantuan "agreement" (which is not an agreement, but is a treaty, as you will see) ever read it? How long would it take you to read, and completely understand, twenty-six thousand pages of legal jargon?

The truth is, it is extremely unlikely that a single one of the hundreds of elected officials who voted on GATT ever read the text! They may have perused digests of the material; may have heard oral briefings about it; may have studied certain segments they thought were important, but probably not a one of them ever read it.

And that includes the president of the United States.

In December, 1993, a five-hundred-page analysis of GATT-WTO was released. Even though this is but a fraction of the size of the GATT treaty, it is very doubtful any of the members of the House or the Senate, or the president or his aides read all five hundred pages.

As a case in point, when consumer advocate Ralph Nader was testifying before the House Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee, he held up the five-hundred-page synopsis of GATT during his remarks. The chairman of the committee, Sam Gibbons (D-Florida), asked "What's that?" When told it was the digest of GATT-WTO, Gibbons laughed and said, "No, I haven't read that thing. I've read this." He pointed to a thin summary of the digest.

Traditionally, if U.S. interests seem threatened, the American Congress has been able to attach clarifications or reservations to various treaties. But with GATT-WTO, this will be illegal. Once signed, the treaty has the force of law.

Article IV, Sec. 5 says: "No reservations may be made in respect to provisions of this agreement. Reservations in respect to any of the provisions of the Multilateral Trade Agreements may only be made in accordance with the provisions set out in those agreements. Reservations in respect of a provision of a Plurilateral Trade Agreement shall be governed by the provisions of that agreement."

Congress cannot interpret, change, alter, or annotate any reservations of any kind to the massive document, which has the weight and legality of a treaty, despite its title of "General Agreement." Article IX, Sec. 2 says: "The Ministerial Conference and the General Council shall have the exclusive authority to adopt interpretations of this Agreement and of the Multilateral Trade Agreement...The decision to adopt an interpretation shall be taken by a three-fourths majority of the Members."

There are those who argue that the adoption of GATT-WTO by the congress is a betrayal of the Constitution. The Constitution says the congress, and only the congress, can regulate trade. However, with GATT-WTO, the congress has handed over to the executive branch, the administration, the authority to regulate trade, and by signing the agreement, the president hands over authority to regulate trade into the hands of a new global authority, the WTO. With the creation of the "World Trade Organization," in Geneva, Switzerland, with hundreds upon hundreds of bureaucrats from more than one hundred nations, a world government of trade will have been put in place.

This will become the most powerful economic body in all history, more powerful than the World Bank, the IMF, or any other economic institution that affects global economic conditions. As such, it is an unconstitutional handing over of sovereignty. How? Simply by seeing dozens of small, insignificant "nations" (like the "Cape Verde Islands," or Dahomey, or Rwanda, or Togo) appoint these thousands of bureaucrats, who will then administer the provision of GATT-WTO, it places all those bureaucrats outside the reach of the American voting public.

The World Trade Organization will quickly become the executive, administrative monster created by GATT. GATT itself will fade into the past, as this world-ruling trade organization begins to function. Some have called it "The Supreme Court of Commerce." Others have labeled it "The United Nations of Trade."

The WTO Will Become a Political Organization

The vast bureaucracy that will form in Geneva will be made up, after all, of human beings from dozens of nations. Each one will come from among the top economists, presumably, in his own nation. One cannot help but wonder about what this means, when brooding over just who the "top economists" from Haiti, or Rwanda, or Burundi, or Brunei, or Papua New Guinea might be. Once ensconced in Geneva, will all these appointees then lose all their nationalism; their cultural, linguistic, religious, social, and economic bias; their patriotism, if not chauvinism? Will each one, from the president of the organization down to the lowliest bureaucrat, divest himself of all prejudices toward his own country, or trading bloc? If he comes from a country that is essentially anti-American; a country which rarely, if ever, has voted with the United States in the U.N. General Assembly, will he suddenly change his opinion about the U.S.?

For decades, the U.N., that farcical paper tiger looming above the East River in New York, largely supported and paid for by the taxpayers of the United States, has searched high and low among tiny, comparatively insignificant, sometimes third world countries for its secretaries-general.

Never could an American or a Russian become secretary general of the U.N. Why? Because of cold war politics. Neither would either of the two competing superpowers tolerate a secretary general from any of the "aligned" countries. Therefore, out of consideration went all the Warsaw Pact countries, France, England, and many others.

So the U.N. was led then, as now, by men from countries outside the two great competing powers and their crony nations. Hence, secretaries-general came from Iceland, or Norway, or India.

Who will be chosen as top dog in the new world-ruling economic body? Already, the lines are being drawn. Already, squabbles loom over such a choice. The United States and Germany are already deeply divided over the choice to be made; neither side is budging, according to news reports.

How many times have we seen economic considerations bring about various trading blocs, which in turn bring about political cooperation, or even political integration?

Will the WTO eventually become a political force in the world? Will it turn to the blue-helmeted soldiers of the U.N., or create an entirely separate armed force of its own to enforce its rules and regulations, or to punish violators of its laws?

The E.E.C. is a primary case in point. As we have pointed out in these pages for many years, an eventual creation of a "United States of Europe" will result, if not directly from the E.E.C., then from its fragments, following a global economic disaster; the impoverishment of the American people, and a great depression striking Europe, Japan, and the whole world.

The WTO is nothing more than an attempt at establishing a world government of trade to dictate trade (admittedly, according to the fine print in twenty-six thousand pages of documents in the agreement) among all nations.

The agreement will begin to supervise and control many areas which were formerly the province of national governments. Such things as imports, exports, banking, tourism, culture, investments, agriculture and environmental considerations, insurance, shipping, health, food and safety_a host of important concerns which are outside of tariffs, and which were always the purview of the U.S. government, will now fall under control of the WTO.

Amazingly, the Reagan and Bush administrations were enthusiastically behind GATT, just as they were behind NAFTA. Repeatedly, the official line of the government has been that GATT will dramatically free up trade between countries all over the world by lowering traditional barriers to trade, such as tariffs, surcharges, duty and the like, and avoid such abuses as "dumping" (wherein a country sells exported products to a foreign customer at lower prices to stimulate sales), quotas, or even sanctions and embargoes.

What happens if and when an individual nation breaks one or more of the provisions of the treaty?

How Discipline Will Be Maintained

Traditionally, when nations cheat, other nations retaliate. Quotas may be imposed, higher tariffs demanded, or "surcharges," which is merely a monetary penalty, attached to the goods imported from a nation found "dumping" its products.

For decades, as the United States has watched its former enemies of World War II, Germany and Japan, skyrocket upward to superpower status, feelings have risen to red-hot when it was perceived unfair practices were being followed.

Within recent months, all-out trade war (which in reality has been waged for years in a quiet struggle) was averted between the U.S. and Japan, when the United States once again accused the Japanese of locking out American products, while America is an open market for Japanese products.

What happens, after GATT-WTO is put in place, when such disputes emerge?

The WTO will be formed from a so-called "ministerial conference," which really means all the members of WTO by a different name. All these members will vote on one from

among their number who will be a director-general. It will be up to this man, no matter from which nation, cultural, socio-economic, or religious background, to appoint the staff of the WTO.

What if the director-general is an Islamic fundamentalist? How would Israel, not to mention all the West, react? But what if he were to be an Israeli? How would oil-rich members of OPEC react?

The selection of the director-general will create large problems. Those problems are already heating up.

The director-general, once having chosen his staff, will be actively involved in the selection of a "General Council" from among all members, which will supervise the trade policies of all nations, including the United States, to insure they conform to the rules of the WTO.

A "Dispute Resolution Body" will be selected. The proposal is to keep this body small and functional, that it consist of only three men. It is possible the general council will opt for five. The WTO staff will compile a list of "experts" in all the fields of global trade, and a massive bureaucracy of panels will maintain surveillance, implement rulings and regulations, and authorize retaliation against any nations determined to be in contravention. There will be more than one "Dispute Resolution Panel," for it is anticipated that many disputes will occur. There will be created a "Dispute Settlement Board," and a chairman appointed, who will serve for four years.

Any changes within the WTO and its labyrinthine bureaucracy would have to come by majority vote, but each nation would have only one equal vote. That means that the United States' vote against or for some perceived inequity could be cancelled by the vote from Togo, or Bangladesh. The majority of the WTO will be made up of nations which have consistently voted against U.S. policies in the General Assembly of the United Nations. Will dozens of these third world nations suddenly change their stance toward America?

Any decision taken by this majority would have the force of law upon the entire membership. That means decisions by third world, often tiny, insignificant nations like Haiti would have power over United States policies.

This does not frighten or alarm politicians in Washington, who smugly believe that nations always act only in their own best interests, and that it is in the best interests_especially in the case of "developing" countries_not to rock the boat of global commerce, since they have the most to gain.

But what about the OPEC embargo on oil in the early '70s? That clampdown cost the Arab nations hundreds of millions, or billions, of dollars a day! Yet, their virulent hatred of Israel and the U.S. overrode the economic considerations.

Only a matter of weeks prior to the Arab oil embargo against the West, a leading political figure in Washington said the Arabs would "never use oil as a political weapon."

Will the WTO always act impartially, and without bias?

Hypothetically, if the WTO finds in favor of an accusing nation, say, Japan, and the U.S. proves unwilling to conform to some rule or regulation it believes is unfavorable toward the U.S. economy, the "Dispute Resolution Body" will decide to impose trade sanctions upon the United States of America.

When the U.S. has imposed sanctions, such as those against South Africa, or Haiti, or Bosnia, it has traditionally done so against nations which could pose no threat, economically or militarily, against the U.S.

Of course, sometimes such sanctions are highly selective, and "back channel" discussions between the realists in the various countries' intelligence agencies hasten to inform their governments of the real picture. It was not widely known that one of the world's major producers of high-grade chromium, which is essential in stainless steel and a host of metals, absolutely vital to the aerospace industry, was the former Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. Nor was it known that Zimbabwean chromium had, as its only access to seaports, the South African Railway and South African seaports.

No matter the sanctions, since South Africa is also the major producer of gold and diamonds, the huge companies, such as DeBeers, continued to do "business as usual."

But what if nations against which the U.S. has imposed sanctions, such as South Africa, or Bosnia, or Haiti, had powerful military forces? What if they possessed nuclear weapons? What if they possessed the means to deliver those weapons to New York, Houston, and Los Angeles? Obviously, the U.S. would think long and hard about imposing sanctions, which represent a first step toward embargo, which represents a major step toward a complete blockade, which results, depending upon the military capability of the nation concerned, in war.

Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941 because the U.S. clamped down an embargo on all shipments of vital raw materials, such as iron and oil, to Japan. On a peacetime footing, Japan had enough stored reserves to survive for approximately two years. But on a wartime footing, with vastly more oil and materials demanded, she could survive as a nation for only one year. Since the British, Dutch, and Americans controlled the vital resources in the "Dutch East Indies" and Malaysia of tin, oil, and rubber, Japan immediately slashed at the American fleet to buy time, then moved south to capture those resources.

Taken to its ultimate, ridiculous limits, the WTO, through its "Dispute Resolution Body," could impose fines, then restrictions, then sanctions, and then embargoes against the U.S. for real or imagined "unfair" trade practices.

If the U.S. balked, believing its own economy would be hurt, would hundreds of thousands of blue-helmeted soldiers from over one hundred countries then descend upon the United States to enforce the policies of the WTO?

Short of such a far-out scenario, of course, would be war; a scrapping of GATT-WTO, just as Hitler tore up the infamous "Treaty of Versailles" when he sent troops into the Rhineland.

The Subtle Transfer of Technology and Wealth

As nations have become more and more industrialized, more technologically developed, they have become more and more dependent upon world trade.

If a nation were almost entirely agrarian, such as some of the small third world countries, it would be almost entirely self-sufficient, growing its own foodstuffs, maintaining only a "cottage" industry.

But millions upon millions of Americans, Europeans, and Japanese have become addicted to a lifestyle that is supported by technology. With automobiles, double ovens, blenders, radio and television sets (often two or more in the same household), VCRs, CDs, telephones, telefax machines, personal computers and the like, has come virtual dependency, like dependency on a drug. It is virtually inconceivable, in the "developed" countries like Europe, Japan, and the United States and Canada, to imagine living without such energy slaves.

Providing all these technological marvels has become the fuel that causes the global economy to function.

Millions of Americans drive an automobile made in Japan or Germany, wear suits made in Italy or China, neckties made in Taiwan, shirts and dresses from Canada, watches from Japan, and shop for drink, food, and vegetables from Argentina, Mexico, and Britain.

The "rust belt" of Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, to name a few of the states, of closed, abandoned old factories, steel mills, coke furnaces, and the like, has given way to America's most popular exports, hamburgers and blue jeans.

From a manufacturing nation, the U.S. has become a nation of "service" industries, such as quick food restaurants, banking, insurance, health care, and the like.

The last time I checked, we ranked seventeenth in ship building, behind tiny Finland! Though the U.S. built thousands upon thousands of ships to help win World War II, the Japanese are now the largest ship builders, and many nations outstrip the United States in ship building. Now, machine tools, rolling stock, and, increasingly, large, transoceanic aircraft are being produced abroad. European "Airbus" has become a major competitor with McDonnell-Douglas and Boeing. Nearly all of the aircraft presently being flown by

the "commuter" airlines which have been much in the news of late because of disastrous crashes are manufactured in Britain, or Brazil, or Sweden.

One need only remember the long gas station lines of the early 1970s to understand how an embargo imposed upon the U.S. would quickly cut off the flow of goods and services upon which millions of American families depend!

Does Bible prophecy have anything to say about the WTO, and the future of American trade? Does the Bible say anything about our global economy; about worldwide commerce and business? Does it say anything at all about a time when many of us will be literally unable to buy, or sell, or engage in business?

The United States in Prophecy

Here are a few excerpts from one of the most vitally important books you will ever read, entitled, *Europe And America In Prophecy*. I urge you to write immediately, or call (903) 825-2525 for your own free copy.

As you study that book, you'll need to ask yourself these questions:

"Is the world's greatest nation ignored in Bible prophecy? If it is, how could prophecy be considered valid? How could prophecy be inspired, if the United States of America is nowhere mentioned?

"Surely, if Bible prophecy is relevant to our times, NOW, then it MUST mention the United States! Many small, less significant nations are mentioned: Ethiopia, Libya, Syria, Egypt. Students of prophecy know that many Middle Eastern nations are identified, some of them by their modern names. What about Great Britain, Canada, Australia, the Commonwealth? For that matter, what about the nations in Europe?"

The United States of America survives as the world's only superpower. In preceding centuries of our modern era, the British Commonwealth was the world's superpower. The blessings of abundance, of wealth, of international power, and global domination are the result of promises God Almighty made to Abraham, recorded in your Bible.

Read the promise made to Abraham when it was reaffirmed to his son Jacob (whose name was later changed to Israel): "And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 28:14).

Obviously, this great promise clearly stated that Abraham's children would "spread ABROAD" from the ancient land of Palestine, that they would ultimately be found in all directions_north, east, south, west_from Palestine! They would be numbered in the countless MILLIONS_as the dust of the earth in number!

This promise transcended the narrow national boundaries of ancient Pales-tine. This promise was GLOBAL!

God did not promise that Abraham's children would become just a small, struggling nation in the Middle East! This is not a description of the modern nation of Israel_a nation surrounded by hostile Arab nations, beset by terrorists, struggling for its very survival.

Reconfirming His promise again to Abraham, God expanded it in Genesis 22:17,18: "That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

Once again, note well that Abra-ham's seed were to become innumerable! They were to possess the strategic land and sea gates that would ensure their prosperity, and provide protection from their enemies!

Your Bible identifies those nations who have received the blessings God promised to Abraham. Without the key which identifies these nations, you won't be able to understand the fully one-third of Scripture which is prophecy.

Get the book Europe and America in Prophecy immediately.

"Besieged Within Our Gates"

Anciently, an attacking army arriving at the site of a major enemy city would be confronted with a system of walls, probably protected by moats, battlements, drawbridges, and the like. The Bible speaks of the "sieges" of various cities, particularly Jerusalem, prior to its destruction by Nebuchad-nezzar of Babylon. Large "siege trains" of men, animals, and "machines" would laboriously draw near. Then, "trenching" would begin, to inch closer and closer to the defensive city walls. Implements of the siege were towers on wheels, so bowmen could be raised to a level equal to defenders on the walls, catapults, which could hurl flaming bundles of oil-soaked rags inside the city, and shielded battering rams to break down the gates.

But long prior to the actual attempt to break into the city, the city would be surrounded, and all flow of goods cut off. Only those cities that had their own water supply, and which had stockpiled sufficient food, could survive for long.

Famine, and death by starvation, was the result (Isaiah 29:1-8).

Today, as in the case of Japan after the American, British, and Dutch embargo of 1941, whole nations can be cut off from their sources of supply. Japan was then and is now a "bicycle" economy. She possesses few adequate sources of raw materials, and must import practically everything. She must then export manufactured commodities in order to purchase food, and more raw materials.

Japan imports oil, coal, iron, cobalt, copper, manganese, aluminum, potash, tin, rubber, dozens of raw materials used in modern manufacturing.

The time was when the United States was virtually self-sufficient in most raw materials. Not any more.

Today, the U.S. is utterly dependent upon foreign supplies to fuel its massive economy. The U.S. imports about half of its oil, and massive amounts of rubber, chromium, steel, tin, cotton, and other raw materials. Primarily, the imports into the U.S. represent consumer goods, such as automobiles, electronic devices, textiles and agricultural products.

Should a major trading partner decide to punish the U.S. for perceived "unfair trade practices," in the Arab oil embargo in the early '70s, the effects to the U.S. economy would be immediate, and massive.

One of the most chilling scenarios is that of retaliation by the Japanese, to whom we have "exported" huge amounts of our debt. Should the Japanese suddenly decide to quit purchasing government paper to help finance our burgeoning deficits, our economy could collapse. Billions of dollars have flowed into our chief trading partners' pockets. "Eurodollars" have steadily flowed into European countries; "Petrodollars" have flowed like a golden stream into oil-rich Arab countries and sheikdoms. Consider tiny Kuwait, over which the U.S. fought a major, and hugely expensive, war. Due to its massive income from oil, Kuwait has free education, free medical care, free social security, and there are no taxes save duty. Presumably, GATT will eliminate even those.

The "Al Sabah" family has complete control. There is no vote in Kuwait. Mostly, it is populated by Palestinian Arabs, and native Kuwaitis number only 28 percent. Per capita income in 1989 was almost \$20,000! That makes Kuwait very possibly the richest country in the world.

"It's all about oil," was the cry of detractors against the war in the Gulf. "There is no oil there," was what the same detractors said as they watched the U.S. vacillate over Bosnia, as more than 200,000 human beings were being slaughtered.

Anyone remotely familiar with geopolitics in the last three decades or so understands how the U.S. has gone to great lengths to avoid offending the Arab nations of the Persian Gulf, because of the rich oil reserves under their bleak, desert sands.

The more dependent the United States has become upon foreign imports, and the more dependent we have become on other nations' friendly purchase of our debt, the more vulnerable we have become to sudden shifts in the attitudes of our trading partners.

With the creation of WTO, the United States watches as a "new world order" of trade and commerce emerges which could mean over one hundred nations agreeing among themselves that the U.S. should be punished for real or imagined infractions of its rules.

What happens to the U.S. if oil-rich Arab states, always irritated over U.S. support of Israel, decide to impose another embargo on oil? What happens if Zimbabwe cuts off our supplies of chromium? What happens if the Japanese refuse to continue propping up our debt? Writing a forward for the World Almanac, NBC's John Chancellor said, "The federal budget is being destroyed by entitlement programs...The U.S. is the world's largest debtor, and the interest payment on the national debt in 1991 was larger than the entire Gross National Product of Mexico...."

Speaking of our sagging infrastructure, deteriorating education, and inability to compete with competitors elsewhere in the world, he said, "These things are crippling the United States at an extremely dangerous time. A new world order is taking shape that will be commercial and highly competitive. The end of the Cold War and the reduced fear of nuclear war is making superpower rivalries obsolete. The next century will be dominated by economic rivalries between trading blocs, in Europe, North America, along the Pacific Rim [Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore], and in the Caribbean Basin.

"In this new order, winners and losers will be determined by the quality of a country's infrastructure, the stability of its economy, and the health and education of its workers." For decades, I have warned of impending trade war between the U.S. and former enemies, specifically Germany, at the head of an emerging "United States of Europe," and Japan, the supergiant of the Orient.

Why? Because all the signs are there, and because there is a bizarre inevitability about trends of history. Recently, a leading Japanese industrialist boasted that "it required the British fifty years to achieve world empire status_it took the Japanese only five."

God warns His sinning, heedless, God-defying, law-breaking people, "But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:

"Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field.

"Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store.

"Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.

"Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out.

"The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be dest

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VISION

by Mark Armstrong

News Trends

- [NATO Paralyzed](#)
 - [Yeltsin's Risky Role Reversal](#)
 - [Middle East: Progress Stalls](#)
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NATO Paralyzed

Bosnia represents a colossal failure for the U.S., the U.N., and the NATO alliance. The continuing carnage has NATO paralyzed, the U.N. issuing vehement but meaningless denunciations, the U.S. floundering with no defined position.

Six weeks ago it made the rounds as a humorous prediction. Why not send Jimmy Carter to

mediate the Balkan war? And why not? Every other crisis he's intervened in has cooled, at least

temporarily. As if by magic, former President Carter again emerged from peace negotiations

victorious, this time with a cease fire in the Bosnian conflict. He announced prisoners of war on

all sides would shortly be released, and that the Red Cross would soon be allowed access to

prison camps.

In truth, the hatred driven chaos in the Balkans is no nearer resolution than before. The Bosnian

Serbs have, for all practical purposes, won the war. Peace accords requiring mutual recognition

of borders have been on the table for some time. The problem is that these plans would require

the Bosnian Serbs to vacate more than a third of the territory they hold, and that apparently is

not in the cards, as they have succeeded in intimidating the U.N. and Western powers, calling for

their withdrawal.

The Carter agreements come at a time when U.N. peacekeeping troops are sporadically

subjected to unprovoked attack by Bosnian Serbs. Requests for retaliatory air strikes have been

denied, reportedly by U.N. commanders who thought better of even passing the request on to

NATO.

One explanation is that air strikes give Bosnian Serbs an excuse for further attacks. The fact is

that Serbs act with total impunity, in open defiance of the U.N. and NATO. Foreign policy

interests of the U.S. and its European allies seem to be in conflict. Conflict related to the

phenomenal muddle that has characterized the West's response since the crisis arose some

three years ago.

Europeans generally have never been supportive of the creation of a national Moslem entity on

the soil of former Yugoslavia, and consequently have been unsupportive of any military plan that

would result in the creation of such a state. When Secretary of State Christopher originally

shuttled between European capitals to formulate a military option, he was shunned. The prospect

of engaging in a military conflict to influence the outcome in Bosnia, sure to complicate relations

with Russia, unstable as that situation is already, is completely out of the question from the

European point of view.

Europe remains fractious, unable to conduct unified foreign policy, yet individually and

collectively cynical of America's capacity to lead. The institution of NATO has entered a period of

gridlock from which it may not recover.

The venerable organization which served transatlantic interests well since the end of World War

II is confronted with circumstances for which contingency plans were never drawn.

Given the modern view that the U.S. can no longer afford the protection of Western Europe, and

recent near total reliance on the U.N. to provide a response to every arising eventuality, the

questioning of NATO's relevance, and future, is unavoidable.

Yeltsin's Risky Role Reversal

Few in the West have ever heard of Chechnya. But events unfolding there may prove significant in several far-reaching ways. Recent reports show the results of air raids on the city of Grozny, civilians scurrying in all directions, bombed out buildings, victims of shrapnel sprawling in the snow. Chechnya has no regimented military, only rebellious civilians with guns. Many have taken to the foothills, preparing to engage the invasion of Russian troops in protracted guerilla warfare if necessary.

Russian Prime Minister Yeltsin has taken the politically risky decision to invade the breakaway

republic, rejecting strong opposition from the majority of democratically elected government

officials, including a number of his most respected reform-oriented supporters. An estimated

40,000 Russian troops, backed up with tanks and helicopters, have taken offensive positions in

the southern enclave.

The violent military response seems out of character for Boris Yeltsin, the man who not so long

ago was quoted saying that violence "will bring about a new crisis in Russia itself." But that was

in response to Lithuania's bid for secession, and the dynamics and geography are different this

time.

Foremost is the fact that Chechnya is predominantly Moslem, just north of Iran and Turkey. It

has long been viewed as a barrier to those hardcore Islamic states to the south, doubly so

because Russia's main corn producing region lies just to the north. Just as Russia supports the

Bosnian Serbs in their efforts to prevent the creation of a national Moslem entity on their flank,

Yeltsin, as some see it, is playing to the rise of nationalist sentiment at home with his get-tough

stance.

Further evidence of a more nationalist posture can be seen in his adamant opposition to the

Clinton Administration's proposal to offer limited NATO membership to newly independent East

European republics. It remains to be seen whether his political stature will be strengthened by

this new tack, or whether it will lead to his demise.

Former U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Jeane Kirkpatrick summed up the newly opened rift

between Washington and Moscow with the following statement:
"Yeltsin's remarks (against

NATO ties for former Soviet satellites) make clear that the easy assumptions of Russian

partnership with the United States are giving way_or have already given way_to the resurgence

of a view of foreign policy that assumes rivalry and competition."

Middle East: Progress Stalls

Despite the passing around of peace awards, the idea of a comprehensive peace between Israel and the Arab world remains elusive as ever.

Palestinians reportedly refuse to hold elections while Israeli security forces remain in the

territories. The push to move Israel and Syria toward accommodation in the Golan Heights,

highlighted by President Clinton's controversial November visits to the respective capitals, has

gone nowhere.

The current round of peace negotiations in Cairo are stalled in deadlock over the lack of

movement on all fronts. Peace prizes notwithstanding, the glowing optimism of recent months,

fueled by the Rabin/Arafat accord signings and images of King Hussein and Prime Minister

Rabin lighting each other's cigarettes, seems to be giving way, once again, to the intractable

realities of the region's geography and history.

In a recently televised roundtable discussion, White House correspondents were asked to name

their most memorable experience on the job. Two cited the Rabin/Arafat ceremonies.

Memorable, yes. Consequence-ual, not very.

info@cgi.org

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Why the Laying On Of Hands?

by William H. Ellis

The ceremony of the laying on of hands is a foundational doctrine of the New Testament church. Notice what the book of Hebrews records: "Go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment" (Hebrews 6:1,2).

It was important for the church in Jerusalem to be reminded of the ceremony of laying on of hands. Of course, they were already familiar with the custom, mentioned many times in the Holy Scriptures_what we call the Old Testament, today.

Ancient Honored Ceremony

From the time of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the laying on of hands was a special ceremony which carried with it a specific meaning.

An excellent illustration is found in Genesis 48.

Joseph, the prime minister of Egypt, was told that his father, Jacob, was sick. So, Joseph brought his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, to Jacob to receive his blessing_and more! After repeating the promise of blessing God had given him (verse 4), Jacob told Joseph that Joseph's sons would become Jacob's sons: "And now thy two sons Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee in Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine" (verse 5).

These two sons of Joseph were legally adopted by his father Jacob and made Jacob's heirs along with Jacob's own sons. The transferal of the blessing and with it the status of legally adopted sons and heirs was ratified by the ceremony of laying on of hands (Genesis 48:13-16). Notice that Jacob deliberately crossed his hands during the ceremony so that Ephraim, the younger son, received the greater blessing and Manasseh, the firstborn, received a lesser blessing (verse 14).

Sons and Heirs According to the Promises

The ceremony of laying on of hands carried with it an intrinsic value. When Joseph saw his father's crossed hands, he thought some mistake had been made (verses 17-20), but Jacob had been deliberate in his action. Once the legal adoption and the passing of the blessing to these new heirs was ratified by the laying on of hands ceremony, the decision was final. So important was this simple ceremony that had it not been carried out by

Jacob and backed by the power of God, the nations of the United States of America and the British Common-wealth could not have achieved world influence.

Even when a blessing was deceitfully gained, the finality of the blessing to sons and heirs is apparent in the case of Jacob himself and his older brother, Esau.

Read the account in Genesis 27.

Rebecca knew that Isaac's blessing of sonship and heirs had intrinsic value, and she connived to get the best for her youngest son instead of the firstborn (verses 1-12). She was even willing to take any possible curse, which also was real and had intrinsic value, on herself if the scheme failed (verse 13). Through lying and deceit (verses 14-26) Jacob obtained the blessing as leading son and heir over his brother Esau (verse 27).

As soon as the blessing ceremony was complete, Esau came to Jacob to receive what he thought was rightfully his (verses 30-33). But it was too late (verses 34,35). A lesser blessing was reserved for Esau, who had treated his birthright as firstborn and heir so lightly he had sold it for a bowl of soup (verses 36-40 compared with Hebrews 12:17 and Genesis 25:27-34). Examples of the laying on of hands ceremony are found in many places in the Old Testament. And, after all, it was the Holy Scriptures, the Old Testament, which was the only Bible the leaders of the New Testament church had as a guide for living a godly life.

In New Testament Baptism

After a truly repentant person is baptized for the remission of sins, the hands of the minister are laid on that still damp head and a prayer is said. In that prayer of faith, the Eternal God is asked to send His Holy Spirit to the believer. An example is given in Acts 19:1-7. Read the account in your own Bible.

Apollos was a Jew, born in Alex-andria. He was an inspiring speaker and well grounded in the Scriptures (Acts 18:24-28). Remember, the New Testa-ment had not yet been completed. He understood the ways of God from the Old Testament, but only knew about the manner of baptism which John the Baptist had practiced_the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins (Mark 1:4).

Aquila and Priscilla heard Apollos speaking to those gathered in the synagogue in Ephesus. They helped him to better understand the ways of God and the role Jesus Christ plays in the lives of Christians. He now understood from the Scriptures of the Old Testament that Jesus was indeed the promised Anointed One, the Messiah.

Apollos then crossed from Asia Minor, the Turkish coast today where Ephesus was, to the Grecian province of Achaia, to the major city of Corinth. There he proved from the Old Testament that Jesus was the Messiah to the Jews who lived there (I Corinthians 3:5-6).

Receiving God's Spirit

Remember, the artificial divisions of chapters in your Bible were added by editors to make it easier to study. The account which begins in Acts 18:24 continues without interruption through Acts 19:7.

After Apollos had gone on to Corinth, the Apostle Paul visited Ephesus and met those people Apollos had taught and baptized. Because Apollos had not known about the promised gift of the Holy Spirit, these people didn't either. They only knew about John the Baptist's baptism to repentance.

Paul explained that John the Baptist's message was that Jesus would come after him and that Jesus was the Messiah. Certainly, the explanation of Christ's death for sinners and resurrection to immortal life took some time, but it was welcome news to these truly repentant people. Undoubtedly, Paul also told them of Jesus' promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5) and the events of the Day of Pentecost when that promise was dramatically fulfilled (Acts 2:1-6). Certainly, Paul also explained what the gift of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit means: The adoption by God the Father of a repentant son into God's own family!

Writing to the Galatians, Paul makes this wonderful truth plain: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law [subject to the law], to redeem them that were under the law [subject to the law], that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Galatians 4:4,5).

Without repentance for past sin, for breaking God's law, and the redeeming blood of Jesus Christ, God the Father will not adopt us as sons. God won't adopt convicted law breakers. After repentance and the baptism which washes sin away, only then can we be God's legally adopted sons.

Paul continues: "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son: and if a son then an heir of God through Christ" (Galatians 4:6-7).

Adoption by God the Father

How is the Holy Spirit granted to repentant, baptized believers? When does the engendering power of the Spirit of God enter a newly baptized Christian?

At the ceremony of the laying on of hands!

Just as Jacob legally adopted Joseph's sons, so God the Father legally adopts repentant, baptized Christians as His sons with the ceremony of the laying on of hands!

In that moment, God places His Spirit in our hearts and minds and we become a member of His family, a legally adopted son.

Returning to Acts 19:5,6: When the repentant Ephesians heard these things, "they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came upon them; and they spake with tongues [foreign languages] and prophesied."

After baptism in Jesus' name, the ceremony of the laying on of hands confers the gift of the Holy Spirit. Read about it in Acts 8:14-19. Notice especially verses 17-19: "Then laid they their hands upon them and they received the Holy Spirit. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit."

Even wicked Simon the Magician saw that the ceremony of laying on of hands had an intrinsic value, and that through it the Spirit of God filled repentant, baptized, believers.

Not Yet Glorified Sons of God

Although Christians have the indwelling Spirit of God, we are not yet glorified as God's sons. Paul wrote to the Romans: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Romans 8:14-17). The phrase "Abba, Father" by which Christians who are God's adopted sons can easily address Him is a close, family form of speech. Today, we might say "Dear Dad." It is that intimate a relationship we, as adopted sons, have with our heavenly Father.

This deeply intimate relationship with God the Father is conferred on Christians after repentance and baptism by the ceremony of the laying on of hands. It is then that the Spirit of God is given and the adoption is legal.

But, as adopted children of God, Christians still await the fulfillment of the promise of being born into eternal life. As Paul wrote to Titus: "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:7). The promise of eternal life is to be given in the future_it is the hope of Christians.

Ceremony for Conferring Gifts and Blessings

In every case where the laying on of hands is administered, someone is set apart for a special purpose or blessing.

Notice when God chose a physical priesthood for the nation of Israel, they were set apart for the holy duties by the ceremony of the laying on of hands. Only a tribe set consecrated by this important ceremony could officiate in God's temple.

The event is described in Numbers 8:5-11. First the Levites were cleansed and purified (verses 6,7), a type of baptism, and an offering is made which takes away sin (verse 8); then the representatives of the tribes of Israel "shall put their hands upon the Levites: And Aaron shall offer the Levites before the Lord for an offering of the children of Israel, that they may execute the service of the Lord" (verses 10,11).

And in verse 14: "Thus shalt thou separate the Levites from among the children of Israel: and the Levites shall be mine," God said.

Throughout the Bible, the laying on of hands ceremony is used in setting apart individuals God has called to serve His people.

Joshua was selected to serve the people of Israel after Moses (Numbers 27:15-23). God instructed Moses to lay hands on Joshua to set him apart for service as a leader of the people (verse 18). And that is exactly what Moses did (verses 22,23): "And he laid his hands upon him, and gave him a charge, as the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses."

Joshua was given "a charge," a great responsibility to serve the nation of Israel.

In the New Testament, deacons were set apart for handling administrative details by the laying on of hands (Acts 6:1-6).

The apostles Paul and Barnabas were both separated, set apart, to accomplish the work they were called to do, by the laying on of hands (Acts 13:2,3).

In writing to Timothy, Paul emphasizes that the spiritual gift of prophecy (inspired speaking) was given to Timothy by the ceremony of the laying on of hands (I Timothy 4:14). The spiritual gift of inspired speaking was given to Timothy so that he could serve God's people.

Paul also warned that the ceremony is to be taken seriously. "Lay hands suddenly on no man" (I Timothy 5:22), wrote Paul. In the Revised Standard Version this phrase is translated: "Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands."

Spiritual gifts were bestowed in Old Testament times through the laying on of hands. In the case of Joshua we are told: "And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him" (Deuteronomy 34:9).

The Gift of Healing

One of the signs Jesus said would follow His servants would be the gift of healing, a gift granted through the laying on of hands ceremony (Mark 16:17,18). Christians are to

follow Christ's example. Even the rulers of the synagogue knew Christ used this ceremony in granting the gift of healing (Mark 5:22,23,41,42; Matthew 9:18, 24).

But can God heal even though the ceremony of laying on of hands is not performed?

Of course!

Read the incredible understanding of faith exhibited by the centurion in Matthew 8:5-13. Why was this man's faith so remarkable that Jesus said, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel," and marvelled?

Jesus was ready to go to the centurion's home to heal the tormented servant, but the centurion knew that might compromise Jesus by Him visiting a gentile's house.

What was so remarkable was that the centurion knew the meaning of authority (verse 9). If he told someone to do something, it had better get done! Without even saying so, by making that statement, the centurion acknowledged Christ's authority over disease and was admitting Jesus could accomplish the healing of his servant without actually laying hands on him (verse 13). At our Tyler headquarters, each week a special gathering of ministers is held. The letters of those who have written requesting prayer for problems, illness, or other needs are carefully prayed over. And although there is no laying on of hands ceremony with each individual in person, these prayers are honored by God Almighty.

Not all ceremonies of the laying on of hands are so weighty. Although each has an intrinsic value, some instances merely confer a blessing. Such is the case in the Blessing of Little Children (Matthew 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16).

The families that followed Jesus knew of the value of the ceremony of the laying on of hands (Matthew 19:13), and Jesus blessed children brought to Him (Mark 10:16).

The Blessing of Little Children is done by the Church of God, International each year following the Feast of Tabernacles in local congregations, following Jesus Christ's example. It is done by the ceremony of the laying on of hands, a foundational doctrine of God's Word.

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WORLD WATCH

by William H.

Ellis

A monthly review of current events from the perspective of biblical prophecy.

The Year In Review

As 1993 drew to a close:

Bosnia continued to endure attempts by Serbians at racial genocide, without substantial help from the U.N., Europe, NATO or the U.S.

An escalation of a global crime wave began with competition between the international drug cartels and a new international mafia, with its tentacles in Russia and Japan.

In Iraq, Saddam Hussein remained smugly defiant of the U.N. and the U.S.

It was discovered that North Korea probably has nuclear weapons and delivery systems. The Middle East peace signed by the PLO's Arafat and Israel's Rabin has not brought peace.

In Science:

Scientists acknowledged cosmic cataclysm as the most powerful force in Earth's history, confirming (they failed to admit) the biblical record.

Rivers of water vapor which each transport as much water as the mighty Amazon River were discovered in Earth's atmosphere.

Evidence of a Great Flood found in China, where water 1500 feet deep moved at 90 miles an hour was mis-dated by scientists.

The U.S. Midwest survived the greatest flood in millenia.

Mt. Pinatubo, a volcanic eruption in 1991 in the Philippines, launched more than 30 trillion pounds of rock, ash, liquid, and gas into Earth's atmosphere, along with 40 billion pounds of sulfur dioxide, raising the worldwide temperatures one degree and causing ozone layers to deplete. Earth's climates still reel from its effects as 1994 begins.

1994 In Review

January

In Sarajevo, Bosnia, 60,000 people have been wounded out of the remaining population of 300,000 who are besieged by Serbia, and the fighting continues.

An earthquake registering 6.7 intensity rattles suburban Los Angeles on January 19, but it is not the Big One! Sixty-one people died and over \$15 billion and property damage result. Aftershocks continued until December, 1994.

Record cold weather in the U.S. Northeast and Midwest kills 142 people.

February

U.N. forces are humiliated by the Serbian troops in Bosnia. Under U.N. eyes, 66 Bosnian civilians are killed, 200 wounded when Serbs deliberately shell a Sarajevo marketplace. U.S. and NATO back away from a showdown with Serbia.

Anti-American North Korea resists U.N. nuclear inspectors while building new 600-mile range missiles.

Gay rights political agenda is propelled into high gear by Hollywood productions and the actions of the U.S. president.

March

A zealot Zionist Israeli kills 40, wounds 150 Islamic worshippers at a mosque in Hebron, proving peace is not successful and terrorism affects both sides in the Mideast.

Uprising of disenfranchised peasants in Mexico continues as guerilla war.

Reports indicated North Korea, helped by China, has a new missile with a range of 2000 miles, capable of reaching U.S. Guam or the Philippines.

U.S. troops withdraw as failures in Somalia leaving the warlords of that stricken country in charge.

Gas emissions in January precede the eruption of Galeras volcano in Columbia on March 23.

April

Mexico's PRI presidential candidate is assassinated. Terrorism remains a tool of political change throughout the world. In Chiapas, rebels continue guerilla warfare.

U.S. embargos of Haiti fail to remove military coup leaders from power.

Prior to "non-racial" elections in South Africa, 100 people are killed in terrorist unrest in Natal province.

Following the "once in a millenium" U.S. Midwest flood of 1993, American farmers begin abandoning the heartland.

Ethnic racial war breaks out in Rwanda, tens of thousands are massacred while thousands more begin to flee the country.

Two separate Palestinian suicide bus bombers kill 12 Israelis, wound 44 others.

The resurgence of fascism enters Italian politics with one legitimate candidate claiming Mussolini was "the greatest statesman of the century."

May

Nelson Mandela wins all-race election in South Africa where tribal turmoil seethes below the surface.

Mt. Rainier, in Washington State, USA, spawns large mud slides earning the label "the most dangerous volcano in the United States," from wary scientists.

NATO threatens ultimatums to Serbia as attacks on Bosnia continue.

Haitians are machetted at home while military coup leaders' wives shop in Miami. The failure of the U.S. policy of sanctions destroys the lives of the poor while the rich remain unaffected. Mass murder and mass exodus continue in Rwanda; over 200,000 estimated dead as proof of organized genocide emerges.

June

North Korea continues to defy both U.S. and the U.N. pressures, but former President Jimmy Carter bridges a diplomatic gap.

On June 8, a deep-focus earthquake in Bolivia registering 8.2 in intensity rang the entire planet Earth like a bell with vibrations lasting for months.

Rwanda genocide continues as cholera and dysentery plague refugees in the hundreds of thousands.

AIDS continues to spread in the U.S. at the rate of 40,000 - 50,000 new cases a year. Distraction from the reality of the world's problems occurs when O.J. Simpson is arrested for double murder.

July

U.S. steps back from North Korea and imposes economic sanctions. Asia-watchers assess the U.S. loses "face," as North Korea's dictator dies, creating a vacuum in leadership which lasts until August.

Haitian political and economic refugees fleeing the military dictatorship at home are detained in U.S. camps and the U.S. threatens invasion of Haiti.

German armored units parade through the Arc d' Triumphe in Paris on Bastille Day.

French troops go to staunch the blood flow in Rwanda. Recognized as historically partisan, France flexes European muscle in a new European sphere of influence.

August

Of the 250,000 Rwandan refugees in Zaire's camps, 10,000 have already died. The remaining men, women and children are struck by a widespread outbreak of cholera. In just three months, an estimated 1 million Rwandans are dead in genocidal warfare.

Muslim terrorists continue international murder: 96 Jews killed, 200 wounded in Buenos Aires, Argentina; 21 Jews killed in Panama; car bombings hit the Israeli embassy and a Jewish charity in London as Jordan's King Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Rabin sign a peace accord.

NATO air strikes in Bosnia, few and far between, are ineffectual as the death toll of genocide reaches over 200,000.

Jurisdictional disputes arise over Jerusalem's temple mount. Vatican control is predicted and negotiated.

AIDS pandemic reaches 17 million worldwide and is predicted to reach 40 million by the year 2000. Asia and Africa are the epicenters of the spreading infection.

Proof emerges of Russian black market sales of weapons-grade uranium and plutonium in Germany.

From July 16-22, fragments of comet Shoemaker-Levy create million-megaton explosions on impact with Jupiter, scarring the huge planet.

September

Cease fire in the "troubles" of Northern Ireland leads to a cessation of that civil, ethnic, racial, and religious war, for a time. Tensions remain high and tempers are barely restrained.

The pope visits Roman Catholic Croatia attempting to influence parties to the genocide in Bosnia.

September 19, Rabaul volcano cones, Papua New Guinea, erupt displacing 45,000 people.

September 30, Kliuchevskoi Volcano, Kamchatka Peninsula, Siberia erupts.

October

October 4, 50 kilometers beneath the sea off the Kurile Islands north of Japan and south of Kamchatka, an earthquake measuring 8.2 in intensity creates a tsunami tidal wave which devastates coastal villages.

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter bribes Haiti's dictators to avoid further conflict and the U.S. occupies Haiti as the "thugs" go free.

Pneumoic plague in India spreads quickly from Bombay, New Dehli, and Calcutta to Sri Lanka and even to London, England.

Iraq's Saddam Hussein bluffs and threatens war again in Kuwait, but backs down in two weeks. Former Middle East combatants win Nobel Peace Prize as an Israeli soldier held hostage by Islamic fundamentalists is murdered. A week later another Muslim suicide bomber blows up a bus in busy downtown Tel Aviv killing 22 Israelis, injuring dozens of others.

North Korea stonewalls and intimidates the U.N. and the U.S. into a buy-out "peace" agreement while retaining secret weapons systems.

November

Jordan's King Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Rabin reach accords ending the state of war between their countries. Syria's Assad begins to speak like a lamb and even Iraq's Hussein offers a tentative olive branch to Israel as Arab fundamentalists' terrorist activities continue unchecked. Swinging to the Republican right, the U.S. Congress shake up sends mixed signals about leadership to an already skeptical world.

A lame duck Democratic U.S. Congress passes the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) ruled by the World Trade Organization (WTO) despite grave doubts of economists. The U.S. courts 18 Asian countries with trade concessions in setting up the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation group of 18 Pacific Rim nations.

Plans for expanding the North American Free Trade Agreement from Alaska to Argentina are made as the U.S. scrambles to secure its place in the world economic war which lies ahead. The U.S. pulls out of European embargo of Bosnia, putting pressure on the weakened NATO alliance and bringing into question NATO's continued viability.

December

Because of sloppy military field work, a U.S. helicopter flew "off course" into North Korean airspace where it was shot down. One crew member was killed, the other was held by North Korea. We are reminded how small incidents create the possibility for terrible war.

France extended its sphere of influence by dramatically rescuing victims of an airline hijacking from Algeria. France, a nuclear power, seeks to dominate Europe through its core relationship with Germany. Let us never forget that the Holy Roman Empire was once ruled by Charles the Great_in France known as Charlemagne and in Germany as Karl der Grosse.

As predicted in Twentieth Century WATCH, just outside of Mexico City, Popocatepetl volcano seems to be entering an eruption cycle. Citizen evacuations totaled 75,000 in late December. Continued earthquake activity off Japan's Pacific coast culminated in a jarring 7.5 intensity tremor requiring tidal wave and tsunami warnings for Japan's eastern coast.

In Australia, scientists discovered an entire grove of trees thought to have been extinct since "prehistoric" times. For botanists, the discovery was compared to finding a living dinosaur, a living fossil. Evolutionists admitted they really don't understand the earth and its environments. As we go to press with this January 1995 issue of Twentieth Century WATCH magazine, here's what to watch in the months immediately ahead:

increased independence of military action for Germany and France as the NATO alliance becomes dominated by Europe and the U.S. withdraws from it;

weather extremes and volcanic/earthquake activity increases creating destruction, poverty, and disease in more densely populated areas;

tensions in North Africa will increase as Islamic fundamentalists gain popular support;

concern over rising dangers posed by North Korea will lead to an expanded military "peacekeeping" role for Japan;

embarrassing political behavior in the U.S. will continue to weaken the power and international prestige once enjoyed by this last remaining "superpower."

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