



THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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

Fall 2009

A Millennial Controversy?

One of the Bible's more controversial scriptures is Revelation 20:4, the only text in the whole Bible that mentions the Millennium. This has generated a formidable debate over centuries of church history. The notion of Christ ruling on earth for a thousand years has not been a widely accepted view among most traditional Christians. Why the controversy? What is so difficult about the plain statement "...and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years"?

by Bill Watson



Bill Watson

Some years ago, while attending the Feast of Tabernacles, a very well-known minister made the opening statement of his presentation somewhat along these lines: "Now hold on to your

hats, all you former Worldwide Church of God people. I'm going to say something that may startle you. Ready? The Feast of Tabernacles *does not* represent the Kingdom of God!"

Admittedly, hearing that was startling, especially coming from this particular minister. But after letting it resonate a bit, it clearly became a challenging idea; and frankly, it did get me to

think—just how *did* the Feast of Tabernacles come to represent the Millennium? And furthermore, where did we ever get the idea Revelation 20:4 should be taken literally?

For many of us, this may seem a rather non-essential debate and relegated to the "boneyard" of past controversies like make-up, the Petrine doctrine (primacy of Peter), and born again. But wait a minute—consider this. Millions of Christian people who claim Christ to be the Son of God and their Savior, absolutely *don't believe* this plain teaching of the Millennium clearly mentioned in your Bible. How can this be? What is it that causes this "blindness"?

Contributing Factors

Many of us in the Christian Sabbath-keeping community are well ensconced in the understanding of Christ's thousand-year rule *on*

earth. However, the contrasting *false* idea of "going to heaven" upon death to be with the Lord, has indeed contributed to misinforming and deflecting many in the traditional Christian faith from understanding the truth about the millennial rule of Jesus Christ *on earth*. Without a doubt, the misdirected teaching of heaven as the reward of the saved has added mightily to the confusion about eternal life; but it's not the only contributing factor.

What many Christian Sabbath keepers don't realize is, there are *three* primary Christian teachings concerning the Millennium and how it fits within the salvific plan of God. Some of you may have heard of these terms while others of you haven't. But clearly, if we are going to understand the larger scope of this controversy, understanding these *three views* of the Millennium is particularly germane to this issue.

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The Feast of Trumpets—and Beyond!

God's Word says, "Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation" (Leviticus 23:24). Why? What does the Feast of Trumpets mean to us—and to the rest of the world?

by Lloyd W. Cary



Lloyd Cary

What is the *next major event for God's people*—in fact, for the whole world? Quite simply, people do not know because they do not understand their Bibles. In Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21, Christ details the general overall scenario for the world: religious

deception, wars, famines, disease epidemics, earthquakes, and so forth. These have been going on in ever-increasing intensity from the beginning. Christ said, however, "All these are the beginning of sorrows" (Matthew 24:8). Things were going to get worse! Much worse! Christ went on to warn that at the end of the age, "...there shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matthew 24:21).

God's holydays, as laid out in Leviticus 23, picture God's plan of redemption—what God is doing on the earth—from the Sabbath and Passover on through to the Last Great Day. (If you have not already done so, please send for our FREE booklet, *God's Seasonal Plan*, which explains each in great detail.) The first of these spring

holydays, Passover, the Days of Unleavened Bread, and Pentecost, have been fulfilled in history. The rest, the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles, and the Last Great Day, lie immediately ahead of us. And what awesome things they portend!

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

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

The Feast of Trumpets that we celebrate reminds us in advance of both the coming **Trumpets**, continued on page 3

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Benefits of Bible Reading

by Andrew Hall



Andrew Hall

The other day I was reading *Men's Health* magazine and the thought dawned on me that my spiritual life could be better if I spent as much time reading God's Word as I did on this. After the thought came to my mind, I began to ask myself why it would be beneficial to read the Bible and study it more often. I was utterly amazed at how much I (or anyone, for that matter) would benefit.

When you study the Old Testament, you will find that God placed a very high priority on His Word. People were expected to read it. This was especially true for kings and priests.

"And it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book from that which is in the custody of the priests the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, so that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them. So that his heart may not be lifted up above his brethren, and that he does not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or to the left, to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children, in the midst of Israel" (Deuteronomy 17:18-20).

This shows many benefits of regularly reading God's Word. The first one is that we will learn to *fear* God. We will learn how to show reverence to our Maker and Creator. By reading the Bible, we learn what the fear of God is and what He expects from us.

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Proverbs 1:7). This first benefit is very important, because without the proper fear of God, we will not become wise in the sense that God wants us to be. We are totally and completely dependent on Him to

attain this wisdom. It is a manifestation of His grace when we exhibit this kind of understanding. This wisdom comes from drinking in His Word. "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Peter 2:2).

Do you yearn after God's Word? If you don't, you really should. If you don't, begin reading it anyway, and you will soon yearn for it as God's Word says to do.

The second benefit is that we learn *humility*. When we realize exactly how *God* sees us, we will have a humble spirit towards others. We will become more patient with the shortcomings of other human beings. When we realize how dependent we are on God, we will be too focused on our own shortcomings to recognize the shortcomings of others. By reading God's Word, we learn to think as God thinks. We learn to look at people with compassion. We learn to have a humble attitude and to consider others above ourselves. This is the attitude of Christ, and we must learn to exhibit it.

The third benefit of regular Bible reading is that we learn to *keep His commands*. When God clearly forbids something, we should yearn to know so

that we don't offend Him. We should have an attitude of "God teach me," and to humbly obey whatever He tells us in His Word. When we do this, the Holy Spirit can make manifest to our hearts and minds the will of God. This is done by regularly reading the Bible.

Now, the fourth benefit is actually a natural result of the other benefits. We have longer life, and our progeny are blessed. When we obey God, *life just seems to work*. We go through life with a sense of peace. Do you have peace in your life? If not, you need to get out your Bible and read it daily. Commit to a schedule and stick to it. You will have peace of mind. You will learn how to live the right way. You will learn how to be healthy, how to get along with others, how to please God, and how to fear Him properly. Do you want these blessings? Take hold of them, for they are yours. Blow the dust off your Bible and get on a study program! Ω

"God has placed a very high priority on His Word."

Feast of Tabernacles – 2009 Pinellas Park, Florida



Come one, come all, to be a part of the 2009 Feast of Tabernacles Choir in Pinellas Park, Florida.

This year we have a first-class performing arts center with all the sound equipment and lights we will ever need. We also have a state-of-the-art sound booth with a first-class technician from the arts center. If you desire to be a part of the music program in Pinellas Park, please contact me quickly so I can send you the music in advance. Thank you. Ω

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Notice!

- It is the desire of the staff to publish *The International News* quarterly. We can do this only if you, the reader, help by submitting timely articles, reports, and photos.
- With few exceptions, submissions should be from 800-1000 words in either .doc, .rtf, or .txt format.
- Submissions may be sent to either vancestinson@cgi.org or lloyd Cary@gmail.com (or both).

DEADLINE for the next issue is **November 15, 2009.**

We look forward to seeing you *in print!*

The Editor

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“trumpet plagues” (Revelation 8–11) that will be poured out in the terrifying “Day of the Lord,” and of our present job of lifting up our voice “like a trumpet” (Isaiah 58:1) to warn the nations of the soon-coming Great Tribulation (Matthew 24:21). It will be a day of fear and trepidation for mankind, but a day of rejoicing for the saints!

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

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

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

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

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

Christ—Our Warrior King

When Christ came the first time, He came as the meek and lowly Lamb of God whose mission was to die for the sins of the world. 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 that oppose Him. 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).

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



Revelation 6:17 declares, “... the great day of *His wrath* is come; and who shall be able to stand?”

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

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

“Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a Sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation” (Lev. 23:24).

walls” (Zechariah 2:2–5). The Feast of Tabernacles will be reinstated 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.

In summary, 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? Praise God!

Let us rejoice in the Feast! Ω

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Controversy, continued from page 1

The three views are: 1) Premillennialism, 2) Amillennialism, and 3) Postmillennialism. All three represent different views indicative of the *timing* as to *when* Christ will return to earth. Let me explain. “Premillennialism” teaches He will return *before* (pre) the Millennium begins. Secondly, “Amillennialism” advances the understanding that essentially, it is “symbolic”—symbolic of an indefinite period, generally corresponding to the time frame from Christ’s incarnation to the establishment of the New Jerusalem. And thirdly, “Postmillennialism” instructs He will return *after* (post) the Millennium is over. This presumes the evangelistic/missionary work of the church *will be successful* in ushering in the millennial kingdom *prior* to the actual rule and literal return of Christ.



St. Augustine

**Understanding
the Three Views**

As mentioned, these three contemporary views are fundamental to the understanding of Revelation 20:4. Two of them have fueled such extreme misinterpretations of prophetic scriptures that one group who shares these views has been labeled *Preterists*. As a consequence, these individuals believe prophetic texts like Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 were fulfilled during the Roman invasion of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, culminating at Masada in approximately A.D. 72. In addition, these same two views have contributed to the concept that Satan has already been bound, since Christ died on the stake, fulfilling Revelation 20:1–3. Amazingly, some believe it’s the church’s job to usher in the “age of peace” in preparation for Christ’s return. That’s right! Christ won’t return until the *church* generates the peace, as described in so many Old Testament prophecies pertaining to God’s Kingdom on earth. These are just a few examples illustrating the *confusion* and *misunderstandings* that have precipitated the debate surrounding Revelation 20:4.

The *Sabbatarian* Christians, on the other hand, have generally adopted the view of Premillennialism—Christ returning *before* the Millennium begins. It is He who will initiate and reestablish peace and God’s Kingdom on earth, *not the church!* (Request our free booklets, *Is The Kingdom of God Here, Now?* and *What is The Real Gospel Truth?*) Fundamentally, “Premillennialism” advances the teaching that Jesus Christ is returning to save mankind from completely destroying itself, forcing world peace on humanity by reinstating God’s government on earth (Zechariah 14:8–9).

Post and Amillennialism are another story. These two views have caused a lot of misinformation, resulting in a substantial amount of confusion with regard to their particular perspective of the prophetic texts. However, both views are built on premises which serve to provide plausibility for their understanding, but at the same time ignore those texts that simply *don’t fit their theology*. Unfortunately, this has only produced a means for Satan to maintain a veil of deception over the vast majority of the Christian world, camouflaging the *PLAIN TRUTH* of what the Kingdom of God really is and how it will come about. We are reminded that this wily Serpent has deceived the whole world by means of making his ministers appear to be “angels of light” (Revelation 12:9; 2 Corinthians 11:13–15).

Some Origins of False Premises

Generally speaking, regardless of the limited commentary we have about the millennial views of the early pre-Nicene fathers (men who lived prior to the Council of Nicea, A.D. 325), it’s commonly recognized that in the West, around Rome, Premillennialism (Christ’s return occurring *before* the Millennium) was the *accepted view* during those early stages of the church’s beginnings.

For example, Papias (A.D. 130), Bishop of Phygian Hierapolis, Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Justin Martyr appear to have been Premillennialists—all believing that Christ would return to *commence the Millennium*. Notice what Phillip Schaff (1819–1893, church historian), has to say: “The most striking point in the eschatology of the ante-Nicene age is the prominent chiliasm, or millenarianism (pre-millennialism), that is the belief of a visible reign of Christ in glory *on earth* with the risen saints for a thousand years, *before* the general (second, Revelation 20:5) resurrection and judgment.” Here we see Phillip Schaff making the comment that it was a “striking point in the eschatology” of that early church era that Premillennialism (chiliasm) was *so prominent*. He continues, “It was indeed not the doctrine of the church embodied in any creed or form of devotion, but a widely current *opinion of distinguished teachers* such as Barnabas, Papias, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Lactantius” (*History of the Christian Church*, Vol. 2, pg. 614). This is quite the admission, coming from Phillip Schaff, who was a Post-millennialist (Christ returning *after* the Millennium).

It is interesting that A-millennialists and Post-millennialists will marginalize the widely accepted teaching of Premillennialism during the early New Testament apostolic church. For instance, they will claim that Irenaeus didn’t write about the Millennium. Admittedly, this may be true in the strictest sense, but notice the implication that alludes to the millennial view in the course of a reference to the Millennium in his fifth book, *Against Heresies*, Chapter 36, par. 3. He says, “John, therefore, did distinctly foresee the first resurrection of the just, and the inheritance in the kingdom of the earth... and what the prophets have prophesied concerning it harmonize (with John’s vision).” He’s admitting John, the apostle, shared the view of the Pre-millennialist. He also admits that John believed in the “inheritance in the *kingdom of the earth*,” and that this “harmonized” with the prophets and his (John’s) vision. Now notice as Irenaeus continues, “But when this Antichrist shall have devastated all things in this world, he will reign for three years and six months, and sit in the temple at Jerusalem; and *then the Lord will come from heaven in the clouds*, in the glory of the Father, sending this man and those who follow him into the lake of fire; but bringing in for the

righteous the *times of the kingdom*” (*Against Heresies*, Book 5, Chapter 30, par. 4). Obviously, this clearly states that Christ is coming back to set up His kingdom *BEFORE* the Millennium begins. In other words, He, Jesus Christ, will begin the age of world peace and reinstitute the government of God on this earth, resulting in a one-thousand-year reign (the Millennium) of utopian conditions that are described throughout the prophetic writings of the Old Testament; and Irenaeus claims *John the apostle believed this, too!*

On the other hand, the Hellenistic and Alexandrian school of thought contributed to a more “philosophical” approach, which led to a more “spiritualized” outlook—or at least that’s what some had claimed. Men like Origen, Tyconius, Methodius, and of course Augustine, to mention a few, took the position that many of the prophetic texts were simply metaphor, allegory, and/or symbolizations. This provided a means by which they could develop whatever theology that might “suit their fancy,” and it did create a platform to launch doctrinal treatises, perspectives, and personal opinion, encroaching on many of the original *apostolic* teachings. Unfortunately, over the centuries, *many original teachings* were compromised *incrementally* in this fashion. Lamentably, the plain teaching of the Premillennial view was also overshadowed by many of the dominant scholars of the time, who through prodigious amounts of published *personal* commentary and *spin*, eventually mitigated this original apostolic belief of Christ’s millennial rule *here on earth*.

So What IS the Plain Teaching of the Bible?

Clearly, the Bible states that “no man has ascended to heaven” (John 3:13). No, not even King David, a man after God’s own heart (Acts 2:34–36)! Instead, what we are told throughout the Old and New Testaments is that mankind will experience a *resurrection* from the dead and resume his life at a time in the future when the Messiah returns to set up God’s government, *here on earth* (Daniel 7:17–18, 24–28; 12:1–4). That is the plain and simple message of what the gospel is all about—humanity having the opportunity to *tabernacle with his God*, here on earth, sharing in the responsibility of guiding all nations to become part of the Kingdom of God (Revelation 2:26) for all eternity. This is foundational to mankind’s destiny!

In his writings to the Corinthian congregation, Paul explains that Christ’s resurrection was in fact the *illustration* of how this “resuming to life” will occur. He asks a very direct question by saying, “Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is *no resurrection of the dead*” (1 Corinthians 15:12)? Unfortunately, in a

unique kind of way, this same question continues to be ignored by many in the circles of traditional Christians today. They simply don’t recognize that by retaining the *heathen belief* that one’s soul is immortal and that upon death one continues to live as a disembodied spirit either going to paradise or eternal torment, that this *contradicts, discredits, and denies* the *method* of the resurrection that Christ illustrated, described in your Bible! Paul could easily ask the same thing today: “How say some among you that

Controversy, continued on next page



Council of Nicaea

there is *no resurrection* of the dead?”—to anyone who believes that when you die, you really don’t, but instead, go on as a disembodied immortal spirit, living in heaven or eternal torment (hell). This question is still appropriate, since this is not what the Bible teaches!

By contrast, notice what Jesus Christ says: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.... Marvel not at this [in other words, don’t be surprised]: for the hour is coming, in the which *ALL* that are *IN THE GRAVES* shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the *RESURRECTION* of life; and they that have done evil, unto the *RESURRECTION* of damnation” (John 5:25–29). This says nothing about the dead *remaining alive* in heaven or hell. It simply asserts that at the time appointed, the dead, *which are in the graves* (not heaven or a place of torment), will hear His voice and be brought forth again to life via the “method” of a *resurrection*—and *embodied* in a similar “life form” as He is presently (1 John 3:1–2). This is in complete agreement with Daniel 12:1–4, which is contextually about the “end times.” Notice, “And many of them that sleep [dead] in the dust of the earth shall awake [therefore they were inactive up to this time], some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Daniel 12:2).

Paul puts it all together in his letter to the Corinthian congregation. Notice, “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept [dead]... But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; *afterward* they that are Christ’s *AT HIS COMING*” (1 Corinthians 15:20–23). There it is! The dead will come back to life *AT HIS COMING*. Simply stated, those who are dead are still in the grave—dead (sleeping, inactive, de-energized)—waiting for Christ to return to be awakened by His voice upon hearing their name called. Has Christ returned yet? No! So where are the dead according to this plain Biblical statement—already in heaven or condemned to eternal punishing? Absolutely not! They’re in the graves, deeply sleeping, unconscious, bereft of time and space, *waiting* for Christ to return.

So, *when* does Christ return? Let Paul answer that question. “Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep [remain dead], but we shall all be *changed*, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, *AT THE LAST TRUMP*: for the trumpet shall sound, and the *dead shall be raised* [a resurrection] incorruptible, and we shall be *changed*. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must *put on immortality*” (1 Corinthians 15:51–53). Christ will return when the *last trumpet* sounds.

Paul mentioned the type, or kind, of change that will occur. Notice, “But some will say, How are the dead raised up? and with *WHAT BODY DO THEY COME*? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened [changed], except it die... It is sown a natural [physical] body; it is *raised a spiritual body*, There is a natural [physical] body, and *there is a spiritual body*” (1 Corinthians 15:35–44). Finally, Paul makes it pristine clear. “And as we have borne the image of the earthy [physical flesh] we *SHALL ALSO BEAR* the image of the heavenly [spirit body]. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood *CANNOT* inherit the kingdom of God; neither does corruption inherit incorruption” (1 Corinthians 15:49–50).

Clearly, the Bible is easy to understand once we remove from our minds all the preconceived notions we’ve been taught in the course of our lifetimes about death and eternal life. If we will let the Bible speak for itself and allow God to plainly describe to us, by His Word, without the distractions of heathen concepts/traditions, we

will see the simplicity that is indeed in Christ.

What has just been described is the *formula* of how God the Father and Christ our Lord fully intend to bring human beings into the family of God. It is a *birthing process*, simply called the *resurrection*. It is the raising of those who are dead and the changing of those who are alive, considered to be “in Christ” (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18). It is the *embodiment* of those individuals who will now live as resurrected spirit beings (John 3:5–9) and take on the literal composition of the God family and become *born sons of God* (Romans 8:14–19). Yes, all those who have the “firstfruits of the Spirit” will enjoy the redemption of their bodies (Romans 8:23) and will become kings and priests in God’s Kingdom as *Spirit-born* sons of God (Revelation 5:10)! That is what it really means to be “*born again*”!

But What Does That Have To Do With the Millennium?

It is unfathomable to appreciate the complete and comprehensive value of this calling, which ultimately results in eternal life as a glorious embodied spirit being. Words escape us as one attempts to comprehend this *remarkable truth* contained in the Word of God. As incredible as it may be, *without a purpose* for living, for sharing, for serving, and being with our God, we’d have to concede that eternal life would be pointless. And God is not pointless, non-sensical, trite, cavalier, or trivial about purpose. There is always *good reason* when God is involved.

We must remember, the Millennium is just the *foretaste* of the “quintessential reason” for the birth-righted inheritance of eternal life we have coming. Here is the real ultimate reason: God the Father is going to “tabernacle” with His creation. The final move *after* the thousand years (Millennium) are finished is when the Father will come to dwell with His Spirit-born family for all eternity. This is what underlines the long-term objective of God the Father and our Lord Jesus the Christ. This is the found-ational purpose for eternal life! Notice, “... Behold, the *tabernacle of God* is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God” (Revelation 21:3).

In these last chapters of Revelation, we are told of a *new heaven* and a *new earth*. It is a place where there is no more pain and suffering. All tears and sorrow will be wiped away, because the former things have been removed, and all things are now new (Revelation 21:1–8). In addition, the sun is no longer needed because God Almighty (the Father) and the Lamb (Jesus Christ) will be *on earth* giving light to all the nations as eternity begins to commence for those who have been born again as spirit beings, and are now part of this family and Kingdom of God (Revelation 21:22–27).

When the truth of our calling is compared to the anemically hollow belief of the traditional teaching of heaven being the reward of the saved, it becomes obvious there is a concerted *conspiratorial effort* to bury this truth from mankind. As was mentioned earlier, Satan has deceived the whole world, and that indeed includes the *whole* world (Revelation 12:9).

Consider the multiple religions of this planet.

Every one of them has some kind of teaching associated with the idea humanity has inherent immortality already within them. Let me remind all of us, it was Satan the Devil who originally told Eve that *God was lying* and that she would *not* die (Genesis 3:4). Consequently, down through history, it’s been believed that upon our death, we really don’t die! Instead, we’re taught, we just go on living in a different life form, and perhaps at a different location. Strangely enough, is it any wonder then, about this consistent pattern of “cover-up”? If we’re really honest about it, indicators of an orchestrated effort to keep this *glorious truth* from mankind’s understanding is clearly obvious!

Here’s the connection: the abandonment of the Pre-millennial doctrine (Christ returning *before* the Millennium begins), which was *understood* to be the *original belief of the early apostles*, has contributed to the ignorance of humanity’s real God-given potential and destiny. Understandably, the additional compounding effect of withdrawing and surrendering the observance of the Feast of Tabernacles, which does represent the Kingdom of God *on earth*, has also provided more camouflage, hiding God’s real purpose for humanity.

The *Pre-millennial doctrine* provides good reason and meaning, and illustrates the clear objective for eternal life. It is the *reason and purpose* for eternally living! This teaching reveals that without God’s rule on earth in the lives of human beings, we would “self-destruct.”

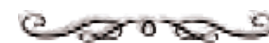
Furthermore, it illustrates that without it (the Pre-millennial teaching/ hope), life as a Spirit-born son of God would have *no purpose*. It would be pointless, because we would miss the contextual connection for having a part in God’s unending government, which is an expression of His love for sharing eternity with us. Furthermore, in the context of eternity, we should keep in mind the Pre-millennial teaching only serves to illustrate a “foretaste,” or is simply a “precursor” to the *real* long term tabernacling experience all of us ultimately look forward to—living with the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ as family members in the Kingdom of God without end (Isaiah 9:6–7). This is at the heart of God’s plan—reproducing Himself after His own kind (Genesis 1:26–28) and sharing it with His “born again” (resurrected) family members for eternity!

So where’s the controversy? Ω



Tertullian, a 16th-century representation

Tertullian



2009
HOLY DAY CALENDAR

- **New Testament Passover: April 7***
- **Feast Unleavened Bread: April 9–15**
- **Pentecost: May 31**
- **Feast of Trumpets: September 19**
- **Day of Atonement: September 28**
- **Feast of Tabernacles: October 3–9**
- **Last Great Day: October 10**

*Observed at sundown.

The Millennium—What Will It Be Like?

*What is the Millennium? Where will it be?
What will it be like? Millions scoff, others have never heard of it.
Only Bible prophecy reveals the real truth about the wonderful world tomorrow!*

by Lloyd W. Cary

“Where will you spend eternity,” the huffing, puffing, perspiring evangelist bawled at his enthralled audience, “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, yes, SHOCKED as to what your Bible really says!

Few, even those in traditional Christianity, give any thought to what the Bible says—yes, prophecies—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?

Millions have prayed the prayer, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done *in earth*, as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10), but do they really know what they are asking? The good news is, that 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 “1,000 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 come 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 and central 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 [now] 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, Matthew 24:14). The churches of this world worship the *Messenger* but ignore His MESSAGE!

Christ told 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, too, 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).

Why Is So Little Preached About the Millennium?

You may rightly wonder, if these things be true, *why* so little is 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, by creeping incrementalism, *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 Scripture for what it plainly *says*.

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. (Be sure to read our lead article,

A Millennial Controversy? by Mr. Bill Watson, on page one of this publication.) 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.

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, millennialism has no longer been spoken of, or very rarely, by a few cranky sects.”

“A few cranky sects”? 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 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* who ascended to power in their churches. 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. **Millennium, continued on next page**



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—a church driven and inspired by Satan the devil—mixing paganism with the true doctrines of first century Christianity and by it 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 Will It 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 man has 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 for a thousand years. 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—droughts, floods, storms, hurricanes, or tornados—to fear, 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. Life span 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 status quo. 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 any more” (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 convert his 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!

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! Do not allow yourself to dismiss these scriptures simply because you are not familiar with them or have been brought up in 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, no, *demand, 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 forthcoming world events. This is your future. 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 your own Bible*, is what the Millennium will be like.

The Kingdom Of God—the Millennium—What It Will Be Like

1. Christ’s Kingdom Is Received From God:

The Lord God shall give to Him the throne.	Luke 1:32, 33
There was given to Him dominion and a kingdom.	Daniel 7:13, 14
I will give thee the heathen.	Psalms 2:8
The kingdom is the Lord’s; and He is the governor.	Psalms 22:28

2. It Is to Be Established When Jesus Christ Returns to Earth:

In the regeneration, the Christ shall sit in the throne.	Matthew 19:28
When the Son of man shall come in His glory.	Matthew 25:31
A parable: Christ to receive the kingdom and return.	Luke 19:12–27
Christ shall judge at His appearing and kingdom.	2 Timothy 4:1
He is coming on a white horse as King of kings.	Rev. 19:11, 16

3. It Will Be Established in Power and Might:

He will smite the nations and rule with a rod of iron.	Psalm 2:8, 9; Rev. 19:15
He will smite the earth with the rod of His mouth.	Isaiah 11:4; Job 4:9
The Stone [Christ] will smite and replace the image.	Daniel 2:34, 35, 44, 45
He shall fight against those nations.	Zech. 14:3–5
In flaming fire He will take vengeance on the disobedient.	2 Thess. 1:7–10
Christ will destroy the wicked with His brightness.	2 Thess. 2:8
The Lamb shall overcome those who make war.	Rev. 17:13–14

4. Israel Will Be Regathered, Converted, Exalted:

Bring again people of Israel.	Amos 9:14, 15
Put a new spirit within you.	Ezek. 11:17–20
Exalted above the Gentiles.	Isaiah 61:4–6
Jerusalem will be the throne of the Lord.	Jeremiah 3:17

5. Christ’s Kingdom Will Supersede and Replace All Earthly Kingdoms:

The kingdoms of this world will become Christ’s.	Rev. 11:15
Christ will be King of kings and Lord of lords.	Rev. 17:14; 19:1
Christ’s kingdom shall never be destroyed.	Daniel 2:44
The kingdom given to the saints of the Most High.	Dan. 7:18, 22, 27

6. The Worldwide Extent of Christ’s Kingdom:

Satan and his influences shall be put away.	Rev. 20:1–3
Jesus Christ to be King over all the earth.	Zechariah 14:9
All nations will keep the Feast of Tabernacles.	Zechariah 14:16
Gentiles shall seek Him.	Isaiah 11:10
Uttermost parts of the earth.	Psalms 2:7–9
All nations shall serve Him.	Psalms 72:8–9
The Stone Who will fill the whole earth.	Daniel 2:35–44
All people, nations, languages shall serve Him.	Daniel 7:14
All dominions to serve and obey Him.	Daniel 7:27
Christ’s kingdom exalted above nations.	Micah 4:1–3
Earth shall be full of glory.	Isaiah 11:9

7. The Eternal Duration of Christ’s Kingdom:

The throne of His kingdom to be established forever.	2 Sam. 7:13, 16
There shall be no end to His peace and government.	Isaiah 9:7
God’s kingdom shall stand forever.	Daniel 2:44
His dominion is everlasting.	Daniel 7:14
The saints to possess the kingdom forever and ever.	Daniel 7:18

Millennium, continued from page 7

- Of His kingdom there shall be no end.
Christ's kingdom to last forever.
The kingdoms of this world to be Christ's forever and ever.
- 8. The Structure of Christ's Kingdom—
Christ, King of Kings, Will Reign From 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 to sit upon the throne of David, forever.
- 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.
- 10. All Nations 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.
- 11. The Temple Will Be Rebuilt**
The temple described in detail.

Animal sacrifices temporarily reinstated.

Burnt, sin, meat, trespass, and peace offerings.
- 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.
- 13. God's Laws, Sabbath, and Holydays 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 shall worship God from one Sabbath to another.
- 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 & speak peace unto the heathen.
- 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.
- 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 a covenant with the wild beasts.
Christ will establish a covenant of peace with all.
- 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 as 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.
- Luke 1:33
2 Peter 1:11
Rev. 11:15
- Micah 4:1-4
Zephaniah 3:20
Matthew 25:31
Luke 1:32-33
- Romans 8:17
Colossians 3:4
Rev. 2:26; 3:21
Rev. 1:6; 5:10
Rev. 20:6
- Psalm 72:8-11
Isaiah 2:2-4
Zech. 14:9, 16
- Ezekiel chapters 40-48
Ezekiel 40:42-43; 44:11
Ezekiel 43:19-27; 45:17
- Psalm 72:8-10
Isaiah 11:3-5
Micah 4:2
Rev. 19:11
- Psa. 119:44, 160
Micah 4:2
Zech. 14:16-19
Isaiah 66:23
- Psalm 72:3, 7
Ezekiel 34:28
Isaiah 2:4
Isaiah 9:7
Isaiah 32:17
Micah 4:3
Zechariah 9:10
- Isaiah 33:24
Isaiah 35:5,6
Isaiah 65:17-19
Rev. 7:17; 21:4
- Isaiah 11:6-9
Isaiah 65:25
Hosea 2:18
Ezekiel 34:25
- Isaiah 35:1,2,6,7
Isaiah 41:18-19
Isaiah 55:12-13
Ezekiel 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 & flaming fire upon Zion.
There shall be showers of blessing.
There shall be bountiful harvests.
The wilderness and solitary place shall be glad.
- 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.
Unrepentant sinners shall not inherit the kingdom.
- 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.
- Isaiah 4:5-6
Ezekiel 34:26
Ezekiel 34:27
Isaiah 35:1
- 1 Cor. 15:50
1 Cor. 6:9-11
Gal. 5:19-21
Rev. 21:8, 27; 22:15
- Psalm 72:19
Isaiah 11:9
Habakkuk 2:14



The Beautiful World Tomorrow!

Amen! What a future! 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).

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.

So we ask again, does the Bible *really* tell of immortal souls spending eternity in heaven, hell, or purgatory as the huffing-puffing preacher claimed 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! What an *opposite* set of beliefs! You be the judge. When people really READ THE BOOK, they find what the Bible *says* and what they are *told* the Bible says are often two very different things! Which do you choose to believe?

Let's be honest! Are there *really* lions, lambs, bears, cows, and snakes in heaven? Will there be harvesting, plowing and reaping, deserts, rivers, rain, heathen, nations, and kings, in heaven? Christ Himself said, "And NO man hath ascended up to heaven" (John 3:13)! Certainly no rational-thinking person can read these many pronouncements from the Eternal God—from the inspired sacred words of Scripture—and not be absolutely convinced and convicted that God's kingdom is going to RULE ON THIS EARTH! The refurbished earth—not heaven—is the reward of the saved! Continue reading in Zechariah 14:4! This plainly shows, "in that day" when Jesus Christ returns, His "...feet shall stand on the *mount of Olives* [on the earth]..."—and that He is coming *back* EXACTLY *as* the angelic messenger *said* He would in Acts 1:11, "...in like manner *as* ye have seen Him go into heaven"!

When we read in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 and the surrounding verses that those who are alive at the Second Coming of Christ will be "caught up together *with* them [the ones having just been resurrected] to *meet* the Lord in the air," we know that, true to the prophecy of Matthew 24:31, the angels will *gather* the redeemed from around the world; we know that they will be collected together to MEET the returning, conquering Christ *in the air* (and the air is very much a part of this earth's *atmosphere*), and continue down to the mount of Olives in that very same day (Zechariah 14:3-4,9)! It is *here*, on this *earth*, that Jesus Christ intends on cleaning house—*solving* the problems—ushering in an era of absolute *joy!* Yes, the saints will reign ON THE EARTH! This is the *message* the *Messenger* brought to earth!

What a wonderful, glorious future lies ahead for mankind! When the seventh trumpet blows, *will you be ready?* Ω

A Score Yet Unsettled: Lucifer's Insurrection

Revelation 12:9 makes a significant statement. A "being" is mentioned, as one who is responsible for "deceiving the whole world." This is not a frivolous accusation when considering the confusion and damage he has caused over the centuries of human history. Clearly then, is there any doubt as to God's justification and right to hold this "spirit being" named Satan, accountable for the "sins of mass destruction" he has caused?

by Bill Watson



Bill Watson

Undeniably, the history of mankind is pathetic! I know some may disagree, saying that's unfair and rather harsh; and arguably, I suppose you could make the case there are a lot of good things humanity has developed, designed, and accomplished. However, so much of human history is tainted with destruction, bloodshed, suffering, and injustice. And unfortunately, in that framing with all of the billions of human beings who have been sliced and diced, raped, robbed, and pillaged, enslaved, mistreated, tortured, and unfairly judged, there is a *ring of truth* to the perspective of mankind's history being, indeed, pathetic!

Most of humanity is completely ignorant of and oblivious to this major contributing factor: a real, living, rebellious *spirit world* surrounding and interacting with the human realm, complicating the circumstances and exacerbating the conditions we find ourselves confronting. Keep in mind, Satan the devil is not called "the god of this world" for nothing (2 Corinthians 4:3; 11:13–14)! Satan's authority, his activity, and influences upon the civilizations of mankind down through the ages are indisputable according to the scriptures of your Bible.

Who *is* this being named Satan? Where did he come from? Will he ever be held accountable for his culpability in so many horrific sins of mass destruction?

Some Fundamental Satanic History

Interestingly enough, the Bible has some historical background on this created spirit being. And it's anything but beyond amazing, when comparing our current world's maddening condition in the light of a God who supposedly is the epitome of love. Obviously, by refusing to acknowledge these vain, arrogant, and unrepentant spirit beings and the present outstanding issue of Satan's violently destructive insurrection—which, by the way, remains unresolved to this day between these mighty beings—our present world with all its challenges and issues becomes a strange anomaly at best. What I mean is this: for most of humanity, it's almost impossible to reconcile the hardships, violence, pain, and anguish in today's world with an alleged God who presumably is the apex of love. Clearly, it's understandable why so many people on earth seem confused and ask, *If there is a God, how can He allow such wretched human conditions to exist?* This is a good question considering the dilemma of reconciling our "real world realities" with a God of love; and therein lies the anomaly.

Logically then, there seems to be good reason to suspect something is missing in this glaring theological contradiction—and there is! In Isaiah 14, the prophet discloses some background on this missing dimension—a former "covering cherub" who went bad. Notice, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning" (Isaiah 14:12)! We are told here his original name was Lucifer. It means *Morning Star, Light Bringer, or Day Star*. This was his original name and function: "Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; ... Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the

day that thou wast created, till iniquity [lawlessness, rebellion] was found in thee" (Ezekiel 28:14–15). These two sections of Scripture explain quite a bit of information about Lucifer in his original role, giving us an encapsulated summary of his origin and profile.

It's plainly stated—he was at the very throne of God as one who had great beauty, wisdom, and authority. Originally, he was "perfect in his ways" as far as God was concerned. But a time came when he lifted himself up violently against God, attempting to exercise power and authority over God Himself. "For thou hast said in thine heart, *I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars [angels] of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will BE LIKE the most High*" (Isaiah 14:13–14).



"[Jesus said]...I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven."

Artist Gustave Doré's concept of the fall of Lucifer, *Paradise Lost*, by Milton.

This arrogant posture of prideful rebellion resulted in an awesome amount of destruction; the evidence is stunningly clear. We are surrounded by the preeminence of this devastation—just look around! Consider the reality of the current condition of the universe. This was by no means a small event—this was huge! It was a monolithic battle that was gargantuan in scope, causing a massive amount of overwhelming desolation and division within the physical and spirit realm of God's dimension.

It also caused catastrophic conditions here on earth, devastating the planet and all of what we consider to be the "pre-historic world" that existed *prior to* the creation of Adam and Eve. The materials of that pre-historic world were buried under prodigious amounts of water and earth, turning it into a thunderous, raging, fierce, turgid solution, which became a deep, dark ball of water covering the complete surface of the earth while suspended in space for who knows how many eons. Notice, "And the earth was [or became] without form [Hebrew *Tohu*: desolated, wasted] and void [Hebrew *Bohu*: empty, ruined, chaotic]; and dark-

ness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God *moved upon the face of the waters*" (Genesis 1:2). This was the condition and status of the earth when we pick up the story where God begins to "renew the face of the earth" (Psalms 104:30) for the purpose of reproducing Himself with mankind. The earth was simply an orb of H₂O—water!

Clearly then, what we have described in Genesis chapter one, is the "recreation" or "remodeling" of the earth *after* a global catastrophe occurred; but now is "downscaled" around God's purpose for man's destiny—reproducing living creatures in His own image (Genesis 1:26–27) with the potential of becoming literally "born again"—except *this* time, of *spirit* (John 3:6–9; 1 John 3:1–2), into His family. This is the awesome potential of mankind, which Satan is committed to subvert and destroy!

Another consideration many don't realize is, when this rebellious insurrection occurred, Satan took one-third of the whole host of heaven with him, dividing the angels against each other. This was a *real event* in universal history. There was chaos and war in heaven! This is an *undeniable fact* of biblical history concerning the universe. Notice, "And his [Satan's] tail drew the third part of the stars [angels] of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: ... And there was *war in heaven*: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon [Satan]; and the dragon fought and his angels, And *prevailed not*; neither was their place found any more in heaven" (Revelation 12:4–8). Satan lost this battle. In addition, Jesus confirms this event when He mentions He was an eyewitness to Satan's expulsion from heaven. Notice, "And he [Jesus] said unto them [the disciples], I beheld [Greek *Theh-o-reh'-o*: to be a spectator] Satan as lightning fall from heaven" (Luke 10:18). That's right! Jesus asserts that He (first person), *before His human birth*, literally was a *spectator* and experienced the visual—He literally witnessed this spiritual battle and watched Satan become exiled to earth.

This war and rebellion remains currently active, but presently contained to the proximity of this planet. It is a "war in progress." Satan has not been formally charged with blame, judged, or punished yet for his culpability in the many sins of mass destruction committed upon mankind and originally directed at God Himself! God the Father has yet to settle this issue with this former "light bringer" who at one time was the apex of His creation. Remember, Lucifer was perfect in all his ways from the day that he was created, until rebellion, avarice, vanity, and pride was found in him (Ezekiel 28:15–17). Therefore, until he is blamed, judged accountable, and punished by being banished from the earth, this score remains unsettled between these mighty spirit beings. These are the hard facts about an event that actually occurred many years ago in the spirit realm and was originally and personally directed and targeted at God; therefore, it really is important to God! And since it **REALLY DID HAPPEN**, it demands to be resolved by God, with Satan and those angels who followed him.

The Invisible War Presently Surrounding Us

This former covering cherub, who originally was part of a triune relationship with the archangels Michael and Gabriel, has been engaged re-

Lucifer, continued on page 10

Lucifer, continued from page 9

lently against God in an ongoing effort to “divide and conquer” anything He (God) has planned. Satan and his minions have consistently been nothing but trouble while “exiled” here on earth. From his original charming proposition to Eve (Genesis 3:1) to his final punitive fate described in Revelation 20:10, the Bible is filled with the “fingerprints” of his attempts to derail the plan of God. Satan has dedicated his life to thwarting God’s efforts.

Unequivocally, the Bible teaches Satan the devil, formerly Lucifer, is God’s adversary (enemy, accuser, or slanderer). He is *contradistinctive* to everything God represents. His will is set in opposition to God, and this deserves “punitive judgment.” Anything less would be a dereliction of duty and unjust in the light of God’s law—and we know God is a God of justice, and plainly states, *Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord*. Justice will be served! God and His plan of salvation will be vindicated, regardless of Satan’s efforts to destroy it.

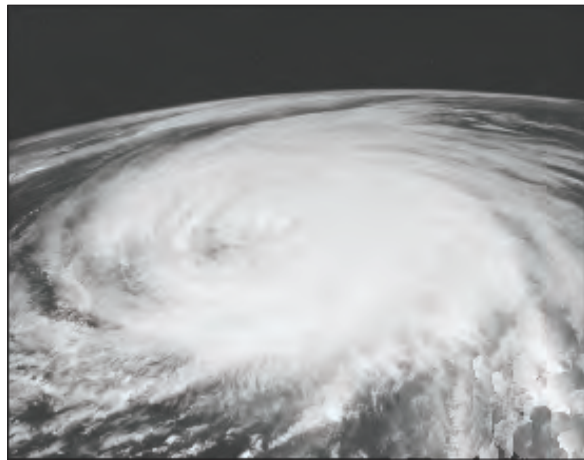
Notice, “And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness *unto the judgment* of the great day” (Jude 6). Notice what Peter says, “For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell [Greek *Tartaroo*: a place of restraint, currently the earth] and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be *reserved unto judgment*” (2 Peter 2:4). And notice what Paul says, “Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life” (1 Corinthians 6:3)? This judgment is a real, prophetic, literal, *future event* that God fully intends to, at some point, execute upon these rebellious demons who tirelessly attempt to destroy everything God has tried to build and share. (For more information, request our FREE booklet, *The Devil, You Say?*)

Undeniably, like it or not, all of us are involved in this *spiritual war*. We are living in the midst of it. The damage incurred over the centuries to world governments, cultures, and ruined lives of individuals, is profoundly incomprehensible! Because of this destruction, animosity, and the incorrigible attitude Satan has, God is determined to resolve this vicious cycle of violence against humanity and Himself! God *fully intends to hold Satan responsible* and destroy his work. Notice what John said concerning another important reason Jesus Christ came to earth: “He that committeth sin is of the devil; for *the devil sinneth from the beginning*. For this purpose the Son of God [Jesus Christ] was manifested, that he might *destroy the works of the devil*” (1 John 3:8).

And presently, it is also by and through “Christ in us” that human beings are able to resist this spirit of disobedience (Ephesians 2:1–10) and minimize his influences in our lives. This is at the core of this war between “*good* (God) and *evil* (Devil).” Central to God’s plan is the reproduction of His character in those He has called through the empowerment of His Spirit. (Request our free booklet, *How To Build Godly Character*.) However, central to Satan’s agenda is the destruction of that process. This is why Paul insightfully presents the perspective he does when he said, “Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand *against the wiles of the devil*. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness [or wicked spirits] in high places” (Ephesians 6:11–12).

With that said, understandably, Peter describes Satan as a lion stalking his prey, looking for weaknesses he can exploit to the destruction of the individual Christian (1 Peter 5:8–10). He is the “accuser of the brethren” (Job 1:6–12; 2:1–7; Revelation 12:10). Whether Satan is disputing over some issue, as he did concerning the body of Moses (Jude 9), or “blocking” God’s angels from answering the prayers

of the saints, as he did to Daniel (Daniel 10:9–21), Satan and his minions are committed to causing havoc and chaos with God, His angels, and His called out ones, the church (Revelation 12:12–17). Satan is relentless in his efforts throughout the world, and will not rest because he knows his days are numbered and has but a relatively short time to accomplish his goal of defeating and destroying everything God has set out to do. Therefore, it becomes plainly apparent that until Satan is completely taken out of the sphere of influence he now enjoys, the “restitution of all things” (Acts 3:21) will not be possible. This demon has set his will against God, thereby becoming the antithesis of everything God represents. He is the *ultimate contradistinction* that signifies the *quintessential opposition* to God’s reproductive plan initiated some 6,000 years ago in the Garden of Eden. God has emphatically stated He will bring Satan down to the “pit” (Isaiah 14:15). And he will be *punitively banished* from the earth, consigned to eternal torment, “day and night for ever and ever” (Revelation 20:10). But it will happen at a designated time yet out ahead, as prophesied to occur, and metaphorically illustrated in the Day of Atonement.



“...and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

The Resolution of the Issue: Revealed in the Day of Atonement

This event of “punitive banishment” is captured in the symbolism of the Day of Atonement. Admittedly, the judgment of Satan and his minions is *yet* to occur. They are presently “reserved” unto judgment. Clearly, this indicates they have *not yet* been judged or punished, but rather remain “chained” to that destiny because of their unrepentant attitude toward God and His “reproductive” plan of salvation. Unfortunately, for this rebellious group of fallen angels, their future is not good, as is revealed in the metaphor of events contained in the symbols of the Day of Atonement.

Those of us familiar with the events described in Leviticus 16 understand the *azazel* goat, which by lot was made *distinct* and separated from the one representing the Lord, ultimately receives the blame and is held accountable for sin. Remember, “...the devil sinneth from the beginning...” (1 John 3:8). It is plainly shown that one of the final acts serving to conclude the ritual of “atonement” is the high priest (representing Jesus Christ at this juncture) by the laying on of hands, transfers the sins to this *azazel* goat (representing Satan, his minions and all their evil), banishing it to the wilderness, *as a punishment*. [NOTE: Interestingly enough, this “act of transfer” for the purpose of *blame* is conducted *after* the reconciliation portion of the ritual has been *completed* (Leviticus 16:20)—plainly illustrating this final action has nothing to do with the reconciliation associated with the goat representing the Lord, but rather everything to do with the *azazel* (Satan) and its separate, distinct *banishment* (judgment/punishment) to the desert wilderness.]

This now clears the way for making possible the total “restitution of ALL things.” Ultimately, true to the reality described in Revelation 20:10 and as was previewed at the beginning of the Millennium (Revelation 20:2–3), this unrepentant, rebellious, ill natured, and mean spirited fallen cherub and his minions, will finally be expunged, banished, and separated from the presence of God and His kingdom for all eternity (Jude 13; Revelation 20:10). Clearly, this prophetic event connects up nicely with the “picture” captured in the *Atonement ritual* (Leviticus 16) and provides the answer as to *how* the “transition of power” is finally *taken from* Satan, the “god of this world,” and *given to* the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Jesus the Christ!

We must remember, Satan’s current role as the “god of this world” is no small matter, and is confirmed in the Scriptures. His evil actions and original insurrection demand, by God’s own admission, vengeance, judgment, and punishment! Assuredly, Satan will be removed and replaced by Jesus Christ and the saints who will reinstitute the government of God (Daniel 7:16–17, 26–28).

However, we cannot ignore the reality of this “score yet unsettled” between these mighty spirit beings. It’s *very real* to God, and was, *originally*, a serious betrayal and breach of His laws that qualify as sin (1 John 4:3); and, consequently, requires punishment. All that he, Satan, has done, portrays an enormous, ongoing, never ending *evil role* over the history of man’s existence, which only goes to prove and substantiate the necessity of holding him accountable for his rebellion, blame, and ultimate punishment for *his original sin* and those he exacerbated throughout mankind’s history.

Admittedly, we want to be careful about obfuscating *our responsibility* for the sins in our own lives. It’s been said we can be our own worst enemy, and if the truth were known, many times, if not most, Satan had nothing to do with our own individual sin! Rather, it was simply our own fault, by failing to exercise the character to control our “fleshy appetites.” Clearly, this illustrates why we need a Savior who is able to forgive and cover sins *we are responsible for committing*.

However, by contrast, that still doesn’t dismiss the fact that Satan does have ways of aggravating the circumstances and conditions we contend with in our lives; nor does it mitigate, marginalize, or eliminate his *direct involvement* in so many “sins of mass destruction” over mankind’s approximate 6,000-year history. So, until the potential and possibility of Satan’s *real* influence is completely eliminated by “pitching” or “purging” him from the activity of God, the “restitution of all things” *cannot* be fully achieved, or really appreciated.

Thankfully, by accepting the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ and His intercessory ministry for the *forgiveness* and *covering* of our sins, as portrayed in the Passover—in combination with the future banishment of Satan and his minions, as portrayed in the Day of Atonement—only then can we be assured this issue *will be settled* and God will be vindicated. This will result in the *restitution* of all things, and God’s plan will be accomplished with the successful birth of the sons of God who will co-inherit “all things” with Christ (Romans 8:14–23; Hebrews 2:6–13). When that is accomplished, a new heaven and new earth will be established, where there won’t be any more pain, suffering, or death to deal with; and *Satan will be banished forever!* All things will be new! All things will be spiritual, literally! All things will be eternal, and *we will be immortal*, living with our Father, and tabernacling with Him and Jesus Christ, our Lord, for all eternity in a kingdom without end (Revelation 21:1–7; 22:1–7, Isaiah 9:6–7)! Ω

Learn Mercy and Not Sacrifice

by Jean Jantzen



Jean Jantzen

“It has been my experience that folks who have no vices have very few virtues.” Abraham Lincoln

When first called of God, we become acutely aware of the overwhelming weight of our past sins. It’s amazing just how

many mistakes one can add up in the first twenty, thirty, or so years of this life. So it is difficult to fathom how all that can be wiped out *in a moment of time* when submerged in the waters of baptism. But one learns that Jesus’ sacrifice covers our sins. We also come to realize the rest of our Christian life will be a struggle against sin, sin that we find dwells in us as permanent, unwelcome baggage (our carnal nature); and only Christ helps us overcome it during this journey (Romans 7:23).

Gratitude for Christ’s mercy at that most pivotal time in our life reminds me of the story in Luke telling of an event that takes place when Jesus is invited for supper at the home of a Pharisee. A woman (sinner), knowing Jesus would be there, “...stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment” (Luke 7:38). Of course the Pharisee was offended seeing that his guest had allowed a sinner (and a woman!) to touch him. Jesus was brutally frank when defending the woman’s actions to his arrogant host. “...I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment... Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little” (Luke 7:44–47). We can see by the example of the hypocritical Pharisee that sometimes in self-righteous zealotry to impress others, they forget they, too, are sinners.



Beersheba Sacrificial Altar

Jesus has a strong message for those with a Pharisaical attitude: *Go and learn mercy, and not sacrifice.* How do we make sense of these words of Jesus?

The Greek word for mercy can also be translated “compassion.” Compassion means to “suffer with.” To suffer with someone means to enter into their experience, their struggles, and to share their pain and sorrow. Mercy is more than a feeling. It requires a response. And this is what Jesus is trying to teach us. As members of God’s church, have we truly *learned* from Jesus’ example of mercy? Or do we find ourselves *intolerant* of the shortcomings of others?

According to the Pharisaical mind, Jesus was offering aid and comfort to the enemy, someone labeled a sinner, whom the Pharisees despised. But Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for their prideful and unmerciful attitude (Matthew 9:11–13; Luke 7:39; 18:11,12) and said “...for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Matthew 9:13).

Over the ages, Christians have had a tendency to put their emphasis on justice. They have not learned that mercy is not a violation of justice, but the greatest possible fulfillment of it. God’s ways are higher than our ways! There is no substitute for mercy.

We’ve heard heinous stories where persons with differences in nationality, race, religion, and ideology were accused, charged with some trumped-up transgression, tarred and feathered, and run out of town by those who thought themselves superior in some way. And many times it was just a matter of differences in skin color.

Whole congregations of Christians have acted in the same way when they have scorned and abandoned one of their own whom they thought strayed off the pure path. Pregnant young girls have been publicly shamed and disfellowshipped as examples to the rest of the parishioners to not sin—or at least not be caught in their sin. Like the Pharisees, many Christians have been led to believe they must put on an outward façade of perfection.

In playing this role, they begin to believe they actually are sinless. When one becomes meticulous about observing every last minute detail of the law like the Pharisees, it becomes easy to shun those who do not live up to extremely high standards of perfection. So, the Pharisee is more concerned with his view of God’s law than with helping anyone else live up to it. They are more concerned with criticism than with encouragement. They practically gloat over what they judge to be the shortcomings of other people. Their first instinct is to condemn the sinner. It seems forgiveness is an unknown virtue to the Pharisee. They have no mercy to help those who fall short of their high demands. Jesus continually rebukes this type of people for their self-righteous attitude, calling them a generation of vipers.

Do we find it hard to forgive? Forgiveness presupposes in us a real conviction that we ourselves are far from perfect—that we, too, are sinners.

“Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow” (Isaiah 1:16–17).

Many will seek to please God by offering a sacrifice of good works, good thoughts, and good words, because they believe they aren’t so sinful. *Look, Lord! Look what I’ve done! I’ve done good things! Therefore, I’m not sinful! I don’t need anyone to save me! Your Son didn’t have to die for me! I’m making it on my own!*

Christ does not desire such sacrifices; in fact, they offend Him. When someone declares to God, *I’m good enough to make it on my own*, he is declaring, *You sacrificed Your Son for no good reason, because I can save myself!* This robs Jesus of His glory and offends His Heavenly Father.

We should rejoice in His mercy and know that, “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise” (Psalms 51:17).

Let’s remember that woman at Christ’s feet. She represents the attitude we continually should be in, not only at baptism, but for the rest of our Christian journey. So if you wish to be strong in the Lord, show mercy and help the weak among you. Ω

Jalynne’s Story

by Lynne Shepherd

On May 6, 2006, I received a phone call at work from my daughter. My three-year-old granddaughter Jalynne’s results had come back from the testing she had undergone. She had cancer! This was the day that changed our lives forever.

Jalynne woke up the morning of May 2, 2006 with a large “blob” hanging out of one of her nostrils. My daughter, Jenny, took her immediately to Children’s Hospital, where she had surgery to remove it. Four days later, the results were in, and I received the call at work. Jalynne had rhabdomyosarcoma, a muscle and tissue cancer. My daughter was crying. I immediately left work and headed for the hospital.

Within the next two days, Jalynne had more tests to find out if there were any more tumors in her tiny body. Three days later, we were told by her doctor, Dr. Mason, that Jalynne had another tumor, just millimeters from her brain, behind her eye. They took Jalynne to surgery to have a “port” or “central line” put into her chest. She was in stage 2 cancer.

During surgery, they noticed that Jalynne’s lymph nodes in her neck were enlarged, so they removed them. Testing came back from the lymph nodes; they, too, were cancerous. Four more tumors were removed. She was now in stage 3 cancer.



Jalynne (Lynne’s Granddaughter)

After six weeks in the hospital receiving chemotherapy treatments, she was allowed to go home. She was a “real trooper” as she endured three more weeks of chemo treatments. After work one day, I had my daughter bring Jalynne and the other children to meet me for ice cream. Jalynne, my granddaughter, was just about completely bald from the chemo treatments. It took everything I had to hold back my tears. Jalynne said to me, “Grandma, my hair is falling out,” as she gently pulled on what was left of her hair, and it fell out.

After forty-one weeks of chemo and six weeks of radiation, Jalynne was in remission. She is doing well! April 1st marked her second anniversary of being cancer free. Watching my granddaughter fight this disease was very hard for our entire family.

After first finding out about Jalynne having cancer, I had asked everyone who prays and believes in God in my department at work and throughout Distribution, and everyone in my church, to please pray for her. Our minister, Bill Watson, anointed Jalynne. I believe with all my heart that Jesus *heard* our prayers. Along with good care from Akron Children’s Hospital, our prayers were answered.

Jalynne still has scans every three months to make sure that the cancer hasn’t returned. I’m asking for all of those who do believe, to please keep our Jalynne in your prayers. THANK YOU!

Lynne Shepherd and her husband, Rick, are members of CGI’s Bath (Medina) congregation. Ω

An Uncomely Tree

by Jean Jantzen

When we think of frankincense, we think back to the giving of gifts to the Christ child by the wise men. Who would have thought frankincense was used fourteen centuries earlier in a ceremony commanded by God?

Nearly forty times in the Old Testament, God declares how pleasing the aroma of a burnt offering is. This positive imagery of scent represents God's satisfaction in experiencing the proper worship of Him. In the meal offering, frankincense contributes to His satisfaction because it always accompanies the burnt offering. The sweet savor offerings were burned on the brazen altar, while the others were burned outside the camp. No sin is seen in the sweet-savor offerings; it was a voluntary offering given freely by the Israelites. They were simply sweet smelling offerings.

Middle English *frank encens*, from Old French *franc encens*, means franc, free, pure: or from the Greek, *libanos*, i.e., "white" perfume of the sanctuary. It is interesting to note frankincense does not release its greatest fragrance until heat is applied (heat representing pressure of trials).

Frankincense played a significant role in the tabernacle in the wilderness. The incense was beaten into fine powder and offered on the altar, as a "memorial...an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD" (Leviticus 2:2).

As an adjective, a *memorial* becomes *commemorative*: intended as a reminder of a person or event or as a celebration of somebody's life and work; or ability to return to original shape; the ability of some materials, such as plastics and metals, to return to their original shape after being subjected to deformation. I think this reveals God's thoughts on his called-out ones and the character they build through a lifetime of fiery trials that literally transform them into something precious and lasting, something God planned out from the beginning.

He also says in Revelation 3:18: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."

Why was frankincense so important in this service to God, and what can we learn from the tree that produces it?

In researching frankincense, I discovered the first scraping of the bark does not provide what the harvesters want—they throw away the first scrapings. The tree is wounded, but the results are inferior resin, quite unusable. It's like us when we are first called by God—we are like the unsightly frankincense tree, wild, straggly, relatively unattractive and our fruits unusable (not many mighty, noble are called). The first deep penetrating wounds on the exterior bark of our humanity does not produce character of high quality. It is just a beginning, a softening up. We are babes in Christ, and in stepping out in faith, Job says, "Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty: For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole" (Job 5:17–18).

Our spiritual growth is slow, and we learn patience through trials and tribulations. We see the example of Joseph being thrown into a pit—

wounded in pride and with much to learn—and sold into slavery. Incense portrays a person's attitude during his trials endured in service to fellow man. A person might be all sweetness and light until the hardship of service hits him, and he grows bitter and turns aside—but not so with Joseph. He conducted himself in a godly manner, serving his master with hard work and diligence. Joseph, like the frankincense, is burned by fiery trials to produce the heavenly fragrance.

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Peter 4:12–13).

A second cutting or wounding of the tree now offers low quality resin. It's progressing, but not worth much. It's only as we grow and mature as God works with us that we are ready for that final firing. We see Joseph's example as a slave in



The Frankincense Tree

"A frankincense tree is scrubby and unpretentious...a tree of the genus *Boswellia*—one of several species that yield frankincense...scraping the bark produces gum-resin droplets. Harvesting takes place nearly year-round. The best of the storied trees grow in southern Arabia. Today just a few tons of frankincense are produced each year, mainly for rituals and health uses. At the time of Christ—celebrated at birth with frankincense—more than 3,000 tons may have been exported annually to consecrate temples, mask the odor of cremations, make cosmetics, and treat every conceivable ill from gout to a 'broken head.'

"Magically, milk white tears welled on the green wound. At some trees, tapped three weeks earlier, handfuls of precious ooze, now hardened to a translucent golden hue: pure frankincense—is collected. Here grows the world's best frankincense, in the narrow strip of Oman's desert plateau that borders the green mountains of the Dhofar region. Only here do the trees find conditions ideal: a steady tropical sun, pale limestone soil, heavy dew from the monsoon. ("Arabia's Frankincense Trail," *National Geographic* 1985, Vol. 168, No. 4, p. 474.)

Potiphar's house with his meticulousness and industry, but he is not quite ready for God's use in a powerful position, and he is thrown into jail for his final wounding or firing. "They bruised his feet with shackles, his neck was put in irons, till what he foretold came to pass, till the word of the LORD proved him true" (Psalm 105:18, 19, NIV). God expects us to endure till He is ready to deliver us.

"Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:6–7).

Frankincense represents the pleasant satisfaction God experiences when His children endure without grumbling the hardships of unrelenting service, especially to their brethren (see Romans 5:3–5).

Only on the third or last cutting does the tree produce real frankincense.

"With a few deft stokes of his spatula-like chisel, Haj Mahana bin Salem chipped away the gray, papery outer bark, smoothing a patch the size of his hand. Magically, milk white tears welled on the green wound. The old Bedouin began scraping another branch. With his bowl he moved from tree to tree, pursuing a harvest unchanged for thousands of years. At some trees, tapped three weeks earlier, Haj Mahana collected handfuls of precious ooze, now hardened to a translucent golden hue: pure frankincense" (*National Geographic*, 1985).

In order to be like Joseph, to stand fast no matter how we are wounded through the trials of this life, we need to be like that frankincense tree whose roots come out of solid rock and go very deep. Listen to the description: "The deep roots and its sucker-like appendage prevent the tree from being torn away from the stone during the violent storms that frequent this region; the tears from these hardy survivors are considered superior due to their more fragrant aroma" (*Britannica Concise Encyclopedia*).

What a metaphor! What a wonderful example, the frankincense tree with its uncomeliness, its ability to dig deep, its ability to withstand repeated deep wounds and to finally in the end produce a rich fragrance pleasing to God. And the tears running down the tree are transformed into something beautiful, aromatic, and worth their weight in gold.

"For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts" (Malacah 1:11).

God knew what He was doing when He commanded offerings in the tabernacle in the wilderness—a foreshadowing of events to come. And the ingredients of that offering are holy and pure—"us." Through much suffering and hardship, we become the end product, that extraordinary frankincense added to the meal as a sweet-savour offering and well pleasing to God. We can now rejoice with the Apostle Paul who said: "Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation" (Colossians 1:21, 22, NIV). Ω

Getting to Know Your Father

Do you have the close relationship with your Father in heaven that you desire? If not, what is preventing that intimacy you yearn for? Can you cry your eyes out before your Maker? Can you tell him everything that is in your heart—your every trouble, secret, fantasy, need? Many of us did not grow up having a close relationship with our father or grandfather, which makes it difficult to relate with our Father in heaven. He is just off somewhere—a stranger whom we think doesn't know our deepest needs and doesn't really care—the distance seemingly unbridgeable. That couldn't be further from the truth. These two great and awesome Beings love us more than life itself. They embody the word love.

A huge miraculous change of attitude should happen when we are called. An excellent example was Saul's conversion. When the single-minded Saul was humbled into submission, he asked Jesus Christ, *What shall I do, Lord?*—and a driven man was converted into a called one. Paul became close with God. The human Jesus also had an intimate relationship with His Father in heaven. We in the body of Christ should strive for this type of relationship.

Jesus tells us "...I am not alone, because the Father is with me" (John 16:32). Jesus knew the Father was always with Him. He had a connection that was unbreakable. That's possible for us.

Let's get practical, though—sometimes it is difficult to just drop to your knees and have instant connection. Our lives are so busy, working, running to and fro, that we get caught up in the physical pursuits. I need somehow to slow down before I can pray—otherwise, my mind is jumping all over the place, trying to talk to God with my mind drifting off to other things. How can that be effective communication when I'm being constantly bombarded and interrupted by my own jumbled thoughts? I have found a solution, and I want to share that solution. We need to prepare our minds for prayer, so I've been doing a journal every day. I reflect on the happenings, the conversations, the observations of the day.

Journaling is a way to balance this part of our lives, whether it's about what we are currently learning in the Bible, those things that are weighing us down, or simply about how our day was spent. It's a way to slow down and meditate on the important things.

When I am finished writing out my thoughts on a page (which takes 15–20 minutes), my mind is more focused. I then write out a prayer to God on another page, then I go to Him adding details, concerns and thoughts that I think of as I go along. This has helped me concentrate on what is important and helped my mind from wandering.



*"But the end of all things is at hand:
be ye therefore sober, and
watch unto prayer"
(1 Peter 4:7)*

by Jean Jantzen

You can do this early in the morning or in the evening or whenever it's best for you. Another benefit of writing out our thoughts is to help us examine our lives. It will help us later to look back at our recorded prayers and see how Christ has answered them.

A great source of inspiration is Herbert W. Armstrong's autobiography about his growing relationship with God and how God cared so much for the details of his everyday life. Mr. Armstrong said to his wife, when there was no milk for their son and they didn't have a dime, "There's only one thing to do... We're helpless, of ourselves. There's no human to help us. We'll have to rely on God. He has promised to supply all our need—and this is a need." Mr. Armstrong time after time relied on God, and God always came through, teaching him the lessons he needed to learn, especially to depend on God. The important thing is that he wrote these things down so we can benefit from his experience with these two loving, caring Beings. I know his book helped me understand our heavenly Father much better.

Today, we can read what King David wrote hundreds of years ago, a journal of his reflections, feelings, lamentations, praises, and prayers. We can learn a great deal from his writings. Following his example will help us to also become a man or woman after God's own heart. We, too, can write down what is most important to us. Like us, David asks, "How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me" (Psalms 13:2)? In studying the Psalms, we learn David goes to God with everything: for healing, Psalms 6:2; for thanksgiving, Psalms 100; for praise of God, Psalms 103; and for repentance and forgiveness, Psalms 51. David reflects on the evil that surrounds him and human nature, his own included (Psalms 12). We know writing these thoughts down helped David focus; it helped him have an intimate relationship with the Father.

He says, "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up (Psalms 5:3). "...for the LORD hath heard the voice of my weeping" (Psalms 6:8). David talked with God throughout the day, and we should too.

"I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved" (Psalms 16:8). It's important to David that he remains "...the apple of the [God's] eye..." (Psalms 17:8). It should be our longing to be the apple of our Father's eye, too.

David learned over the years, "The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore"

(Psalms 121:7–8). That's a profound statement—think on it!

We all know we should pray, but are we truly effective? It's easier said than done. I think we all want this closeness, this oneness, with the Father and Son—but don't know how. It is imperative we become close—our eternal life depends upon it. And we cannot do this on our own. In our weakness and neediness and lack of discipline, we need to cry out for strength and power and love of His Spirit for a thriving spiritual union.



In Christ we enter into this intimacy by receiving the spirit of adoption, causing us to cry out *Abba! Father!* (Romans 8:15). God's spirit makes all things possible. "...God hath said, I will dwell in them [you], and walk in them [you]; and I will be their [your] God, and they [you] shall be my people...I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Corinthians 6:16–18).

Ω

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Atheism

The dogmatic belief that there was no beginning, and there was nothing in it. And nothing did nothing, and then magically erupted for no reason, creating everything, and then a bunch of everything became all-ness and magically rearranged itself for no apparent reason whatsoever into self-replicating bits which turned into dinosaurs and other highly complex beings.

Makes perfect sense—to an atheist.

Sermon Transcriptions

by Dianne Sain



Dianne Sain

The first of transcribed sermons has been submitted to Vance Stinson for publishing on the CGI website.

I have taken on this laborious task because I saw a *need* for this service due to my own circumstances.

I enjoy Bible study very much, but do not enjoy sitting in an office chair at my computer to watch DVDs. Since I am the only one in my home in a quest to know God, I must go about this while respecting others. By printing out the sermons, I am able to take them to an easy chair, read, and meditate on them.

Several years ago, Mike James put out a sermon on CD about Elijah, as to whether he died or not, and whether he is in heaven. I just could not grasp it all quickly. I listened to this CD several times in my car while driving to work. I just wanted to stop the car and write everything down because my mind was racing. I realized I needed to just transcribe the whole thing so I could proceed at my own pace. I also wanted to mark my Bible, because I know I will need this information again to share with others in the future. Perhaps I'm not the only one desiring a written copy—for example, the hard of hearing may be frustrated in missing points in the sermons occasionally, and others may not have access to CD or DVD players.

Of course I cannot do this job alone. Transcribing is time consuming, and sermons often need to be edited for clarity. I like to send a transcript back to the speaker so he can clarify and “fill in the blanks” so to speak, when I haven't been able to understand or hear clearly. So far, the speakers have graciously undertaken the task and encouraged me in this project. The Pittsburg church already has a good start on a transcription project, and in addition to posting on their own website, has given permission to add them to the headquarters site.

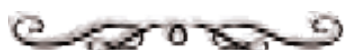
We need help with this project! Those of you who can listen and type what you hear could do these transcriptions. (I can give you information on getting a foot pedal set up for starting and stopping the CD or DVD.) We could send these transcriptions to others, who would edit them. If you have editing experience, you are needed in this project. A few minutes of your time here and there would turn out to be a blessing to others.

You may contact me at:

dianesain@bellsouth.net or
info@hickorycgi.org

Ω

Dianne, a member of the Hickory, North Carolina congregation, is the pianist and the website creator/editor for the local church. She is a medical transcriptionist in addition to being the mother of three, and has five grandchildren.



Here's How You Can Have the Best Feast Ever!

Year by year we hear mention of “the best Feast ever.” How can this be? Does this just “happen,” or is there something you can DO to assure each Feast will be your best Feast ever?

by Lloyd W. Cary

It's coming! Feast fever! Do you find your temperature rising with excitement as you think and plan for this year's Feast of Tabernacles? We do!

We hear much talk about “the best Feast ever.” How is this possible? How can each Feast be better than the last? Does it just “happen,” or is there something you can do to assure it? To keep from having an “accidental” or “happenstance” Feast, some planning is necessary. There is a wise saying, “Never put off until tomorrow what you can do today.” How true!

Let's examine some ways to assure this year's Feast is *the best Feast ever*.

A Checklist is One Way to Plan to Have the BEST FEAST EVER.

Begin a small notebook and make a checklist of the things you need to do before leaving for the Feast and the items you want to take:

- Notify work or school
- Stop mail and newspaper
- Make arrangements for pets
- Motel reservations
- Maps, tour book, GPS
- Traveler's checks
- Car: tune-up, oil, lube, filter, tires
- Bible, pen, and notebook
- Camera

Foresight saves stress. You will have to admit that if you went to the Feast and forgot any of these items, this could create some stress for you and your family at the Feast.

Plan Several Activities Ahead of Time

Each Feast site is unique. Each site offers something special, perhaps the beach, water falls, theme parks, amusement rides, skiing, horseback riding, camping, hiking, historical attractions, etc. To find out about activities and restaurants, you can write to the Chamber of Commerce of the festival site city and request information. You could also get on your computer and search out information or contact your automobile association for maps and information. Perhaps the best way is to talk to friends and people who have been there before.

Talk to your family after you receive this information and plan some activities ahead of time. This helps to build excitement in going to the Feast, especially with little children.

Pray For the Best Feast Ever

- Start praying ahead of time that God will bless this year's Feast of Tabernacles and that it will be *your* best Feast ever.
- Pray for all the sites where God will be placing His name through His ministry.
- Pray that these sites will be safe havens for God's people, where they can worship God in peace and harmony, eat good clean food, and participate in wholesome activities and recreation.
- Pray that God would inspire the speaking, the hearing, and the doing.

- Pray that the sermon messages will be positive, uplifting, and beneficial to all the brethren.
- Pray for God's protection for all of His people while they are traveling to, during, and from the Feast.
- Pray for a positive attitude for yourself, your family, and all of the brethren. It seems that at this time of year, Satan tries to influence us with trials and tests to see if he can get us into a bad attitude. Don't let little annoyances bother you while you are at the festival site. Be patient. When you go to a restaurant or a recreational activity, there will be longer lines to wait in due to the influx of people attending the Feast.

James 5:16 says: “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

Pray for the BEST FEAST EVER.

Plan to Serve for the Best Feast Ever

Plan now to *serve* at the Feast. Volunteers are priceless! There are many ways to serve:

- Make someone new in the Church feel welcome.
- If necessary, aggressively create peaceful situations.
- Volunteer to be an usher, sing in the choir, or work in the first-aid room or mother's room.
- Volunteer to give rides to services.
- Send cards or telephone those at home who were unable to attend.
- Keep your hotel room neat. Plan to leave a generous tip for the maid. Others are observing us.
- Leave generous tips for the waiter or the waitress.
- Offer to babysit so a couple can attend special events.
- Plan to have an evening alone.
- Invite fatherless children and their mothers to an activity.
- Include those with nonmember mates in activities.
- Pick up scraps of paper and trash on the floor.
- Serve up a smile. Proverbs 18:24 says, “A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly.”

The main ingredient in being friendly is to smile. It's FREE! It does not cost anything to smile. You can use your smile to break the ice in talking with a stranger. Your smile will put both of you at ease so you can begin a conversation with your new friend.

In Review:

1. *Develop* a checklist.
2. *Plan* several activities ahead of time.
3. *Pray* for the best Feast ever.
4. *Serve* at the Feast.

If you apply these four points diligently, you can anticipate having the BEST FEAST EVER. Ω

Church News

Wedding in Toledo, Ohio

*Evan is the son of CGI members
Mark and Chris Willee*



Charlotte and Evan Willee

**Congratulations
Charlotte and Evan!**

Susan and Jay Bohnett are pleased to announce their daughter, Charlotte Bohnett's marriage to Evan Willee, the son of Cheryl Steele, and Mark and Christine Willee. The high school sweethearts and long-time best friends were married on July 3, 2009 at Tamaron Country Club in Toledo, Ohio. Charlotte's attendants were maids of honor, Brittany Paepke and Colleen Mihaly, and bridesmaid, Alison Reny. Evan's attendants were best men, Michael Willee and Harrison Steele, and groomsmen, Brian Dupler and Jacob Cohen.

Charlotte and Evan are both graduates of Bowling Green State University, Charlotte with a BFA in Creative Writing and Evan with a BS in Journalism. Currently, Charlotte manages the Audiobook Cover Department at Midwest Tape in Holland, Ohio, and Evan works for Guardsmark Security at the BP Refinery in Oregon, Ohio. They're both pursuing secondary degrees with Evan at Owens Community College and Charlotte at Lawrence Technological University.

Charlotte and Evan celebrated their honeymoon in Antigua and now reside in Toledo, Ohio. They'd like to thank everyone for their support and well wishes. Ω

New Baptisms in Metro Manila Church, Philippines



Maranding Church Lanao Del Norte

We had several baptisms last July 11–12, 2009. On July 11, Sabbath afternoon, after the church service, Miss Farline Bagtas entered into a covenant with God the Father and the Lord Jesus. Rene Corpuz, assisted by Mr. Romie Guintu, performed the baptism ceremony at the swimming pool at the fourth floor of Metropolis Mall, Alabang City, Metro Manila. Miss Bagtas has been attending the Alabang South Manila congregation for more than a year, and has been contemplating baptism since this year's Passover.

On Sunday morning, July 12, 2009, Mr. and Mrs. Domingo and Melinda Gabiola also went through the waters of baptism officiated by Mr. Winston Co, pastor of the Metro Manila church, and assisted by Rene Corpuz. The ceremony was held at the swimming pool at the residence of Mr. Co. The couple had been fellowshipping with the church for over a year. The couple came into contact with the church through the monthly Bible Studies being conducted at the EDSA Shangri-La Hotel in Ortigas Centre, Pasig City. Ω

Submitted by Rene Corpuz
rene@cghilms.org



Melinda and Domingo Gabiola



Rene Corpuz, Farline Bagtas, and Romie Guintu



NOTICE:

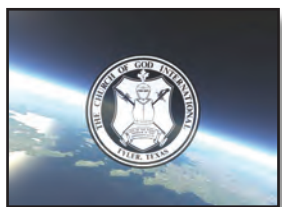
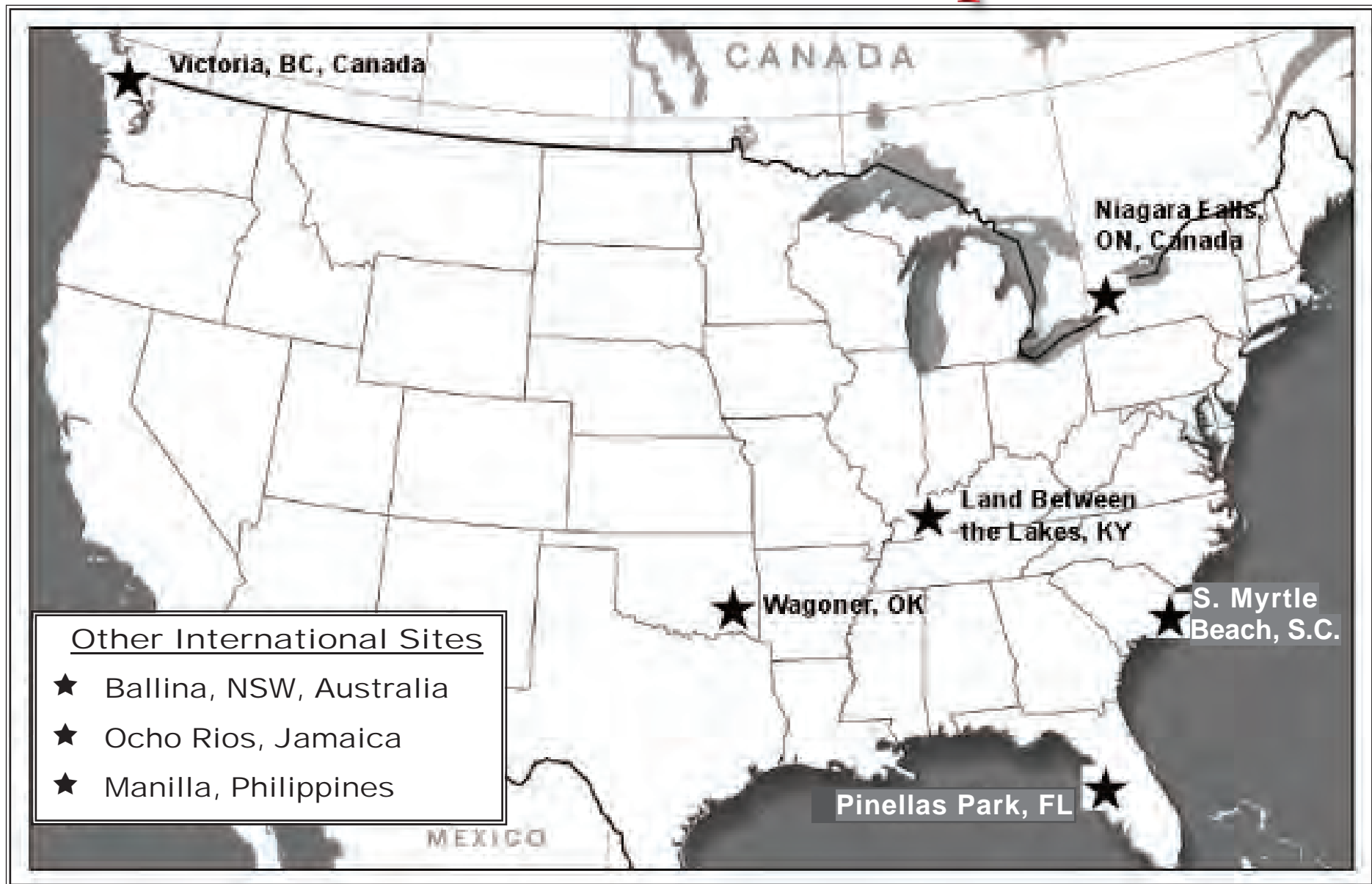
The home office in Tyler would like to recruit the services of foreign-language writers and speakers. If you can offer any assistance, please call at 903-939-2929.

What's going on in your local church area? 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 can publish it under "Church News." We'd love to hear from you!

The editor



Feast Site Map



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Pre-Feast Issue!
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