



THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

The official newspaper of The Church of God International

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"Put on the whole armor of God"

2004

The United States of America and Great Britain— *Enigmas of the World?*

Why are these cultures so misunderstood? Some would say they're so hedonistic and violently licentious, yet charitable, benevolent, blessed, and extremely affluent. How can this be? Why is it that "reaping what you sow" doesn't seem to apply to these countries? Is there a missing piece of the puzzle needing more serious consideration? Is there more to these cultures than meets the eye? Perhaps a different perspective is required?

By Bill Watson

Many of us today are very aware of the fact that the world is engaged in a "war on terrorism." This is not just an American and/or British or Jewish war. Terrorism has "touched down" on Middle Eastern nations, too—like Saudi Arabia, who itself is known for harboring terrorists. Some political pundits have gone as far as describing this growing confrontation as World War III.

Though that description may be somewhat exaggerated, make no mistake—things *have* changed! Domestic air travel is viewed differently. Business investment, as well as personal investing, is approached with a far greater degree of prudence. Considerations on where to vacation or go to school or expand one's business interest are handled with increased diligence.

So, I think many of us would agree the "war on terrorism" has affected our way of life. And, it has finally infected human societies on a global scale. There is no nation free from the concerns of this worldwide scourge of "cat and mouse" called terrorism.

But how many of us are aware of another type of war that is raging all around us, a war that is also intent on eroding the very foundations, the underpinning, of our Western society? This war is very subtle. Its methods are extremely crafty and often blatantly seductive. There are a variety of techniques, from exploitation to very indirect innuendo, but all are used in the "debate of ideas" to persuade you to accept the changes that are being advanced.

There is an assortment of venues that are used, including our legislators, the lobbying of private interest groups, and, of course, the sound stages and production companies of the entertainment and media communities—all converging on one objective, and one objective alone: to change the standards and values of what was once a Judeo-Christian-based culture.

There are many books out today that outline many of the "signs of the times," announcing the "Death of the West." As a matter of fact, Pat Buchanan has recently written a book by that same title, describing some of this "handwriting on the wall." (I highly recommend it.) It's no secret that, if the current trends persist, much of the West, especially the United States of America, will be reduced to third world status. There are many pressures that are encroaching on what was once considered the status quo, and so instrumental in maintaining the freedoms and liberties of this one remaining, once morally stable, superpower. However, this should be no surprise to many of us as we begin to view the course of what appears to be the "beginning of the end."

In Jeremiah, chapter 30, the prophet writes about some very interesting prophetic events concerning two specific geopolitical entities "in the latter days" (verse 24). These two nations, connected in heritage to the God of your Bible, are identified as *Judah* and *Israel*.

Jeremiah assures us that God will not completely obliterate these two end-time countries from the families of the "latter day nations." On the contrary, He has reserved that fate for the nations He uses to correct and punish these cultures of His.



Osama Bin Laden

Conflicts with God But He is clear on the fact that, though He will ultimately preserve and save both *Israel* and *Judah*, this assurance is secured for a period of time yet in the future, when David

will be resurrected, at the beginning of the Millennium (Jeremiah 30:7-10). However, in the meantime, prior to the commencement of the Millennium and David's resurrection, punishment and correction "in measure" will occur (verse 11) if trends that God considers sinful and lawless continue. So, if these cultures that carry the names of *Israel* and *Judah* continue to



Is this a portent of the prophesied time of "Jacob's trouble"?

behave sinfully, they will most assuredly reap this correction and punishment God has reserved for those He holds responsible for knowing better.

The United States and British Commonwealth nations, along with our Jewish counter-parts, have behaved badly, both socially and in hegemony—and they know better! They are therefore responsible for their bad behavior. Their history and present geopolitical profile connects them with the *identities* of the nations of *Israel* and *Judah* "in the latter days." God is not amused by the "quality of culture" that has grown out of them in the time allotted and with the affluence resulting from the promises made to our spiritual forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Therefore, knowing some of these things, it's imperative we do the best we can to better acquaint ourselves with what God expects of us in these "latter days." (Write for our free taped lecture series on the *Biblical Origins of the British Commonwealth and United States of America*.)

You see, so many people today do what they think or feel is right for them. We here in the West, specifically in North America and Britain, have become a very secular, humanistic, and hedonistic society. Very few in our Western culture investigate what the God of the Bible might expect of them. In fact, the majority of people today attempt to find a theology, philosophy, or general concept of "God," if at all, that

suits them—that is compatible with their lifestyle. Far be it from most of us to entertain the idea of following a lifestyle in accordance with God's Word, the Bible. Most people today don't want to be involved in what they would consider interference with their lives. The fact is, today we have many who are attempting to squeeze God out of everything, and anything, that has the name of God associated with it. Simple things like "In God we trust," which is on the dollar, or "one nation under God," which has been a part of the Pledge of Allegiance for decades.

Yes, unfortunately, our nation is beginning to show the lack of our Judeo-Christian influence through the apparent abandonment of the God of *Israel* and *Judah*. For instance, it wasn't long ago that fatherhood and motherhood were viewed as something to aspire to along with a monogamous, lifelong marriage. But those days are fast disappearing. Marriage is being redefined to include the legitimizing of homosexual unions. "Shacking up" is no longer viewed with disdain. If you become unwontedly pregnant you can legally "execute" your unborn child by getting an abortion! Fornication is no longer perceived negatively among the unmarried. In fact, for many singles, sex is considered a normal and expected part of

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...and MUCH MORE!



Terrorism reaches the Pentagon.

ENIGMAS

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the premarital relationship. And the divorce rate today runs rampant within the heterosexual community.

Pornography, prostitution, corruption in business, politics, pundits, entertainment, and private interest groups lobbying for their particular agendas, along with many well-intentioned, but usually very "self-willed" or "party" promoting, national and/or international diplomatic policies, all contribute to the disgust and repugnance of many on the national and international levels. And we wonder why other nations have this anti-American attitude!

Cultural war strategies

Alexander Solzhenitzyn, anti-communist and Noble Prize winner in literature, had said, "To destroy a people, you must first sever their roots." The heritage of any nation is an instrumental part of its culture, and today much of that heritage in the United States is under attack. Using the guise of "political correctness" and the methods of "incrementalism," many of the historical events and political forefathers of the United States are being demonized. The criticism and ridicule of these "God-blessed" personalities, conditions, and circumstances have served to demoralize and embarrass the national and international profile of this nation, which has been built on the promises of God as part of its spiritual heritage; but unfortunately, this has been forgotten by many today.

So many have forgotten that this nation was a God-ordained prophetic event for the purpose of advancing the *scepter promise* of humanity, which is *Jesus Christ*. And God has preserved and cared for this nation, the United States, and others under the commonwealth banner, including the establishment of the current nation state of Judah (Israel), in order to accomplish His salvation mission. However, it's becoming quite clear that we, once a Judeo-Christian-based culture, are abandoning our God-ordained role and becoming increasingly vulnerable to succumbing to a pleasure-loving, epicurean type of society.

In Isaiah 1:3, God says that the ox and ass know their master, but Israel doesn't consider. "Ah sinful nation, a people heavy with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are separated and gone backward" (verse 4).

The prophet Jeremiah continues this indictment concerning the conditions of that ancient ten-tribed coalition of Israel that today's USA and many of the commonwealth cultures of the former British Empire appear to be following presently: "For thus says the LORD, Your bruise is

incurable, and your wound is grievous [Jeremiah is referencing social conditions]. There is none to plead your cause, that you should be bound up: thou have no healing medicines [these social ills are irreversible]. All thy lovers have forgotten you [international alliances]; they seek you not; for I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of your iniquities; because your sins were increased. Why criest you for your affliction? Your sorrow is incurable for the multitude of your iniquity: because your sins were increased, I have done these things unto you" (Jeremiah 30:12-15).

This description of Israel's unfortunate condition is a convicting commentary for those who consider the immutable consequences of breaking God's laws, understanding that God has obligated Himself to punish these modern-day Israelites for their transgressions. It's quite daunting, to say the least.

Imagine a world without the United States and Britain

Frankly, it's quite frightening when one takes the time to consider what this world would be like without the combined political and military might of the British and American cultures over the last 400 years or so. And, though all of us know that these geopolitical entities are not perfect by any stretch of the imagination—nor have their leaders been anywhere near sainthood—the results are obvious: without their political influence, military machinery, and *unconditional* divinely blessed success, history proves this world would be a "socialistic nightmare."

Just consider the alternatives of World Wars I and II. Consider what this world would be like if the Soviet Union had been able to achieve its objectives. Again, the results are obvious. We see no flood of people, at break-neck speed, risking their lives to immigrate to the former Soviet Union. Quite the contrary, if they could they would leave at break-neck speed.

Consider the empires of the past, like the Hapsburg, Napoleon, Garibaldi, Hirohito, and Hitler regimes of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries. Would we have wanted these socialist tyrants to be ruling the world today as they so desperately intended to do? No! I think it's fair to say the world is far better off today with the geopolitical influences and dominions of Britain and the United States.

Unfortunately, it appears that modern-day trends indicate that the days of these once-great superpowers are indeed numbered. And though there may be some who would applaud the demise of the United States and the setting of the sun on the British Empire, it only goes to prove how ignorant they are of what will replace it.

Because what is around the corner, waiting on the threshold of tomorrow's horizon, is a tyrannical socialist empire of political and military power that will emerge onto the geopolitical scene, *profiled* by your *Bible* as a "beast" combine of Babylonian, Persian, Greco-Macedonian, and Romanish hedonism.

Daniel 7:23 reveals, "The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be different from all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces." The apostle John describes it as a combination of all the above mentioned empires by portraying it (in Revelation 13:1-3) as an amalgamated combination of these beasts existing in a single entity that has been restored (healed from its apparently deadly injury) to the wonderment and chagrin of the whole world, taking its prophetic global position on into historical perdition and infamy.

This will be a very horrible time for planet earth and is sure to result "after" God corrects and punishes the cultures of the modern-day Israelites of North America, Britain, and a few other Commonwealth countries. Additionally, the modern-day nation of Judah, known today by the secular world as Israel, will also shortly thereafter be betrayed, invaded, and occupied, to the astonishment of its inhabitants. The brotherly alliances of the United States and Britain, which have provided protection for so many years, will be eliminated and neutralized by this global beast, allowing for this unfortunate invasion to occur once again upon the Jewish people.

The book of Daniel is explicit: "He [the beast power, alias the "King of the North"] shall enter also into the *glorious land* and many shall be overthrown: but these [currently Muslim countries] shall escape out of his hand, Edom and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon [believed to be the modern day area of Jordan]" (Daniel 11:41).

However, keep in mind this would not happen as long as the United States continues to retain the geopolitical power it presently has. Yet, we are told for certain that **this will happen**, which means that the United States and Britain will be *unable to protect Judah* from this attack. **That is a sobering reality!**

The cultural war contributes

The point is that those who criticize, debate, and endeavor to change the very standards of laws and Christian-based values, and additionally attempt to "gainsay" rhetorically the foreign policies of the United States or Britain, should **BEWARE**—the day is coming when God will execute His judgment on these cultures for failing to set the proper beacon of godly values, freedom, and liberty as defined by His

laws. Consequently, those of the *anti-American persuasion* will have what they seem to want: **a world without** the United States and Britain as we know it today.

But, keep in mind, the alternative will be quite grotesquely consequential. It will be like no other time in the history of humankind. It will terminate the current global equilibrium and issue a "time of the Gentiles" as never before!

Jesus Christ described it in Luke 21:24: "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

Jesus further describes it in Mark 13:19-20: "For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be. And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake [the "elect" are those Christians who keep the commandments of God and testimony of Jesus Christ—Revelation 12:17], whom he has chosen, he has shortened the days."

So, those who want to call the efforts against the war on terrorism silly, and just hypocritical Western double standards that were indecently hasty and dubiously rationalized with defiant prosecution, are ignorantly playing into the hands of the "cultural war activists" who want to clear the way for a **global socialistic empire—a one world government**. The unfortunate reality of this is *they will get what they want*, but not before God is ready to correct and punish His birthrighted cultures. When that happens, the world will go through some of the most horribly violent and reprehensible times in its history.

Until then, may the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, turn *your* hearts back to Him; and hopefully, for the meantime, He will continue to bless the United States of America and Save the Queen! ... "lest I [He] come and smite the earth with a curse" (Malachi 4:6).

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The Ten
Christian Checks

Should I...or shouldn't I? That is the question. And the answer is...

By Lloyd W. Cary

We often hear the question asked, "Is it okay to..." do, say, or think a particular thing? "Would it be a sin to..." is a frequently asked question even after reading 1 John 3:4: "Sin is the transgression of the law." Some matters are hard to discern in today's world.

However, the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asun-

der of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Hebrews 4:12).

A wise man once said, "All liberals take this attitude: 'If the Word of God does not specifically forbid something, it is all right to do it.' We must apply the spiritual principle. When there is no 'thus saith the Lord,' you must apply the spiritual principle."

Following are ten Christian checks to help us discern the spiritual principle as to whether a word should be spoken or an action should be taken in questionable circumstances. Meditate upon these things.

1) Can you sincerely thank God for what you are about to partake of?

2) Would you want to be found doing it

if Jesus Christ were to come back at this instant?

3) Could it prevent anyone else from finding Jesus Christ as his or her Savior?

4) Will it edify or help anyone else find the truth as the word is defined in John 17:17?

5) Does your conscience condemn you while you do it?

6) Do you have any doubts about it? (Rule of thumb: when in doubt, don't!)

7) Would you have others do this to you?

8) Will it be evil-spoken-of unnecessarily because of the way in which you do it?

9) Would Jesus Christ do it if He were in your place at that time?

10) Are you closer to Jesus Christ today than you were yesterday? If not, who moved?

Are You a “Legalist”?

Many accuse God’s church of being “legalistic” because we teach the keeping of the Ten Commandments. Is this true? Is it a sin to keep God’s law? Do you want to be legal or illegal with God?

By Lloyd W. Cary

Many have erroneously accused the Churches of God, who teach that God’s Ten Commandments must be kept, of “legalism”—of trying to “earn” our salvation by good works or commandment-keeping. Nothing could be further from the truth. This epithet is mainly hurled at those who advocate the requirement to keep the Almighty’s Sabbath and holy days. These unfounded misconceptions convince many unthinking people that we are preaching “nothing but law, law, law!” Sadly, this is how many Sabbath-breakers view Sabbath-keepers. “Law and grace” are held in as highly contrasting view as possible, as though they were opposites. In truth, law and grace go together like hand-in-glove.

What is the Bible definition of sin? First John 3:4 defines sin as the transgressing, or breaking, of the law.

What is grace? Grace is the unmerited, undeserved clemency, pardon, and forgiveness of sin, or law-breaking, by a loving, all-merciful God. There is no conflict or contradiction here. In fact, if there were no law to break, there would be no sin and therefore no need of grace for having broken it! Why? Because “sin is not imputed when there is no law” (Romans 5:13).

If this line of ill-reasoning were to be followed, we would be forced to conclude that if there is no law to break, there would be no sin, and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on your behalf would be needless. Seen in this light, the “no-law” doctrine is blasphemous!

What is legalism?

To be “legal” means to be in harmony with the law; to conform with or act lawfully. Which law is referred to, theologically? Primarily, God’s law, based upon the Ten Commandments.

Question: Does God become angry with us if we try to obey Him? Consider: Are you pleased or angry when your children obey you? Do you become angry or pleased when they disobey you? The answer is evident and God feels the same way.

There are uncounted volumes written about the horrors of observing the Fourth Commandment, but strange to say, one cannot find any books written about faults of the other nine commandments. Virtually all religions adhere to them. Some religious denominations go so far as to claim the Ten Commandments are all done away, obsolete, or “nailed to the cross,” only to bring back the other nine!

What does the Bible itself say about God’s law? “The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward” (Psalm 19:7-11).

Jesus warned, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil [obey, complete, or fill to the full]. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle [the smallest dotting of an “i” or the crossing of a “t”] shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:17-19).

It is said of Christ in Isaiah 42:21, “He will magnify the law, and make it honorable.” That is, He would make it even more binding than the mere letter of the law; He would make it binding upon the heart and the inward parts.

Christ added, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).

Finally, He asked the heart-piercing question, “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say” (Luke 6:46)?

If the Bible is so plain in showing that God’s law has not been done away, where do these ideas of legalism come from? Let us delve into some history.

How it began

In the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, when the Protestant Reformation began unlocking the minds of millions of Roman Catholics to the truth about “salvation through faith in Jesus Christ,” the term “salvation by works” meant quite a different thing than it means today. In those dark days, Catholics thought they could earn salvation through such acts such as the following:

- Doing penance to win forgiveness of sins.
- Paying the priesthood sums of money to pray for dead loved ones in hell or purgatory.
- Acts of self-flagellation or torture, such as kneeling for hours on end, or crawling roughshod for miles on hands

and knees.

- Auricular confession to priests.
 - Enforced celibacy and adherence to many man-made ordinances.
 - Repetitiously saying the rosary and ritualistic prayers. Vain repetition of prayers to Mary and other dead saints.
- These manmade regulations were introduced by the Roman Catholic Church and influenced the lives of countless millions of believers through the Dark Ages. The Protestant Reformers rightly exposed these practices as being *unscriptural* and absolutely worthless as far as salvation was concerned (Matthew 7:7; 15:9).

The Protestant stand was—and still is—that according to Scripture “salvation is available—free of charge—by faith in Jesus Christ,” not by anything we could do, however worthy it may otherwise appear to be. This is what those early Protestant Reformers meant when they accused the Catholic Church of trying to obtain “salvation by works.”

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The Passing of a Pope...

Historical Turning Point?

The twenty-first century presents the Catholic Church with unprecedented challenges. The momentum of modernity and geopolitical globalization—in economics, politics, multiculturalism, morality, militarism, and yes, even religion—demands a more contemporary and progressive approach. Will Catholicism make the adjustment? Billions of human beings are focused on the Vatican—but why?

By Bill Watson

Over the last thirty-eight years of my life, I have not ceased to be amazed at the attraction the pontiff generates. It's incredible how some who may consider him to be just a passive figurehead could galvanize such a force of unity and empowerment. However, this only serves to illustrate just how uninformed so many people are of the rich, dark, and powerful influence the Catholic Church has had over approximately the last two millennia.

The world's current pontiff, former Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, the archbishop of Karkow, has recently surpassed twenty-five years of pontifical leadership. It was on October 22, 1978, that he was officially christened John Paul II and placed on the papal throne.

At that time he was placed in the midst of liberal trends that were building from as far back as John XXIII, who was intent to revive the Church. However, this first ever Polish Pope and first pontiff of non-Italian ethnicity since Adrian VI (1522-23), and youngest (58 years old) since Pius IX (1846-78), was consumed with "fire in his belly" to resist the "winds of liberalization."

He grew up in the shadow of the Third Reich and later the oppressive heel of the Soviet Republic, perpetrators of socialistic global values. His papal legacy will be characterized as a resistance fighter to the pressures of tyrannical dictators and governments, while at the same time an advocate for the solidarity of doctrinal tradition.

Pope John Paul II's world-renowned efforts

His slogans and rallying cry will be best remembered by his statement, "Do not be afraid," which was spoken for the first time at his commencement ceremony in October of 1978 and still reverberates in the minds and hearts of traditional and Catholic Christians throughout the world. Additionally, as his papacy continued, the word "solidarity" took on new meaning, first resonating in the minds and hearts of Poles in Poland, and then as many would attest and have you believe, became the undercurrent force and rallying cry resulting in the dismantling of Eastern Europe and ultimately the Socialistic Republic of the Soviet Union. However, that remains to be determined. Yet, the perception for many throughout the world is that he, Pontiff John Paul II, is to be credited with, *at minimum, contributing to the empowerment of trends* responsible for the demise of the Soviet Empire.

It is a known fact that this Pope is one of the most educated and internationally well-traveled papal figures in the history of the Catholic Church. He knows and speaks over a dozen foreign languages and has traveled well over two hundred times with 102 trips abroad. He has covered almost 700,000 miles during his reign as pontiff, including visits as far away as South Korea, Papua New Guinea, Mexico, and even Cuba.

Wherever he goes, literally tens of thousands are attracted to these personal appearances. For instance 300,000 saw him in Santiago de Compostela (Spain) in 1989, approximately one million in Poland in 1991, three million in the Philippines in 1995, while approximately one million attended in Paris. Many more locations could be mentioned, but it just goes to prove and substantiate that the Catholic Church remains a legitimate modern cultural and religious force to contend with.

Current problems facing the Catholic Church

Today, John Paul is suffering with a variety of health issues and appears to be near death. Many have postulated he will be passing in the not too distant future. Yet, this current 83-year-old pontiff continues to be revered, and admired, *by about 30 to 40 percent of the world.*

However, the Catholic Church is currently facing a curious paradox in the offing: the selection of a new pontiff who will contend with the modern global issues of so many social, political, and military considerations, which are unlike any others of previous generations, and at the same time needing to address and define the specific sac-

erdotal doctrinal issues that are crucial to the mission and direction of the Church. Some would say a **new universal (Catholic) vision** is needed, appropriated to better serve the needs of a merging world determined to pursue the goal of worldwide globalization that hopes to standardize human rights and environmental management.

Yet, in spite of these demands and awesome organizational uncertainties, Pope John Paul II refuses retirement and, *instead*, requests prayer to **continue** his radical worldwide appeal. That's a message that disturbs some, because his challenging homilies confront a wealthy world of developed nations with constant reminders of the need to relieve the suffering of the less fortunate poor and underdeveloped third world nations, which consequently encourages a more socialistic approach to facing our global problems. Many in the developed Western nations are uncomfortable with this.

So pressures continue to mount within the church as the need to address these many contemporary social and doctrinal issues gain priority, momentum, and importance. He has attracted criticism for his conservative outlooks regarding his resistance to changing positions on ordaining female priests, relaxation of birth control, abortion, celibacy, and divorce. Additionally, he refuses to address the issues concerning the loss of priests, increasing lawsuits due to pedophilia and other aberrant sexual behavior, the rise of homosexuality inside the priesthood, and other assorted problems inherent with an organizational structure such as the Catholic Church.

In countering these criticisms, he has insulated himself in an arena of traditionalism, surrounding himself with individuals and priestly orders, while initiating movements within the Church of a conservative nature. Pressures are growing, though, for the **Universal Church** to explore new options of what kind of "face" it intends to put on as it begins to participate *more intensely* with the global unification of our changing world.

European unity is gaining momentum

At the same time, the emerging European Union is gaining influence in and among the community of nations. It has begun to participate in areas never before expected. The E.U. is engaged on more fronts than ever before. Areas like space exploration, peace plan negotiations, economics, corporate mergers, biogenetics, environmental management, industrial and manufacturing standardization through the listing of ISO required certifications, and yes, even bar codes on **all goods** that are sold *throughout the world.*

Many of the European Union nation states currently remain predominantly Catholic, but according to J.D. Wilke, in his writing, "Global Population: A Reality," he mentions that in the year 2000 the numbers of Muslims surpassed Catholics worldwide. You can be assured *this did not go unnoticed by the Catholic Church hierarchy.* However, as if that isn't important enough, if current trends continue, some prognosticators have said that Muslims may also surpass the Catholic population in **Europe** by as early as the year 2015. This has many in the Vatican extremely concerned about the future of Catholicism and its relationship to a centuries-old dream and hope of a resurrected and "healed" United European Empire.

There are many challenging concerns confronting the Catholic Church at the outset of the twenty-first century. But perhaps the Church's greatest challenge concerns the need for a fresh new **Universal Church vision**, perceived to be disconnected from and unrelated to the medieval management style of John Paul II and, consequently, could capture the hearts of Catholics around the world and instill new energy and a renewed sense of vigor, enthusiasm, and commitment. A voice is needed that can articulate the concerns of the poorer nations of the world and, at the same time, persuade a humanistic secular power block of nation states (the E.U.?) to take the lead in geopolitical

initiatives that would indeed begin to impact the world in a major socialistic way.

What does the Bible say?

In Revelation 13:11-14, we see a **second beast** described as one coming up out of the earth. This beast is described as a *lamb*, but *speaks like a dragon*. He will exonerate the *first beast* described in Revelation 13:1-9 and cause many to admire, honor, and obey this secular system. We are told this will be accomplished with miracles, wonders, and signs in the sight of men. This **second beast** is *closely associated* with a hedonistic empire and charismatic epicurean styled leader, described in Daniel 8:23-25.

Notice Daniel's statements about what this leader does; **"And in the latter time** of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power [remember, he shall be allied with other nations that are described as a coalition of ten kings—Daniel 7:24; Revelation 17:12-13]; and he shall destroy wonderfully [or *wondrously, greatly*], and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand: and he shall magnify himself in his heart and **by prosperity** shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.

Many commentaries, and scholars will admit that they see a pre-type fulfillment of these scriptures, in the years 167-164 B.C.E., in the personage of Antiochus Epiphanies and his transgressions against the Jewish people and the defamation of the second temple. There are enough historical facts in Jewish history to make a very good case that this *has been fulfilled in type*. However, *it's fair to say, only in type*, because it is an obvious fact he did not "stand up against the Prince of princes," **who happens to be Jesus Christ.**

So, it's apparent there is an end-time application and **dual fulfillment** of some *modern-day leader* who will have a similar persona, as Antiochus of old, who will rise up onto the world stage of geopolitics and is well connected to a Babylonian, Persian, Greco-Romanish system model that is intimately anchored to the ancient heathen "Mysteries" of early Babylonian origin, just this side of the Noachian deluge. It remains to be seen as to who this up and coming modern-day ruler will be, but whoever it is will have the benefit of not only worldwide military and economic power (Daniel 7:23), but also the influence of a major religious institution that has an enormous amount of history associated with the nations and peoples of this world, including God's church, or **those Christian people** who kept the Commandments of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ (Revelation 12:17).

Notice that this **second beast** is described in Revelation 17 as a *great whore* who has politically fornicated with the kings (secular governments) of the earth. She has ruled many peoples, nations, and ethnicities (verse 15), and is responsible for the blood of the martyrs of Jesus Christ (verse 6). We are told that she sits on seven mountains (verse 9), and is that city which reigns over the kings of the earth (verse 18).

When one considers the descriptions aforementioned in Revelation 13 and 17 and the patterns of factual historical records, the connections of a **revived Holy Roman Empire** whose "*wound has been healed*" becomes clear. Though there are additional meanings throughout Revelation 17, a couple of literal meanings cannot be overlooked. One point being that the Vatican is renowned for being built among, or on, seven literal mountains or hills. They are known by specific names: Aventine, Palatine, Capitoline, Quirinal, Viminal, Esquiline, and Caelian. Second, we cannot ignore the contextual fact that

Continued on next page

John, writing in about 90–95 C.E., was indeed recognizing that *great city* on the ascent at this time, during and near the end of his life, which carried the name of the empire—that city being Rome!

Remain faithfully alert

So as we approach the time of John Paul II's passing, don't underestimate the potential *historical turning point* this may portend. It will be extremely intriguing to see and

curiously stimulating to watch what this first transfer of papal leadership in the twenty-first century will produce.

Europe is on the move and gaining some momentum, and with what **Bible prophecy explains**, along with the *patterns of previous historical footprints*, the **Universal (Catholic) Church** appears to be destined, and positioned, to increase the pace as it proceeds to address the timely issues facing our world's cultures and its own relativity in an environment fast advancing in the ways of secular

humanism.

The **Universal Christian Church** has some "turning points" up ahead, but it's historical "fruit" has proved it can be very successfully adaptable and accommodating toward "garnering the masses" for the purpose of achieving the ultimate dream—that of going forward and aligning with this worldwide geopolitical socialistic Euroclydon that, ultimately, it will mount and ride into prophetic perdition.

The Unanswered Question About the Sabbath: *Did the Patriarchs Keep It?*

By George Ramocan

The silence in the book of Genesis concerning the observance of the Sabbath has led many to believe that the Patriarchs never observed it. The reason given for this view is that neither the word *Sabbath* nor any command to observe it appear in the book of Genesis.

This argument defies sound reasoning, since of the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament, the word *Sabbath* appears in only fourteen of them. The books of Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, Ezra, Esther, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Lamentations, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Obediah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habbakuk, Zepphaniah, Haggai, Zacchariah, and Malachi do not mention the Sabbath.

Based on the anti-Sabbatarian argument, the Sabbath was not observed during the time of these books. This makes no sense, for the Sabbath was observed during the times described in these books. This objection, therefore, cannot stand.

Historically unsound

The *Word Biblical Commentary* offers a far better reason why the word *Sabbath* might not have appeared in Genesis. It says, "[I]t is striking that the Sabbath is not mentioned by name. Cassuto (1:65–68) suggests that this is because the Babylonians termed the fifteenth day of the month, the day of the full moon, *Sap-attu*; so Genesis, not wishing to confuse the two, avoids the term" (Vol. 1, p. 35). Cassuto's interpretation is attractive in the light of the possible polemic against Near Eastern practices elsewhere in chapter 1.

The *Fausset's Bible Dictionary* says the following: "The history of the patriarchs for 2,500 years, comprised in the small compass of Genesis, necessarily omits many details which it takes for granted, as the observance of the Sabbath."

The fact that we do not see a commandment to keep the Sabbath in the book of Genesis cannot be used as proof that it was not commanded.

This is proven in Genesis 26:5. After the death of Abraham, God said to Isaac, "Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws."

This text reveals a number of important points: First, God commanded Abraham to obey His laws, statutes, and commandments; second, God's commandment was communicated verbally ("Abraham obeyed my voice"); and third, the commandment to keep the laws of God was not recorded in the book of Genesis at the time it was given.

The fact that we do not see a commandment or law stated in Genesis does not mean it was not given. Indeed, Genesis is a book of beginnings, not a book of laws.

ARGUMENTS FOR THE OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH IN GENESIS

To know whether the Sabbath was observed in Genesis, one must examine the relevant accounts given in Scripture. The primary statement in Genesis concerning the Sabbath is found in Genesis 2:3. I believe that this text reveals much more than is normally credited to it.

The text reads, "By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done."

In commenting on the Hebrew word used for "work" in Genesis 2:2–3: the *Word Biblical Commentary* says, "[The Hebrew word for the word] 'work' occurs three times in vv 2–3. It is the ordinary word for human work (cf. 39:11; Exod 20:9), and it is therefore a little unexpected that the extraordinary divine activity involved in creating heaven and earth should be so described. It may be, as Westermann suggests (1:170), that this word has been deliberately chosen to hint that man should stop his daily work on the seventh day."

This comment is absolutely devastating to the position held by non-Sabbatarians. The *Word Biblical Commentary* is here suggesting that (1) God's intent for man to observe the Sabbath was "hinted" at in creation; (2) the universality of the Sabbath is implied in the language of Genesis 2; this means the Sabbath was given to mankind generally; (3) the people who walked with God must have known about the Sabbath. This shatters the very foundation of the anti-Sabbatarian argument. Oh what confirmation of the words of Jesus Christ that the Sabbath was made for man!

The second point we learn from Genesis 2:3 is that the seventh day was blessed and made holy at creation. If the seventh day was made holy at creation, then it must have been holy at the time of Adam, Noah, Enoch, and Abraham.

Philosophical perspective

A question posed by Richard Baxter over two centuries ago remains relevant today. He asked, "Why should God begin two thousand years after [the creation of the world] to give men a Sabbath upon the reason of His rest from the creation of it, if He had never called man to that commemoration before?" (Richard Baxter, *Practical Works*, III, 774, edition 1707).

The closest some have come to answering this question is to say that God is progressively revealing himself to humanity, and so different things are revealed at different times in human history.

But this answer falls short. Progressive revelation does not mean that God is creating new things and revealing them to man.

Instead progressive revelation means that God is gradually enlarging man's understanding of the things He has already created. The fact that man discovered the law of gravity many years after creation does not mean it did not exist from creation. If God has created nothing new since creation, the Sabbath must have either existed from creation or it does not exist.

The scriptural evidence that the seventh day was in existence at the time of the creation is compelling. Exodus 20:11 says, "For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy."

The day on which God rested at creation is described here as the Sabbath. The *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* tells us: "The word 'Sabbath' does not occur in the [creation] story; but it is recognized by critics of every school that the author means to describe the Sabbath as primeval" (Vol. IV, p. 2630).

The issue then is not whether the Sabbath existed from creation, but whether the Patriarchs observed it. If the Sabbath was holy from creation, it is unthinkable that Enoch, who walked with God, did not know it. If he were unaware of it, God would have been guilty of causing him to desecrate it. If he desecrated that which was holy, how could he have been called righteous and holy? It is therefore evident that Enoch and the patriarchs must have kept the Sabbath.

Lange's Commentary states the following on Genesis 2:3: "If we had no other passage than this of Gen 2:3, there would be no difficulty in deducing from it a precept for the universal observance of a Sabbath, or seventh day, to be devoted to God as holy time by all of that race for whom the earth and all things therein were specially prepared. The first men must have known it. The words, 'He hallowed it,' can have no meaning otherwise. They would be a blank unless in reference to some who were required to keep it holy."

Abraham and the Sabbath

It is not stated in Genesis what constituted the laws, statutes, and commandments God gave to Abraham. One must go to other areas of the Scriptures to seek clarification on whether the Sabbath was included in the laws, statutes, and commandments given to Abraham.

The very next biblical text (after Genesis 26:5) in which God uses the terms "My commandments" and "My laws" is Exodus 16:28–29. It is to be noted that Exodus 16 occurs before the existence of Sinaitic Covenant.

The covenant under which God is here relating to Israel is the Abrahamic Covenant. God had made it clear to Moses

that His move to deliver Israel from the hands of the Egyptians was based on His covenant with Abraham.

It is during this period of the Abrahamic Covenant that He rebukes Israel for breaking "My laws" and "My commandments," the same terms he used in relation to his covenant with Abraham in Genesis 26:5. Here God reveals the Sabbath as being part of "My laws" and "My commandments."

Nothing is suggested in the text that the laws and commandments referred to here are different from the ones given to Abraham. They are both identified as God's commandments and God's laws, under the same covenant, and written by the same author, Moses, who does not make a distinction between them.

One would have to argue that there was a change in what God called His laws and commandments on these two occasions under the same covenant (the Abrahamic Covenant) in Genesis and Exodus. To claim that these laws and commandments are different raises important questions about the nature and character of God. Therefore, we may logically conclude that Exodus 16 sheds light on the laws, statutes, and commandments mentioned in Genesis 26.

This view is supported by the fact that what we have come to know as the book of Genesis is not considered by Jewish historians as a book in itself. Genesis to Deuteronomy—the Pentateuch—is considered by Jewish historians to be a single book, written by a single author, Moses. According to Andrew E. Hill and John H. Walton, in their book, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, "The 'five book' division of the Pentateuch is a secondary partitioning of what was intended to be a unified literary whole."

With this view of the first five books of the Old Testament as a unified literary whole, one must assume that God's law and commandments stated in Genesis 26:5 is the same as God's laws and commandments stated elsewhere in the Pentateuch, unless the author otherwise stipulates.

Conclusion

A logical, historical, philosophical, and scriptural test proves that the Sabbath was observed in Genesis, contrary to the anti-Sabbatarian view. There is overwhelming biblical support and scholarship for the claim that the Sabbath was known and observed by the Patriarchs.

No less a person than the great Protestant Reformer Martin Luther supported this view in his writings when he said, "[T]he Sabbath was before the Law of Moses came, and has existed from the beginning of the world. Especially have the devout, who have preserved the true faith, met together and called upon God on this day" (*Luther's Works*, Vol. XXV, p. 330).

God Has Only One True Church on the Earth

By Sandra-Mae Robinson

A pervasive spirit of tolerance has invaded our society and has crept its way into Christianity. It has become increasingly expedient to be politically correct on various controversial subjects. Political correctness is usually the language of the liberals or inclusivists in Christianity. This group de-emphasizes doctrines. They maintain that the only doctrine in Christianity pertinent to salvation is the belief in Jesus' incarnation, death, resurrection, and His future return. All other doctrines are peripheral, and their promotion by denominations results in schisms in the body of Christ. Liberals therefore believe that all denominations are true. However, this idea has been weighed by the Scriptures and is found wanting. The words of the Bible convey an idea of the Church of God that is far removed from that which is held by the liberals, that is, there is only one true Church of God whose identity is determined by a specific set of beliefs and doctrines.

Individuals who push the view of there being one true Church of God are labeled exclusivists or religious bigots. Regardless, this so-called religious bigot is asserting that the Bible *does* teach exclusivity. The one true Church of God must hold the faith of Jesus Christ and keep the commandments of God—including the weekly and annual Sabbaths. In our world, where a large number of denominations are teaching diverse doctrines, it is necessary for us to establish what the biblical position is as it relates to the importance of doctrines. I will not be arguing the validity of any particular doctrine that is beyond the scope of this presentation. However, I will debate the biblical concept of the one true church by countering several of the arguments put out by the liberals in addition to highlighting the importance placed on doctrines. I will also attack the minimalist view that only an acceptance or belief in Jesus Christ's atoning sacrifice is necessary for salvation.

Prior to initiating this debate, I must clarify that my reference to the one true church is not an allusion to a single denomination. "Church" is translated from the Greek word *ecclesia*, which means sanctified or called-out ones. The church consists of all individuals from all over the world, irrespective of their denominational titles, who hold certain fundamental truths of the Bible. It, however, does not constitute the majority of denominations, or professing Christianity in general.

Exclusivity in Scripture

The Bible is the inerrant Word of God and admonishes us to prove all things. Very early in the Scriptures we are given an indication of the significance God attaches to doctrines and commandments as well as His exclusive nature.

God's chosen people, the Israelites, were the only persons to whom God entrusted His oracles and His laws. In Deuteronomy 12:30–32, God instructs the Israelites not to adopt the worship practices of the inhabitants of the land that they will possess and use them in their worship of Him. Also, Exodus 12:48–49 informs us that if a stranger wanted to be a partaker of the Covenant, he would have to undergo circumcision and abide by the laws given to the Israelites by God. This is noteworthy, as it is revealed in Scripture

that physical Israel prefigured spiritual Israel, or the church. Hence, our God, Who is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow, Who took an unequivocal stance with Israel on matters of worship, by extension, would still be concerned about the worship practices and doctrines of spiritual Israel, or the church.

Having set this premise of exclusivity from the Old Testament, it is necessary to ascertain whether the same trend emerges in the New Testament. Is Jesus or the Father indifferent to our doctrines and teachings as long as we express belief in Jesus' incarnation, death, resurrection, and imminent return? Here are several arguments of the liberals.

Liberal arguments

"Just believe on Jesus!"

The liberals preach that only a belief in Jesus' incarnation, atoning sacrifice, and His return is necessary for salvation and constitutes the gospel. Romans 10:9; 1 Corinthians 15:1–4; and 1 Corinthians 2:2 are a few of the texts submitted as proof of this. Romans 10:9 states, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." In 1 Corinthians 15:1–4, Paul reports that he had been declaring the gospel which he received concerning Christ's death for our sins and His resurrection. In 1 Corinthians 2:2, Paul states, "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." Do these statements provide an absolute definition of the gospel? Absolutely not!

One of the hints we have that Romans 10:9 is a loaded statement and implies more than what is actually stated is the text in Matthew 7:21: "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." But what of 1 Corinthians 15:1–4? When we read the entire fifteenth chapter, we learn that Paul was addressing a group of people who did not believe in Jesus' resurrection or had doubts about its occurrence. It is therefore not surprising that he began his discourse on the gospel with Jesus' death and resurrection. Furthermore, on another occasion, when expounding the doctrines of the gospel, Paul (in Acts 13:16–32) did not begin his speech with Jesus Christ, but with the promises made to Israel's forefathers.

Now what about the passage where Paul says that he only wanted to know Jesus and Him crucified. First John 2:4 explains to us what knowing Jesus means: "He that saith I know Him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

But for the more stubborn liberals who want to press ahead with the idea that believing in Jesus alone essentially brings us salvation, let me settle the matter expeditiously and decisively by drawing on James 2:19: "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe and tremble." We know therefore that the devil and his angels also believe in Jesus Christ, so if we take a superficial interpretation to all the passages relating to a belief in Jesus Christ for salvation, we place ourselves in the precarious position of having to include the devil in the wonderful family of God—inclusive indeed.

The Bible does indicate that the gospel is more than just a message about Jesus Christ's life. The passages that speak about Jesus and His apostles preaching the gospel generally make reference to the gospel as the gospel of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is a future kingdom that will be established on the earth (Daniel 2:34–35, 44; Revelation 10:5). Jesus is central to the gospel, but issues such as who will be the rulers and subjects of the Kingdom, what laws will govern the Kingdom, and how does one inherit this Kingdom are some of the relevant themes entrenched in the gospel.

Also when one considers Galatians 5:19–21, which says that no idolater or drunkard shall inherit the Kingdom of God, we get a clearer understanding that more is required of us than just our belief in Jesus Christ's sacrifice for our sins. There are deeds that the true Christian ought to practice as well as certain actions that we ought to refrain from. This takes the debate to another level because prudence would dictate that the liberals agree with us in order not to be inconsistent with Scriptures.

"Just show love!"

Notwithstanding, they would argue that all Jesus wants us to do is to show love, and since this is expressly taught by all Christian denominations as the will of God, it approves them as God's congregations. But love is more than common to all denominations; it is expressed in the world's other main religions and even among people of no religious persuasion. Many of the points in Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount" in Matthew 5–7, which was chiefly on love, were taught by Buddha 500 years in advance.

Besides, love is used very loosely by professing Christians and deviates at times from the biblical definition. Professing Christians have used love to justify all kinds of lifestyles, some of which are unbiblical. The ordaining of practicing homosexual priests and bishops readily comes to my mind. However, the Bible has its own definition of love. It goes like this: "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments" (1 John 5:3). Also, 2 John 6: "And this is love, that we walk after His commandments." Love, as defined by Scripture, is rooted in the commandments of God.

We now arrive at a very pivotal point of the debate. The fact of the matter is that the various denominations do not teach the same set of fundamental commandments. We must therefore determine whether the Scriptures have anything to say on the irrelevance of doctrines or commandments.

At the time when the first-century Church of God began growing, the disciples were admonished to continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine (Acts 2:42). Second Timothy 3:16–17 tells us that all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine. Paul, in 1 Timothy 1:3, instructed Timothy to charge the brethren that they teach no other doctrine. The churches were also warned about teaching other doctrines. "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God.... If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed" (2 John

1:9–10). We are admonished to be thoroughly furnished in the Word so that we are not tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine (Ephesians 4:13–14). Ephesians 4:4 tells us there is one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. In addition, Jude 3 says to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Other scriptures that support the importance of doctrines include Colossians 2:8 and Mark 7:8–9. The foregoing scriptures indisputably alert us to the importance of doctrines.

I have made a discovery in the past few years of debating and interacting with several heresies. The driving emotion at the root of these heresies is usually psychological, involving some deep inferiority complex. The liberals deem exclusivists as groups of individuals who are obsessed with aspirations of grandeur and elitism, who want to impose our standards on other groups, thereby subverting their cultural and individual expressions. Frankly it's becoming a bit of a tedious task correcting these individuals, but errors must be refuted. God respects all cultures. He is, after all, responsible for the variety we see among nations and individuals.

Nonetheless, God's Word is sovereign; therefore, any cultural form that is in contradiction to the Word of God has to be discarded. Are we to understand that a people's cultural experience—take, for instance, a group of people who are traditionally cannibalistic—is so paramount that it is okay for them to retain all their cultural traditions as long as they accept and believe in Jesus' atoning sacrifice? I think not.

"Lord, Lord—see our mighty works!"

The liberals also claim that God is working with all denominations because many have been doing mighty miracles in Jesus' name. But in Matthew 7:22–23, Jesus says that He will tell *many* who address him as "Lord, Lord" that He does not know them and they are to depart from Him, this despite their pleas of working miracles in His name. We cannot therefore use claims of miracles in Jesus' name as a single measure of identifying true Christians. Besides, the working of miracles is not unique to Christianity. Numerous supernatural acts occur outside of Christianity in religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism, and we know that they are not Christians because Jesus said that He is the way, the truth, and the life, and that no man comes to the Father except through Him.

But how do we deal with cases where God has answered many prayers of individuals who are members of various denominations and make claims of feeling and experiencing God? Do you remember Matthew 5:45? It states that God makes the sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the just and the unjust. This text basically highlights God's love for everyone. He is touched by the suffering of each individual; so, through His compassion, He will answer prayers and bestow blessings upon everyone from all over the world. *This cannot and should not be confused with salvation.*

True Christians are to do no less; we are to follow in Jesus' footsteps; we must therefore be kind and compassionate to all, including those outside of God's church. Our forceful utterances against denomina-

Continued on next page

tions that we do not consider a part of the Body of Christ are not rooted in any feelings of hatred on our part. We have simply made a righteous judgment (John 7:24) based on the Word of God and have concluded that all of them are sincerely wrong.

Lest the liberals remain unconvinced about the fact that denominations can believe in Jesus and not be a part of the Body of Christ, Galatians 1:6-9 is there for reference. It speaks to the preaching of "another gospel," a *perverted* one, and Paul pronounces a curse on any man or even an angel who teach the gospel in any form contrary to the Scriptures.

"We all have the same Spirit!"

The liberals also expect us to believe that, irrespective of the denomination we associate with, we are all bonded by one Spirit, the Holy Spirit of God. Not so! God gives His Holy Spirit to those who obey

Him, so if we are not keeping God's commandments we do not possess His Spirit and therefore do not belong to Him.

It is ironic that the liberals have not detected the flaw in this seemingly impressive argument about the Holy Spirit. John 16:13 refers to the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of truth that will guide us into all truth. It is not possible for God's Spirit of truth to convince denominations that contradictory doctrines comprise truth.

Our exclusively inclusive God

There are over 30,000 denominations in Christianity, some of them professing to be the "only true church." The Scriptures inform us that Satan has transformed himself into an angel of light. Combine that with the many warnings of Paul against false doctrines, his statement that the mystery of iniquity was already manifest, and his predictions of a time when people will not endure sound doctrine but heap to them-

selves teachers to suit their preferences.

Consider also the influx of gentiles from all over the world to the faith. Some of them had preconceived ideas from past religions and brought their ideas into Christianity. Match that against human beings overwhelming propensity to distort facts, especially over a time frame of roughly 2,000 years, and you'll end up with the perfect recipe for religious confusion.

This is what the book of Revelation addresses so emphatically in chapter 17. A strong warning is issued to God's people to come out of Babylon. According to Strong's *Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, the word *Babylon* is translated from the Hebrew word *Babel*, which means confusion. Many of these denominations purporting to have the true gospel of God are a part of this Babylonian confusion we are to avoid.

It is a misunderstanding of the true

gospel of God that leads to the idea of inclusiveness. The gospel is much richer and broader than the various denominations assert. Its level of inclusiveness even surpasses that of the liberals; however, it is also exclusive, but only with respect to the time periods of salvation.

This current dispensation, prior to Jesus' return, is extremely exclusive; only a relative minority will be saved (Matthew 22:14; 1 Corinthians 15:23; Romans 8:29). Subsequent to Jesus' return, the vast majority of the world will get their first chance to hear the true gospel and be saved (Revelation 20:5,12). All peoples are accounted for in this wonderful plan of salvation.

The true Church of God, therefore, which is the pillar and bulwark of truth, must persist in trumpeting the true gospel of God, which perfectly embodies the love, honor, and glory of our exclusively inclusive God.

LEGALIST, continued from page 3

Centuries passed

However, as time passed, and when the truth about the seventh day (Saturday) Sabbath became more widely known, those who opposed obedience to the Sabbath of the Ten Commandments began accusing Sabbath-keepers of returning to "salvation by works," of "being legalistic," of trying to "earn salvation," of trying to "work their way to heaven." It is a very shallow charge when one stops to consider it. No one will protest or accuse us of legalism or preaching "salvation by works" when we teach the following:

- The need to worship the true God alone ("Thou shalt have no other gods before me"—Exodus 20:3.)
- The worthlessness of idolatry ("Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image"—Exodus 20:4-6.)
- The need to honor God's name ("Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain"—Exodus 20:7.)
- The need to respect our parents ("Honor thy father and thy mother"—Exodus 20:12.)
- The need to respect life ("Thou shalt not kill"—Exodus 20:13.)
- The need to remain true to our marital vows ("Thou shalt not commit adultery"—Exodus 20:14.)
- The necessity of honesty ("Thou shalt not bear false witness"—Exodus 20:16.)
- Bringing inordinate desire under submission ("Thou shalt not covet"—Exodus 20:17.)

But the moment we mention the need to keep the Fourth Commandment—the true Sabbath day as commanded in the midst of the Ten Commandments—a gasp and a cry goes up: "You're being legalistic!" "You're preaching salvation by works!" "You're forgetting that salvation is a free gift from God!" "Don't you know that salvation is by faith in Jesus alone?"

Depending upon the accuser, this charge is a demonstration of either innocent or willful ignorance. Many may have never come to grips with the Sabbath issue and are only parroting what others have told them. But it may well be that most who do take this stand do not want to obey the Sabbath commandment in the first place. To them it is a burden, an inconvenience, an embarrassment, and a constant reminder that the church made a colossal blunder when it jettisoned the true Sabbath day of the Decalogue and adopted the pagan rest day of *Sunday*. If unchecked, this antinomian attitude leads to a stand of determined and habitual disobedience, which is iniquity! Iniquity is a willful determination to ignore and break a known command of Almighty God. (For further study, please be sure to send for our free article, *Sunday, Saturday—What Difference Does It Make?* and the audiocassette, "Who Changed the Christian Sabbath?")

Should we compromise?

If we were to compromise and preach the need to keep *Sunday* instead of God's Sabbath, there would be no charge of "legalism"; no hands would be thrown up in horror. But the moment one preaches "obedience" and the need to keep the seventh-day Sabbath of God's law, there is an unholy uproar accompanied by wild accusations of "legalism."

Here is another remarkable statement by Jesus:

One time a rich young ruler came to Christ and asked, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" And Christ said to him, "If thou wilt enter into life, *keep the commandments*." Pleading ignorance, the young man asked, "Which?" to which Jesus named several commandments out of the Decalogue to show him just which ones He meant: "Thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, honor thy father and thy mother: and, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matthew 19:16-19). This could be only one set of laws—the Ten Commandments. Being in a Jewish culture, the Sabbath did not even need to be mentioned; it was a given that it was included in the very midst of the Ten Commandments.

Would any, after reading the above testimonial, accuse the Lord Jesus Christ of being a "legalist"? And yet we can plainly see that Jesus was promoting "obedience to the commandments" as the path to life!

To those who say they "know the Lord" and "abide in His love," the Scriptures answer, "By *this* we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, *and keep His commandments*. For this is the love of God [Bible definition], that we *keep His commandments*: and His commandments are *not* grievous [hard, or burdensome]" (1 John 5:2).

Does God change? Did He give His law, and then see that He made a mistake, and revoked it? Let the Scriptures speak! "For I am the LORD, I change *not*" (Malachi 3:6); and "Jesus Christ [is] the *same* yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8).

The apostle Paul asked, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in *sin*, that *grace* may abound? *God forbid!*" (Romans 6:1-2) He went on to say, "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that *know* the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as *long as he liveth*?" (Romans 7:1). Like David, Paul said, "For I *delight* in the law of God after the inward man" (Psalm 119:96 and Romans 7:22).

Revelation, the last book of the Bible, declares, "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that *keep the commandments* of God, and the faith of Jesus" (Revelation 14:12).

In view of these texts and many more that could be added, the biblical admonition is that you ignore those who judge (Matthew 7:1). It is those who disobey God who get hung up about "legalism." "But *avoid* foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain" (Titus 3:9). Leave them alone and bear in mind these biblical facts.

"All [God's] commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever" (Psalm 111:7-8).

We have all sinned (transgressed God's law [1 John 3:4]) and are under the death penalty, for "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).

However, if we accept the Almighty's free offer of salvation by putting our faith in His Son, Jesus Christ (John 3:16), repent, are baptized, and receive God's Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38), we are saved by *grace*. That is, we are saved by the great love, compassion, forgiveness, and mercy of

God. This is the central theme of the everlasting gospel. This is the old, old story that God's true servants have taught and preached throughout the years, and it is still true today.

Thereafter, after having accepted salvation, a true believer must take steps to live an obedient, sin-free life. In other words, Christ's followers must stop sinning—stop breaking God's law. This means: no more paganism, idolatry, cursing, adultery, lies, theft, deceit, covetousness, or Sabbath-breaking.

Notice that these acts of obedience can *never* "earn" our salvation. Oh, no, because salvation, as mentioned above, is a *free* gift. You cannot earn it. Obedience is only a requirement. By analogy, if someone were to offer you a free thousand-dollar bill, and said all you have to do—*all* that is required of you—is to step forward and take it out of his hand, the act of stepping up and taking it—the requirement—did not "earn" it. It is *still* a free gift. So it is with salvation—it is a free unearned, unmerited gift. Likewise, when you come to Christ, the requisite is that you do your best to obey Him and repent when you do sin. Salvation cannot be obtained in any way other than by faith in God through His Son, Jesus Christ. Do not let the slanderous label of "legalist" deter you from doing what is right!

A warning from the Word of God

But—and here is an awesome, frightening fact—willful disobedience after having received a knowledge of the truth will certainly keep a person out of the Kingdom of God, no matter what he or she may profess to believe!

The Bible says, "For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" (Hebrews 10:26-27).

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind [homosexuals], nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6:9).

This is what the Scriptures plainly teach concerning obedience and disobedience, and law and grace. Those who ignore these plain facts are deceiving themselves and in the Day of Judgment will be astonished beyond words to find out how wrong they have been.

"Many will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works?'" In today's language, we might paraphrase it, "Lord, haven't we performed many good works, had many revivals, performed miracles, built many churches, edifices, hospitals, and universities *all in your name, Lord*?" Alas! Many—to their utter consternation—will hear these frightful words: "And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, *ye that work iniquity* [practice lawlessness]" (Matthew 7:22-23).

This brings us back to the title of this article: "Am I a 'legalist'?" When the term is correctly defined, you *bet* I am! I want to be legal, not illegal, with God.

Don't you?

A True History According to Holy Scripture

By Benjamin R. Chapman

CHAPTER 2

THE PRE-NOACHIAN FLOOD WORLD

Creation and the Garden of Eden

0 A.M.
Creation

This chapter begins with the wonderful stories of Creation and the Garden of Eden but ends with the greatest calamity ever to befall mankind, the worldwide Flood of the time of Noah. As we shall see, the first 1,656 years of man's history were at times happy but at other times quite sad. The first seven chapters of Genesis have many revealing truths to relate.

To understand our story, we must begin in the beginning. In Genesis 1:1 we read, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Now, I know that many people in this world believe in evolution, even though evolution has never been proven. But I hope you don't and that you are a God-believing person who believes in a divine Creation. Genesis the first chapter has many more interesting things to say about God's Creation that are of utmost importance to you and to all mankind! What is the purpose of God's Creation and mankind? Do we glean any "hint" in this account about the purpose of human life on earth? Absolutely! In fact, more than a hint:

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Genesis 1:26-28).

Here is an awesome revelation: God created Adam and Eve in His Image, after His likeness! His plan reveals that He desires to expand His family to include many "children"—more members of His kind! First, he built man out of red mud, physical elements, not out of Spirit of which He is composed. He made man a free moral agent to choose what he wants to do with his life. But if man chooses to accept God's rule and obey His commandments, to build righteous character, and to qualify for admission into God's family, at the great First Resurrection God will perfect man's character and replace his mortal, fleshly body with ever-living Spirit! That's the incredible truth of your Bible! But that is *not* the subject of this study. Other booklets in our inventory cover this in detail.

The Garden of Eden

What we should be more concerned with is God's Plan to restore His government on this earth! God designed and planted a gorgeous garden for Adam and Eve to live in and care for.

"And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads" (Genesis 2:8-10).

God made all the best things for His children Adam and Eve, but He did put one limit on them:

"And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:16-17).

But we all know the story in Genesis 3. Eve first listened to the voice of the tempter, the Devil (who was really the first sinner—not poor Eve), and ate of the only prohibited tree and gave to her husband, who also ate of the forbidden fruit. Thus, after just one day of peace and har-

Editor's note: This is the second installment of a series by Benjamin R. Chapman on the history of the world according to biblical data. Mr. Chapman has completed several chapters and plans to eventually publish the entire series in a single volume. Until the volume is completed and made available, we plan to run segments of the work serially in the *International News*.

mony (that first Sabbath with God), Adam and Eve sinned and were forced out of the Garden of Eden. Their world changed. The nature of the ground and even the nature of animals changed for the worse. Genesis 3:17-19 only gives a broad hint of what happened to their idyllic lives:

"And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee: and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

And, except for a few personalities in the Bible, man has failed to really follow God. Jesus Christ came from the God family as the Word to reveal His Father and His plan, and today awaits His Father's instructions to come back to this earth with His Father's government. What you read in the Bible is much of the story of how God is planning to reestablish His government on this earth and how we fit into His great calling.

God's plan to reintroduce His government

The real heart of this story is God's plan to bring His government back to this planet. Jesus Christ will do that when He returns.

In the Bible, we read the story of mankind's abject failure to follow God's ways, but the story is interspersed with the occasional successful life of one of God's children who was willing to choose His ways.

In Genesis 4, we read of Adam and Eve's first two sons, Cain and Abel. Most of us are familiar with this tragic story. In a fit of jealous rage Cain slew his brother Abel. The family of Cain made a terrible mess out of the world. Josephus, in his *Antiquities of the Jews*, relates this poignantly in Book 1, Chapter 2, Sections 1-2:

"God therefore did not inflict the punishment [of death] upon him on account of his offering sacrifice, and thereby making supplication to him not to be extreme in his wrath to him; but he made him accursed, and threatened his posterity in the seventh generation. He also cast him, together with his wife, out of that land. And when he was afraid, that in wandering about he should fall among wild beasts, and by that means perish, God bid him not to entertain such a melancholy suspicion, and to go over all the earth without fear of what mischief he might suffer from wild beasts; and setting a mark upon him that he might be known, he commanded him to depart.

"And when Cain had travelled over many countries, he, with his wife, built a city, named Nod, which is a place so called, and there he settled his abode; where also he had children. However, he did not accept of his punishment, in order to amendment, but to increase his wickedness; for he only aimed to procure everything that was for his own bodily pleasure, though it obliged him to be injurious to his neighbors. He augmented his household substance with much wealth, by rapine and violence: he excited his acquaintance to procure pleasures and spoils by robbery, and became a great leader of men into wicked courses. He also introduced a change in that way of simplicity wherein men lived before; and was the author of measures and weights. And whereas they lived innocently and generously while they knew nothing of such arts, he changed the world into cunning craftiness. He first of all set bound-

aries about lands; he built a city, and fortified it with walls, and he compelled his family to come together to it; and called that city Enoch, after the name of his eldest son Enoch [this is not the Enoch, son of Jared, in the Seth line]. Now Jared was the son of Enoch [KJV says Irad]; whose son was Malaliel [KJV: Mehujael]; whose son was Mathusala [KJV: Methusael]; whose son was Lamech [not the Lamech who was the father of Noah]; who had seventy-seven children by two wives, Silla [KJV: Zillah] and Ada [KJV: Adah]. Of those children by Ada, one was Jubal; he erected tents, and loved the life of a shepherd. But Jubal, who was born of the same mother with him, exercised himself in music; and invented the psaltery and the harp. But Tubal, one of his children by the other wife, exceeded all men in strength, and was very expert and famous in martial performances. He procured what tended to the pleasures of the body by that method; and first of all invented the art of making brass. Lamech was also the father of a daughter, whose name was Naamah; and because he was so skillful in matters of divine revelation, that he knew he was to be punished for Cain's murder of his brother, he made that known to his wives. Nay, even while Adam was alive, it came to pass that the posterity of Cain became exceeding wicked, every one successively dying one after another more wicked than the former. They were intolerable in war, and vehement in robberies; and if anyone were slow to murder people, yet was he bold in his profligate behavior, in acting unjustly and doing injuries for gain."

Of particular importance to Noah, many hundred of years earlier, was the accomplishments of one of the Cain line, Tubal-Cain, who invented brass and was an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron (Genesis 4:22). To think that Noah used only wood to build his ark is not to think realistically! We will be briefly discussing the ark's construction later in this chapter.

The happy generations of Seth

130 A.M.
Seth

According to Jewish tradition, as explained in a footnote in Chapter 2, Section 3, Adam and Eve were blessed with thirty-three sons and twenty-three daughters! Let us focus our attention on the one son Seth, mentioned in Genesis 5:3-5:

"And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth: And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters: And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died."

Josephus enlightens us about the amazing accomplishments of this man Seth in *Antiquities*, Book 1, Chapter 2, Section 3:

"Now this Seth, when he was brought up, and came to those years in which he could discern what was good, became a virtuous man; and as he was himself of an excellent character, so did he leave children behind him who imitated his virtues. All these proved to be of good dispositions. They also inhabited the same country without dissensions, and in a happy condition, without any misfortunes falling upon them till they died. They also were inventors of that peculiar sort of wisdom which is concerned with the heavenly bodies, and their order...."

Seth, and possibly his descendants, were the inventors of astronomy [study of the motion of heavenly bodies], a skill that was passed down through the Flood to the Patriarchs and all human posterity! He certainly had ample time to study, and possibly record, all that he learned about the motion of the earth, moon, and stars since he lived 912 years in a peaceful country!

Not much is known about Seth's children, other than they were righteous and God-fearing people for an amazing seven generations. I am including them in this study, but briefly, with the scriptural references.

**235 A.M.
Enos**

"And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos: And Seth lived after he begat Enos eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: and he died" (Genesis 5:6-8).

**325 A.M.
Cainan**

"And Enos lived ninety years, and begat Cainan: And Enos lived after he begat Cainan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: and he died" (Genesis 5:9-11).

**395 A.M.
Mahalaleel**

"And Cainan lived seventy years, and begat Mahalaleel: And Cainan lived after he begat Mahalaleel eight hundred and forty years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years: and he died" (Genesis 5:12-14).

**460 A.M.
Jared**

"And Mahalaleel lived sixty and five years, and begat Jared: And Mahalaleel lived after he begat Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Mahalaleel were eight hundred ninety and five years: and he died" (Genesis 5:15-17).

**622 A.M.
Enoch**

"And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and he begat Enoch: And Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years: and he died" (Genesis 5:18-20).

**687 A.M.
Methuselah**

"And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him" (Genesis 5:21-24).

A wicked world

In *Antiquities*, Book 1, Chapter 3, Section 1, we read what Josephus had to say after the seventh righteous generations of Seth:

"Now this posterity of Seth continued to esteem God as the Lord of the universe, and to have an entire regard to virtue, for seven generations; but in process of time they were perverted, and forsook the practices of their forefathers, and did neither pay those honors to God which were appointed them, nor had they any concern to do justice towards men. But for what degree of zeal they had formerly shown for virtue, they now showed by their actions a double degree of wickedness; whereby they made God to be their enemy, for many angels of God accompanied with women, and begat sons that proved unjust, and despisers of all that was good, on account of the confidence they had in their own strength [perhaps this is the original source of the doctrine of angels cohabiting with women—an easily proven impossibility since there is no sex in the angelic kingdom]; for the tradition is, That these men did what resembled the acts of those whom the Grecians call giants. But Noah was very uneasy at what they did; and, being displeased at their conduct, persuaded them to change their dispositions and their acts for the better; but, seeing that they did not yield to him, but were slaves to their wicked pleasures, he was afraid they would kill him, together with his wife and children, and those they had married; so he departed out of that land."

Bullinger, in his *Companion Bible*, commenting on Genesis 5:21, tells us that the name "Methuselah" means "when he is dead, it shall be sent, i.e. the Deluge." Methuselah's lifespan of 969 years (the longest lifespan we know of) shows God's great mercy towards mankind. Indeed, Methuselah did die in the year of the Flood, possibly just before it occurred, maybe even in it!

**874 A.M.
Lamech**

"And Methuselah lived an hundred eighty and seven years, and begat Lamech: And Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred eighty and two years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died" (Genesis 5:25-27).

**1056 A.M.
Noah**

"And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son: And he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concern-

ing our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed. And Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred ninety and five years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy and seven years: and he died" (Genesis 5:28-31).

Thank God for righteous Noah

Noah was born into a very troubled world. Except for his righteousness, all of mankind would have been destroyed! We all should be very thankful for this man. Read what Genesis 6:1-7 has to say:

"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that [giants before the Flood and after it], when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them."

God saw such unhappiness on the earth that He was sorry He had made mankind! But in the next few verses we read, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God" (Genesis 6:8-9).

We read of the exploits of this great Patriarch Noah and his three sons. His obedience led to the physical salvation of man through the great Noachian Flood. A few preachers of righteousness are mentioned in Scripture, but our *real* saga begins many years later in far-away Mesopotamia, the land of the ancient Chaldeans.

**1536 A.M.
The Ark**

The construction of the ark began when Noah was just 480 years old, twenty years before his first son Japheth was born. We know this from the fact that the Flood began when Noah was 600 years old and that he was given 120 years to build it. Noah was a servant of God who had given him a tremendous project to build. God would have provided the materials, finances, and manpower to complete this job. Noah was not a poor or ignorant man. He used all the knowledge and skills available to him to build a very sea-worthy boat that would be able to withstand the tremendous waves that swept the earth during the Flood, which lasted just over a year.

**1556 A.M.
Japheth**

Obviously, as they became grown men, Noah's three sons helped him in the ark's construction. It is a false assumption to believe that Noah did not hire many other workers to fetch all of the massive beams and keel work and to assist in the boat's construction. Noah had 120 years to build this huge ark (estimated to be over 500 feet long—if one uses the Egyptian cubit of twenty-one inches, as speculated by Josephus in footnote c. in Book 1, Chapter 3, Section 2 of *Antiquities*). Other archaeologists have written that the royal Egyptian cubit (the only cubit Moses, the author of Genesis, would have known) was more accurately considered 20.6 inches, making the ark an astonishing 515 feet in length! A modern U.S. football field is 100 yards or 300 feet long. This was a big boat.

Readers are encouraged to visit the web sites www.anchorstone.com and www.wyattmuseum.com for many more interesting details about the ark's construction. The use of various kinds of metals in its construction is most fascinating.

Bullinger's *Companion Bible*, in a note on Genesis 5:32, has this interesting bit of understanding:

"Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Named in inverted order. Japheth was the elder (10:21), Shem the youngest, and, in other cases, the youngest chosen for the blessing. Cp. this inversion of the order in 10:1, with 2, 6, and 21, and see 11:10 and note on 9:24: 10:1."

**1557 A.M.
Ham**

This birth year for Ham is somewhat speculative, and is what you will find in Bullinger's *Companion Bible*, Appendix 53. But it seems most reasonable because we can definitely date Shem's birth year as 1558 A.M. as will be explained later.

**1558 A.M.
Shem**

To confirm Bullinger's Appendix 53 on the date of Shem's birth, we can see from Genesis 11:10 that Shem was 100 years old and begat Arphaxad "two years after the flood." What does this expression really mean? Was Arphaxad born two years after the Flood *began* or two years after the Flood *ended*? Let's examine the story of the Flood itself. We read in Genesis 7:6 that Noah was six hundred years old when the Flood of waters was upon the earth.

**1656 A.M.
The Flood**

Genesis 6:11 shows us even the specific date the Flood began: "In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened."

Now read Genesis 9:28-29: "And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died."

The expression "after the flood" here clearly means "after the *beginning* of the flood," since $600 + 350 = 950$, else Noah would have lived 951 years if we *include* the year of the Flood. I assume that Moses would have been consistent in his use of the Hebrew, so my conclusion is that Arphaxad was born two years after the *beginning* of the Flood to be consistent. Therefore, he was born in 1658 A.M. Shem was 100 years old when Arphaxad was born, so Shem was born in 1558 A.M. as I have shown above.

Many more lessons could be related about the ark's construction and the nature of the Flood, but this chapter is already a bit too long!

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CHURCH NEWS

Wayne Hendrix visits Florida brethren, urges preparation for things to come

The Sabbath was an extra-special event for the local Auburndale, FL, CGI on January 24. Along with having a special guest speaker, Wayne Hendrix, our friends from the neighboring Clearwater congregation also joined us. The morning began with a sermonette by Bill Pyle, on communication with God in our technological times, entitled "Is This the Gospel in the Twenty-First Century?" Mr. Pyle used computer terminology to relate his message of how we should be communicating with God daily.

Wayne Hendrix then delivered a sermon dealing with the "end time." The following is a summary of his sermon:

His observation is that this is the first generation to be able to say all things are in place according to Bible prophecy. Relating back to Luke 21:29, he explained that we must be observant and diligent, always looking to see if the "tree is full." Because we are at the place described in Matthew 24:15, we must prepare ourselves. We must be aware of the things that are occurring in the world and our society. We must not be overcome by this life's emotions and tragedies, for we might forget the individual tasks we should be doing. We cannot become distracted because the Great Day of the Lord will come as a surprise (Luke 21:35).

Since we know this time is coming, what should we be doing? We know that one day we will stand before Him and He will know us as we are. At that time, the truth of who we really are will be crystal clear. There will be no disguising what we have done due to situations, political correctness, philosophy, or modern society. God decides truth (John 18:37-38). Due to the cultural and spiritual demise of our society we must work on our character, our interaction with others (our personal relationships), and be aware of the geopolitical trends in the world.

We have twice before seen the abomination of desolation come to pass. We are now seeing more earthquakes and in areas that usually do not have them. And we are also now seeing more pestilence in the world. The Euro is now an economically viable form of monetary exchange; we are

starting to see more cohesiveness in Europe with countries sharing common borders. The United Nations is working on political and military cooperation. The

Middle East continues to be a powder keg of hatred. The Arab world is becoming increasingly more linked due to technology, which enables them to spread their message of hatred for the Jews to even more Arabs. When all this comes to pass, someone will have control of this large union (the leaves will be on the

trees).

The Kingdom of God is coming and it is not a rapture where people will be taken



Gary Jenkins and Jean Harkins

away. The gospel about the Kingdom of God has been preached throughout time and on all continents (Matthew 24:14). And even though the Day of the Lord may be described as a time of gloom and doom, we know that there is a light at the end of the tunnel for us.

In conclusion, Mr. Hendrix referred us to 2 Corinthians 13:5 and asked us to examine ourselves. He asked if we were asked to, could we defend the doctrines of God's church, and if we can't we needed to get busy. He advised anyone that could not do this to obtain a copy of the *Statement of Beliefs* and go through the verses that support those doctrines so that we are prepared when a time comes that we are tested. Mr. Hendrix closed his sermon with 2 Corinthians 13:11-14.

After this thought-provoking sermon, we enjoyed a delicious potluck lunch and much fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ. It was a spiritually uplifting

Springfield announces winners of annual chili cook-off

On Sabbath, February 21, we had our annual chili cook-off in Springfield, MO.

We ladies gladly let the men have their way in doing the honors of making the chili. They did a great job, and the rest of us enjoyed the chili. They received prizes by the votes of the members. The prizes

were kitchen utensils—gives them a hint that we want them to do this again next year.

Winners of the chili cook-off include David Beckerdite (first prize), Steve Milholland (second), Charlie Schuster (third), and John Muehlman (fourth).

Betty Register



Chili cook-off winners (left to right) David Beckerdite (1st prize), Steve Milholland (2nd), Charlie Schuster (3rd), and John Muehlman (4th)

Wichita gets one elder, two deacons, and a deaconess



Charles Groce visited the Wichita, KS, congregation on the Sabbath of January 10, 2004. While he was there, he, with elders Frank Marang and Max Davis, participated in the ordination of two deacons, Rod Loomis and Jim Ryan, and a deaconess, Suzanne Loomis. Mr. Groce also presented Max Davis an ordination certificate. Mr. Davis was ordained an elder at last year's Feast of Tabernacles in Wagoner, OK. **Above left:** Left to right are Rod Loomis, Max Davis, Suzanne Loomis, Frank Marang, Jim Ryan, and Charles Groce. **Above right:** Max Davis being ordained on the Last Great Day of last year's feast. **Bottom:** Charles Groce presents Max Davis (left) with an ordination certificate during the January 10 visit.



Morehead, Kentucky, church grows by two

Despite temperatures that plunged down toward zero, there was much warmth on a very special Sabbath weekend at Morehead on January 31, 2004.

Services began with Deacon Lowell Shoemaker asserting that each of the members of God's church is "pregnant." And he then painted a scripture-by-scripture analogy that led to our "birth" at Christ's return—the perfect sermonette for the two baptisms that were to occur later in the day.

Sandra Corum then sang the "Baptism" hymn—"Amazing Grace"—a capella as she always does.

Visiting Fort Thomas elder Bob Swimm, who has had the high honor of baptizing five of the current Morehead brethren, gave a sermon on the hope of forgiveness, reconciliation, and the resurrection, for us now and for everyone later.

Pastor James Pollitte was speaking in Fort Thomas and then had to fly to Tampa to tend to his brother Richard who had bypass surgery earlier in the week. Senior pastor Bob Tackett was preaching in

Knoxville, but hurried back to witness the two baptisms.

At 5:00 p.m., Mr. Swimm, assisted by Jeff May, led Robert Morris and Merle Jones into the warmed (thankfully) swimming pool at Holiday Inn Express. It was wonderful to welcome Mr. Jones' wife and several other friends and relatives of the Morris and Jones families to participate in this joyous occasion. Mr. Swimm read scriptures from Luke 15, 14, and 9, speaking of the joy of the angels in heaven, counting the cost, and the stern admonition not to turn back once the hand had been put to the plow.

After Robert and Merle had affirmed they had counted the cost, accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior, promised to obey and serve Jesus and obey His holy law, the were immersed, had hands laid on them, and received God's Holy Spirit, thus increasing God's family by two. The brethren applauded and warmly hugged their new siblings in the Lord.

Congratulations and welcome to the family, Robert and Merle!

Bob Swimm

Grandpa and grandsons take the day in Springfield

On Sabbath, February 7, the Springfield, MO, CGI had a very special day. Grandpa and grandsons took the day, with Drew De Jarnette leading songs, Daniel De Jarnette giving the sermonette, and Ken Register ("Grandpa") providing the sermon.

Grandpa is doing his best to see his grandsons follow the teachings of Christ. The young men have grown up in the church, and they want to help where they can.

Grandpa has been their mentor, hoping someday to leave behind four generations obeying God.

The young men and young people are

our future for the church. Let's support them.

This was our potluck Sabbath. We had more than one blessing.

Betty Register



"Grandpa" Ken Register (center) with grandsons Drew De Jarnette (left) and Daniel De Jarnette (right)

Exodus puppet show enriches NTBMO for Willow Springs, MO, brethren

On the Night to be Much Observed 2004, sixteen brethren gathered at the Senior Citizens Center to be entertained with an Exodus puppet show featuring Sarah Volmer and Stephen Kramer, with Sherry Volmer narrating and Debbie Kramer handling props.

Sarah's two lemon pies finished the

evening in fine fashion. Sarah has some of the best cooks in the CGI asking for recipes.

We also had 14 participants (two first-timers and two observers for Passover services the evening before).

Ted Standley



Ordination at Indy congregation

God's holy days are a joy and inspiration to all of His people, and so are observed with great joy at the Indianapolis congregation of the CGI. Thirty-one members came to observe Passover, which is always so awe-inspiring and uplifting to the members. The Night to be Much Observed was kept by 12 members in Anderson, Indiana, and 15 in the Indianapolis area. As we gathered for the first day of Unleavened Bread, all together again, we observed the day with thankfulness. Deacon Mark Schwarzkopf brought the sermonette, and Pastor Frank Denman brought the main sermon, as both dealt with the Days of Unleavened Bread.

The last day of Unleavened Bread brought many more blessings to the congregation. Ferrell and Barb Vincent from Louisville were here, and Ferrell brought the main message, "A Wilderness Journey." It was very well received as Mr. Vincent recounted how we can have many problems and sorrows in our journey through life, but we must look to God for

our deliverance, as ancient Israel looked to Him for their journey in the wilderness.

But before that, a first for the Indy congregation, as the first deaconess for the local congregation was ordained. A longtime member of the Church of God, Mary Pate, was called to the podium by the pastor, and he and fellow minister Ferrell Vincent laid hands on her for the ordination rite. Mary is the wife of Don Pate, also a longtime member of the church. Mary Pate was baptized in March of 1975, and she is a very outgoing person who has been of much service to the members and ready to be of help when she can. It truly was a Sabbath of delight, and the Indy congregation was very happy at the ordination of a deaconess.



Mary Pate

Frank Denman

Charles Groce visits MO brethren during FUB

The first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread 2004 was a very special day for the Springfield and Willow Springs, MO, congregations. Charles Groce gave a message showing the real importance of the Ten Commandments. He brought out points most of us had not considered before.

We appreciate Mr. Groce coming and fellowshiping with the brethren, and we enjoyed sharing our unleavened bread with him.

Please come again soon, Mr. Groce. We love you.

Betty Register



Charles Groce and Ted Standley greet one another on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Better late than never

In preparing for the Days of Unleavened Bread, most of us start days, even weeks, in advance by looking in cabinets, drawers, and closets, and behind sofas and chairs or wherever one may have a snack that may be on the crumbling side. Ladies, how about your purses—especially those of you with small children—and children's rooms? How about your toaster, vacuum cleaner, and refrigerator?

Ah—refrigerator!

I had started cleaning my refrigerator days before Unleavened Bread. I took everything out except eight or nine cans of soda pop, which was on the lower shelf. Then I replaced the items along with some fresh things back in the refrigerator.

After the first day of Unleavened Bread, I double-checked again. Maybe I had missed something (these are the days to check oneself!). Everything seemed to check out.

Then, on the sixth day, as I was prepar-

ing food for the next day's festival meal, I opened the refrigerator and—lo and behold!—my heart seemed to jump into my throat. I could hardly believe what I saw!

Remember the soda pop? Well, a can of biscuits seemed to be staring me in the face. And I felt like those cans of soda pop were giving me the message—but it wasn't the soda pop; it was God.

We have been in God's church over 50 years, and when you should have it right you still know you haven't got it *all* right yet! As long as we are in this human flesh, we'll be reminded of our imperfection.

God has a way of letting us know how human we are and our need to keep working on our proclivity to commit sins.

Oh yes...my husband removed the biscuits a way-y-y off our property. It's still better late than never—though I may never look at biscuits the same way again.

Betty Register



Charlie and Pam Schuster were married on March 20, 2004, in Springfield, MO. Ken Register (left) performed the ceremony.



Charlie and Pam Schuster and Connie Mulehman were baptized on March 28, 2004. Ken Register (right) and Ted Standley (left) officiated.

Make plans NOW to attend...

Feast of Tabernacles 2004

This year, the Feast of Tabernacles is September 30 through October 6, with the Last Great Day following on October 7. If you haven't made your festival plans, you should do so soon. The Church of God International will hold the feast at the locations listed below (with festival coordinators for

Pensacola, FL

Festival Coordinator: Bill Watson: (330) 225-0478; wtw@adelphia.net

Land Between the Lakes, KY

Festival Coordinator: James Pollitte: (606) 742-2222 or jamespollitte@kih.net

Wagoner, OK

Festival Coordinator: Ron Elkins: (903) 793-0061 or (870) 653-6043

Myrtle Beach, SC

Festival Coordinator: Mike Nolen: (843) 761-5211; tmnolen@homexpressway.net

Salt Lake City, UT

Festival Coordinator: Benjamin Chapman: (801) 226-6635

Harrison Hot Springs, BC

Festival Coordinators: Ken Register: (417) 889-5054; Bob Swimm: (859) 441-5611

each site). For further information, write or call for a free copy of our festival brochure, or contact the festival coordinator for the feast site you plan to attend. For updates and additional information, check our Web site: info@cgi.org.

Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada

Festival Coordinator: John Coish: (519) 741-0455; johncoish@cgi.org

Ballina, NSW, Australia

Festival Coordinator: Herb Haupt: 011-61-7-5463-2949; cgi.au@hypermax.net.au

Ocho Rios, Jamaica

Festival Coordinator: Ian Boyne: (876) 765-2160; (876) 926-8428; (876) 926-6710; iboyne@jis.gov.jm

Philippines

For Metro Manila: Rene Corpuz: (632) 995-0294 or (63917) 811-6365; rene@cgpiphils.org

For Naga City: Joel Barrios: (63919) 272-4147

Pentecost weekend at Morehead, KY

Writing about regionals and socials at Morehead never waxes humdrum or routine because they are always uplifting and refreshing. Pentecost 2004 was no exception.

Louisville's Ferrell Vincent took the model prayer outline the "Our Father" of Matthew 6 and presented a seven-point Bible study on God's "priorities," followed by a "pop" quiz.

On Sabbath, Jeff May pointed out in his sermonette that the so-called educated fail miserably by calling the teachings of Jesus a "philosophy"—not seeing them as the TRUTH of life.

Pastor James Pollitte powerfully preached PERSEVERANCE, pointing out that we were born to rule, to follow in Jesus'



Pentecost 2004 at Morehead

footsteps, to receive Living Waters, and to endure until the end.

On Pentecost, Mr. Vincent forcefully spoke on the metathesis, or transfer from the Old Testament Feast of Weeks to the New Testament Day of Pentecost, and the emotion of A.D. 31 and its great miracles: the giving of the Holy Spirit, the gift of languages, 3,000 baptized, Jesus appearing in and out of their midst... (Mr. Vincent slightly choked with emotion at this point and apologized—no reason for that, can we imagine the emotion of the time when the Spirit descended on the disciples?)

For his part of the split sermon, Bob Swimm, Fort Thomas pastor, spoke of Pentecost being a time of growth for all the brethren, being nurtured with vision, enthusiasm, and faith. He closed with the words of an old Country-Western song, "I'm Just an Old Chunk of Coal, but I'm Gonna be a Diamond Some Day."

The brethren were treated to special music from Bob Swimm, Sandra Corum, and Brenda Pinkerman, who came with her husband, Morgan, our local contact in Barboursville, WV.

Senior Pastor Bob Tackett and Mr. Pinkerman served as worship leaders. And as always there was much good food and Christian fellowship.

Bob Swimm

The Bright Side

Monday, April 5, 2004, started off as a cool crisp spring morning. The smell of fresh flowers blooming filled the air, and the morning turned into a beautiful and warm comfortable afternoon. My family and I spent most of the day double checking our home for leavened products that we may have missed, overlooked, or left behind, for you know how anxious children can be. So much excitement was overwhelming us all, for this evening at sundown was to be our very first Night To Be Much Observed. It was to be observed with our loving and caring extended family members. What a wonderful event and experience it was to be with so many wonderful people who believe and observe the same things my family and I observe. It was the true significance behind the events that were unveiled so many thousands of years ago. Can you imagine being a part of the firstfruits that God chose to completely be lifted up from pain and suffering and to be able to see for your own eyes so many miraculous things take place?

I myself owe God everything, for He loved us all so much that He chose His own Son to live and die for us. Christ's life and death was all about us and what He was trying to prove, show, and share with so many, who in return did not believe. Many months prior to Passover, I began questioning my heart. Was I good enough all year? Was I thinking and acting the way that God wants me to act? Am I an example to others?

God sacrificed the most precious thing in His life, and that was His Son. We are warned numerous times of things that were and are to be. A lot of our rights as Christians are being slowly but surely torn from our grasps. My children are not allowed to say a blessing at school over their meal, giving God thanks for having another meal when so many in the world are starving.

I have dwelled on Passover and the Night To Be Much Observed for a long time, and yet I look at it with a heavy heart and a joyful heart. It saddens me that so many won't be a part of this wondrous life and future that God has in store for us all, but that is by their choice, not God's will. On the other side of my heart, I am so overwhelmed with joy, and I am so blessed to even be a piece of this wonderful puzzle of life that God is slowly putting together. I hope that many of us kept this holy day season with love, happiness, and a thankful heart. I know my family did.

There were many of our brethren that could not attend this wonderful gathering, but they need not worry, the thoughts of them all were with us. Even though I have never seen your face, or I may not even know your name, as Christ does for us all, I carry you with me in my heart, for my blessing came the day I entered into this wonderful family. My life growing up was very difficult, and I experienced things that no child should ever have to go through, but the BRIGHT SIDE to all this is that God chose you and me and others alike. Like the Israelites in Egypt, I myself was living in bondage trying to escape the pain and suffering from the past, for it seemed as if it was to be my future also. God has seen fit to deliver me from the bondage I was in, and I am so blessed in more ways than I can count. Sure, I still go through trials every day, but in the end, it was worth it all because I know that my God is the Potter and I am the clay. He is molding me and shaping me into the person of His choosing, not mine.

All the glory goes to God. I hope everything that you do in Christ is done with a loving and cheerful heart. We are all on different paths and journeys, but we will all find each other in the end, when we are with our Lord and Savior. May you all be blessed through Him who has brought us all together. He is the Shepard and we are His flock, for now He is feeding us, and some day, at His appointed time, He will lead us all home.

Darla Bright

Calgary welcomes Kentucky elder

Western Canada's second most western province is nicknamed "sunny" Alberta, and it did not belie its moniker on June 5 as I stepped off US Air Flight 1040 to sunny 78-degree bright sunshine.

As recently as last Feast of Tabernacles, the Church of God, International did not have a fellowship in Alberta, but thanks to the boundless energy of Mr. and Mrs. Ken Kerr, and their willingness to work with Charles Groce in Tyler, and our lone elder John Coish, over in Ontario, serving all of Canada, a fledgling church is doing quite well in Calgary.

A handful of the "walking wounded" have "pecked" in to check out the "new" church at Calgary, and are taking their time before making a commitment. But they are finding a warm family environment, and although most of the spiritual food is via video, they are finding it sound and worthwhile.

In the past eight months, Calgary has been visited by John Coish, Bronson James, Frank Marang, and, on June 6, me. I spoke at the AM service on the spiritual blindness that grips this world of Satan's,



Bob Swimm (right) with Ken Lofts, 87, who drove over 100 miles for the meeting

pointing out that we are in training to become eye surgeons to restore sight as assistants to Jesus. At the afternoon service, I used Ezekiel 37 to climax the sermon to build up the HOPE of the resurrection of all our loved ones as we lead them into the Family of God.

The potential for growth in Canada's provinces is, well, overwhelming. We need to clone Mr. Coish many, many times.

But for now, the news from Alberta is...SUNNY!

Bob Swimm

Taking Time

By Darla Bright

Whispering and laughing on a warm summer's day,
Wishing the troubles of life would fade away.
Giving thanks for all God has done,
To truly understand, that He gave His only Son.

Stopping to take a fresh breath of air,
To realize how much God must care.
Seeing a blessing in a little drop of rain,
To know that Jesus' death was not in vain.

Taking the time to stop and pray,
Giving God thanks for everything,
For He created the world in just six days.

Thank God for taking time to grace our life with His words;
Thank God for taking time to hear every cry.
Thank God for He gave his only Son to die,
So that some day we will be eternally by His side.

Ten Things You Seldom Hear in the Church of God

1. Hey! It's *my* turn to sit in the front row!
2. I was so enthralled, I *never noticed* your sermon went over time 45 minutes!
3. Personally, I find personal witnessing much more enjoyable than doing my own thing!
4. I've decided to give *our* church the \$500.00 a month I used to send to TV evangelists!
5. I'd like to volunteer to be the permanent coordinator of our weekly potlucks!
6. Forget the minimum salary; let's pay our pastor so *he* can live like *we* do!
7. I *love* it when we sing hymns I've never heard before!
8. Pastor, we'd like to send you to the feast this year in Jamaica!
9. Since we're all here, let's start the worship service *early*!
10. Nothing inspires me and strengthens my commitment like a good, strong sermon on *correction*! Lay it on!

Submitted by Lloyd W. Cary

Hickory congregation sends greetings, reports blessings

Greetings from the Church of God International of Hickory, NC, to the scattered brethren of the CGI. I sincerely hope you have been blessed as much as we have this past year.

We have had good services and very good attendance. We have gained a new member, Robert Gilreath, since the Feast of Tabernacles, and four who were formerly with the CGI are now attending with us. They are Mrs. Audrey Miller, Mr. and Mrs. Danny Jacques, and Mrs. Lois Henley. Also, Mr. Frank Cody is back after an extended illness. His dear wife, Mildred, is not able to attend, and all of us miss her greatly. (Please pray for her and for us. We need your prayers.)

Our church was blessed by two visitors from Tyler, TX, on the Sabbath of January 24. Charles Groce and Benny Sharp

dropped by during a trip to Myrtle Beach, SC. They went to Myrtle Beach to finalize plans for this year's Feast of Tabernacles.

Danny Jacques, in his sermonette, spoke about "Our Father's Love" and abortion in our nation.

After the sermonette, the "Hickory Nuts," members of our local church, entertained the congregation. After much practice, the group—Darla and Shayla Bright, Jerry and Ruby Griffin, Aggie Jacques, William and Frances Morgan, and Clyde and Effie Bost, with Diane Sain at the keyboard—sang two songs: "My Soul Shall Rejoice In The Lord" and "Amazing Grace." After this, William Morgan sang a special song.

Next, Charles Groce gave a sermon on "Best News I've Ever Heard," which was about the Ten Commandments. Mr. Groce

had the audience participate, and everyone enjoyed it.

Mr. and Mrs. Mike Nolen and members of their group from Summerville, SC, were also visiting with us that day. In addition, we had three special visitors from Wytheville, VA.

Everyone got a blessing from the service and the fellowship we had afterwards. Quite a few went out to eat and fellowship more.

The Hickory, NC, CGI meets each Sabbath at the Fairfield Inn off I-40 at Exit 125 in Hickory, NC. Bob Simmons, our pastor, along with his wife Betty, will be there to welcome everyone. You can reach Mr. Simmons at 1-864-895-7431 or simm9383@bellsouth.net.

Come worship with us!

Clyde Bost



Above: Bob Simmons, Roger Bright, William Morgan, and new member Robert Gilreath. Below: Charles Groce chats with brethren.



A joyful Sabbath for Indy congregation

The weather did not seem conducive for a happy warm Sabbath, February 21. The morning was cold and damp. But as time for services drew near, 27 happy people came to our meeting place to hear the visiting minister from Ft. Thomas, KY, Bob Swimm. Bob commented that this was his first trip back to Indianapolis since 1989, when he attended a GTA campaign here. Bob brought the sermon on "hope" and it was received very well, as that is a very important part of the gospel, or good news. Frank Denman, pastor of the Indy congregation, brought the

sermonette about the apostle Paul's warning to the remnant church in the latter days.

After services, we had our usual "potluck" dinner, then had a time of really fine fellowship! But as we had planned a hurried "fun show," and it was still Sabbath, we then proceeded to have a "hymn-a-long" and sang just about every song in our songbook. It was very inspiring, and the people were able to call out hymns to be sung, so we had a variable menu of song, and everyone really enjoyed that. It seems that we do know more songs

that we can use for our services in the future.

Then, as we wound down in song, we adjourned back to the dining hall, where the ladies brought out some snacks and finger foods, and we settled down to be entertained by Bob Swimm doing what he does so well—singing songs with CDs playing background music. That, too, was very well received.

Then Bobby Whitt and Jack Stephenson sang some country and blue grass songs, which really went well also.

But as all good things must come to an end, everyone was getting tired, but they were still so uplifted that there was another

er approximately 30 to 45 minutes of fellowshiping. We all were reluctant to leave! It was so good having Bob Swimm here, and some of the people commented as we were leaving that we should do this again soon!

But it would be remiss not to thank the ladies for their labors of love in preparing all the food and snacks, and of course to everyone for making it a prelude to "the night to be remembered," because this Sabbath will be remembered with happiness, as a true "Sabbath of delight."

Frank Denman

Jamaican CGI campaign nets 275

Pastor Boyne shows Sabbatarian groups inconsistency of arguments against holy days

The Church of God International (CGI) in Jamaica continued on its course of path-breaking growth when on Sabbath, February 14, it held its biggest public campaign ever addressed by a local speaker, pulling out an unprecedented 75 visitors to make a total attendance of 275.

Addressing the topic, "Should You keep the Feast Days?" which was aimed specifically at the Sabbatarian community, I (local CGI pastor) spoke at length, drawing on scholarly sources such as the *Word Biblical Commentary*, as well as the Seventh-Day Adventist ministerial magazine, *Ministry*, to prove that the holy days are still binding.

We took out prominent newspaper ads under the headline, "Questions for Sabbath-keepers." The ad had a number of sharp questions aimed at showing the inconsistency in keeping the weekly Sabbath while rejecting the annual Sabbaths. The ad showed that many of the arguments used by Sabbatarians against holy day observance were the same ones used by Sunday-keepers against the weekly Sabbath.

The public lecture continued on that theme and at the end, a number of Sabbatarians came up to say how astounded they were at the information that was given. There were a number of Adventists, Church of God (Seventh Day) members, and Seventh-Day Baptists who attended. Included in the audience was the vice-president of the Ministerial Association of a Church of God (Seventh Day) group who, along with his Communications Director, was nodding his head in agreement throughout the two-hour presenta-

tion. Everyone sat in rapt attention for the entirety of the presentation.

The Church of God (Seventh Day) ministers said the church would be holding a retreat for all its ministers in a few months specifically to discuss the holy days, and I offered to make a presentation there. Another Church of God (Seventh Day) group sent representatives to ask that I come to make a presentation to them also. This was a part of the plan, to get the opportunity to speak to Sabbatarians on the importance of maintaining consistency in what they observe.

I systematically went through all the arguments Sabbatarians who reject the annual holy days usually use against the feast days, showing that all of them were invalid and inconsistent. I also used Samuele Bacchiocchi's two-volume books on the holy days, as well.

As a means of stimulating interest in the campaign, I devoted my religious discussion program on radio, *Religious Hardtalk*, which has the largest listenership of talk shows in Jamaica, to a debate between a Seventh-Day Adventist theology professor and one of our deacons, George Ramocan, MA theology student at an evangelical seminary. The SDA professor was no match. A number of persons who came to the campaign said they came through the interest generated from the program.

There was a follow-up lecture the next week where I discussed the topic "The Bible Does Not Promise Heaven!" aiming at both the Seventh-Day Adventist community as well as the general world of churchinaity. We expected about 20-25 persons, but were pleasantly surprised when 54 visitors turned up, making it a

total attendance of 254. The church also held campaigns on the same topics in our smaller church in Ocho Rios, which on the two days attracted a total of 42 persons, 10 being visitors.

Follow-up Bible studies were scheduled on the subjects, "What About Those Who Never Heard?" dealing with God's plan to reach everyone with the gospel, and "Why the Trinity is False." Monday night Bible studies are also being held with visitors, in addition to studies given during Sabbath services.

Two Worldwide Church of God families and a friend (a total of eight adults) have come over to the CGI as a result of the campaign. They are excited about hearing the truths of God powerfully proclaimed again.

Some Seventh-Day Adventists have also been attending with CGI since the campaigns, as well as Church of God (Seventh Day) members. Lay members heavily supported the campaigns by actively invited friends and passing out leaflets on the road advertising the campaigns.

CGI Jamaica mobilizes the energy of all the church, not just the ministry, and believes strongly in member activism. While many COG groups are declining and retreating from effective evangelism, the CGI Jamaica continues to grow dynamically.

CGI Jamaica is the largest Church of God group in the English, French, Spanish, and Dutch-speaking Caribbean and one of the fastest growing in the world. The Kingston CGI has over 200 attending on the average Sabbath, and approximately 25 meet in Ocho Rios.

Ian Boyne

The Armor of God program is aired weekly on these stations...

RADIO

JAMAICA—Kingston: RADIO JAMAICA, 4:45 a.m., Thursday (Local)

TELEVISION

NEWFOUNDLAND TIME (CANADA)

ON, Toronto: VISION (national cable Canada), Sunday, 6:30 a.m. EST; Monday, 1:00 a.m. EST

PACIFIC TIME (CANADA)

ON, Toronto: VISION (national cable Canada), Sunday, 3:30 a.m. PST, 10:00 p.m. PST

AUSTRALIAN TIME

AUS, Brisbane: Briz 31, 7:00 a.m., Sunday

EASTERN TIME (USA)

The Word Network: Sunday, 10:30 a.m.
ABC Family Channel: Friday, 5:30 a.m.

CENTRAL TIME (USA)

The Word Network: Sunday, 9:30 a.m.
ABC Family Channel: Friday, 4:30 a.m.

MOUNTAIN TIME (USA)

The Word Network: Sunday, 8:30 a.m.
ABC Family Channel: Friday, 6:30 a.m.

PACIFIC TIME (USA)

The Word Network: Sunday, 7:30 a.m.
ABC Family Channel: Friday, 5:30 a.m.

**Watch
Armor of God
online!**
www.cgi.org

Obituaries

Alleta Merle Nelson

Alleta Merle Nelson, 93, of Fairfield, Iowa, died Saturday morning, February 21, 2004, at Jefferson County Hospital in Fairfield.

Miss Nelson was born October 4, 1910, near Maple Hill, Iowa. She was the daughter of Oscar and Lula Work Nelson.



Alleta Merle Nelson

She graduated from Estherville High School, lived for many years on a farm near Wallingsford, Iowa, and moved to Estherville, Iowa, after retiring.

The last of her immediate family, she was preceded in death by her parents; two brothers, Claire and Floyd Nelson; and one sister, Vera Nelson.

Bob and Pansy Alcorn of Waterloo, Iowa, had the pleasure of visiting Miss Nelson. Bob wrote the following in memory of Miss Nelson:

Alleta Nelson was a member of a Sabbath-keeping church in the Estherville, Iowa, area for a long time. She would tell me how much she enjoyed the dear people she met with and how much she missed them. They were all elderly people, and they died off. She was pretty much alone with no place to go.

She was getting old herself and still wanted to be in contact with a church that still believed in obeying God. Around 1990, she found out about the Church of God International. She was so happy to be able to receive taped sermons. She was at least 150 miles from the nearest church. Her thoughts were on all the nice people that provided the tapes she listened to. Don't ever think your tithes and offerings, attendance, and efforts are a waste. People do need people, and she was so happy to be part of the extended church.

On my visits, Miss Nelson always reminded me of how God had blessed her so much. She never complained about how people might have treated her wrongly, or how many misfortunes she had. She farmed all her life.

She stayed on the farm to help her mother when her brothers left. She'd tell about how she just loved all the different animals she had and how they would follow her on the truck when they were sold.

She told me many times how much she looked forward to the Kingdom of God and to be able to watch Jesus rule justly. She believed a better world is coming. That's why she felt so blessed. She was a real inspiration to me. She will be missed.

Lauren Marie Hendrix

On Sabbath, January 3, 2004, our granddaughter, Lauren Marie Hendrix, was severely injured when the all-terrain vehicle (ATV) she was driving failed to negotiate a curve and consequently struck a tree while traveling at a high rate of speed.

Lauren was life-flighted to an emergency trauma center, but her injuries were massive and she never regained consciousness. At approximately 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, Lauren was pronounced dead.

Lauren died four days short of her fifteenth birthday. The grief and shock to those of us who loved her has been, quite simply, overwhelming.

Day-to-day life goes on, however, and we are all dealing with this terrible tragedy as best we can. There is, of course, great comfort in knowing and understanding God's plan for humanity. As my dear friend Bill Watson said, as he preached Lauren's funeral, some day Lauren will hear the voice of Jesus Christ and she will come forth; she will live again.

God's people have been wonderful through this ordeal; therefore, on behalf of my wife Sandi and all of Lauren's loved ones, and for myself, I thank you. There just aren't sufficient words to express our gratitude for all the flowers, cards, letters, donations, and prayers. Sandi and I are blessed indeed to have fellowship and communion in Christ with all of you.

Wayne Hendrix

Eride "Mary" Gasparini Bial

On September 25, 2003, family, friends, and Church of God brethren gathered at Gilbert Funeral Home in Christopher, IL, to attend the final services of Mary Bial. The services started at 12:00 noon, with Wendell Yeary of the Intercontinental Church of God conducting the service. It was a large funeral, and it was very evident that Mary was much loved by all who knew her. Burial was in the Harrison Cemetery at Buckner, IL.

Mary was born to Primo and Caterina (Berolla) Gasparini on September 20, 1923, in Coella, IL. She passed away on Tuesday, September 23, at 9:20 a.m., in her home, where she had always been so happy with her family.

Mary was an accomplished cook and had a good head for business. Her husband Andy, with her help, created a successful farming business. Their son Michael followed in their footsteps and inherited their love of farming. Mary worked at Hoe



Andy and Mary Bial

Supply in Christopher for 55 years and was a treasurer for the Christopher High School. She had also been valedictorian there in 1941.

Andy and Mary have three children, all of Christopher, IL: two daughters, Yolanda Corizine (married to Dr. James Corizine) and Regina Bial, one son, Michael Andrew Bial (married to Pamela Paul); two grandchildren, Christian Michael Bial and Bryton Shane. Mary's husband Andy survives, along with her sister, Frances S. Sluzevich, and brother, Johnny Gasparini, of Springfield, IL. She was preceded in death by her parents; two sisters-in-law, Katie Gasparini and Mary Bial Fourez; a nephew, Ronnie Gasparini; and a brother-in-law, Sam Sluzevich.

I first met Mary Bial when she left the Worldwide Church of God around 1990 and came to attend services with the CGI in Marion, IL. She had been baptized into God's church on November 9, 1975, in Woodlawn, IL, by Jim Servidio. However, before that time she had studied at home for many years, not realizing that there were places where she could attend services. In 1987, she went on a trip to the nation of Israel, a dream come true! She

dearly loved the people of Israel and looked forward to the time that they would be grafted back into their own vine. She had great faith in God and hope for the future.

Mary was one of the strongest Christians I ever knew. She had a good understanding of the Scriptures and fearlessly gave her witness with such conviction that people couldn't help knowing just what she stood for. Yet, she was kind, patient, understanding, and a great listener. I called her "Barnabas" because she was such a great encourager of the brethren, her family, and her friends.

She loved all of God's people regardless of what group they were in. She started attending the Feast of Tabernacles with the CGI around 1990 (in Oklahoma). When the Kentucky feast site opened in 1995, Mary attended every year, making many friends and enjoying being with God's people. Locally, she attended services with the ICG (pastured by Dr. James Ricks and Wendell Yeary) in Vienna, IL.

She has helped me in my life in so many ways, always showing me much love and kindness. She saw others as they would be, overlooking their faults. What a woman of God! I miss her a lot, but look forward to seeing her again on the sea of glass, after we are all born into the family of God.

Let us finish our course, so that we can all be together with the Father, Jesus Christ, the angels, and each other. What a wonderful time awaits us!

Nancy Miles

Tony M. Phelps

Tony M. Phelps, 38, of Tripoli, IA, died Sunday, March 21, 2004, from injuries sustained in a traffic accident near Mason City.

Funeral services were Friday, March 26, at Rettig Funeral Chapel in Tripoli, with Duane Nicol officiating.



Tony Phelps

Tony was born in Waterloo, IA, on July 19, 1965, son of Ralph and Verna Weldon Phelps. He married Predeatta "Dee" Halstead on December 9, 2000, in Waterloo.

Tony graduated from Tripoli High School in 1984. He took truck-driving training in Des Moines and had worked for Wynne Transport for three years.

He is survived by his wife; a daughter, Kaelann Phelps; three stepchildren, Felicia, Ashley, and Austin; his parents of Wauke; three brothers, Danny Joe of Des Moines, Craig of Denver, and Tim of Lowell, IN; and two sisters, Clarissa Ahlen of Waterloo and Lori Forburger of Crown Point, IN.

In the funeral service, Mr. Nicol emphasized the biblical teaching on the resurrection, stating that Tony would indeed live again.

Margaret Stowell

Margaret Stowell, a true and loyal member of God's church at Louisville, KY, entered into rest Sunday April 4th 2004.

Margaret was baptized into the family of God April 15, 1981. She is survived by three daughters: Elaine Brown (husband Marty), Carol Arnold (husband Bill), and Bonnie Thomas (husband Dan); one sister, Corine Dewees; two brothers, Vernon Short and Milton Short; seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren; many nephews and nieces; and many, many good friends.

We in the Church of God will miss her, and look forward to seeing her at the great

celebration at the sound of the last trumpet. Margaret was ninety-four. Funeral services were conducted by Ferrell Vincent.

Wilfred Seal

Wilfred (Wilf) Seal, born in Oldham, England, December 4, 1921, passed away suddenly at home on May 2, 2004. A memorial service was held on Saturday, May 8.



Wilfred Seal

Wilf is survived by Joan, his wife of 48 years; daughter Debbie (Shane) McGee of St. Albert, Alberta; three sons, Gary of Courtenay, Brian (Lorna) of Courtenay, and Mark of Victoria B.C.; four grandchildren, Shannon (Mario) Rittmeyer of Edmonton Alberta, Justin McGee of St. Albert, and Jillian and Callum Seal of Courtenay.

Wilf was baptized in August of 1970, and was an active member of the church.

He loved fishing, pool, and cards.

He will be missed by his family and friends.

Jack E. Wroten

Jack Wroten, 75, of Flint, TX, died May 9, 2004, in Tyler. Funeral services were held May 12 at Lloyd James Funeral Chapel with Charles Groce and Bronson James officiating.

Jack is survived by his wife Deloris Wroten of Flint; sons Jack R. Wroten (wife Karan) of Flint, Marvin Wroten (wife Elaine) of Paris, TX, Michael Wroten (wife Kathy) of Chelsea, Maine, and John Davis (wife Gina) of Grand Saline, TX; daughters Jennifer Wroten of Dallas, TX, and Kim Stephenson of Whitehouse, TX; brothers Elizay Wroten of Tyler, Moody Wroten of Huntsville, TX, and Bobby Joe Tullios of Lake Providence, LA; sisters Betty Kniffen of Tyler, Ruth Swick of Plano, TX, Alice Daley of Orange, TX, and June Hasteley of Muskogee, OK; 10 grandchildren, Julie Speers of Mansfield, TX, Amy Wroten of Grand Prairie, TX, Amanda and Bonnie Wroten of Paris, Jennifer Tolar of Rice, TX, Paige, Emily, and Chance Stephenson of Whitehouse, and Jack and Josh Wroten of Chelsea, Maine.



Jack Wroten

Jack was born on February 6, 1929, in Fort Worth, TX, to the late Thomas Vincent and Zelma Mae Wooley Wroten. He was a veteran of the Korean War in the U.S. Marine Corps.

He was a member of the Tyler congregation of the Church of God International and member of the Rose City Sams RV Club.

Jack, lovingly called "Papa" by his grandchildren and other children who knew him, helped local schools with field trips and interesting projects, such as setting up an incubator with eggs so the children could watch them hatch.

He will be remembered for his exceptional kindness and generosity, his love for children, and his tireless service to the church and his community.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations . . .”

By Benjamin R. Chapman

My article is titled after one of the most important scriptures in the Bible that defines one of our major responsibilities! Of course, we know this is from Matthew 28. It is Jesus Christ's commission to His apostles:

“And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age’” (Matthew 28:18–20, American Standard Version).

We in the ministry today should take this admonition seriously! We want to preach the good news to all nations, and we just wish (and pray) we could do much more. I personally have been blessed to travel often to England and Australia, mostly on trips for my computer business. But when I can, I visit one of our congregations for Sabbath services. We don't have a regular CGI fellowship group in England anymore, but perhaps one of these days...

Little did I suspect that when God called me into His church, someday I would be privileged to take part in the international part of His work! Yes, it was a long time coming. I went to Ambassador College for three years to earn a B.A. degree (already having earned a B.S. in engineering from another college). Yes, I did work in international areas (I spent three years in Brickton Wood, England) before returning to the U.S. and another “foreign” area, Texas, where I taught college classes at the Big Sandy campus for some ten years. That was all part of my growth path in the Radio Church of God and the Worldwide Church of God. Then, after being transferred to Pasadena in 1973 God showed me five years later during a time of great upheaval and confusion that the Church of God International was the organization I should be supporting.

My efforts have been primarily in New Jersey and Utah, but I have been appointed the Western U.S. Area Coordinator, and I try hard to visit all the chartered churches and fellowship groups in the West once each year, in addition to preaching and teaching at my “home” church twice each month in Murray, Utah, a small city just five miles south of Salt Lake City. We now hold Feast of Tabernacles and Last Great Day services in nearby Sandy, Utah.

But since my business has allowed me to fly to England many times (although not recently to my disappointment), and to Australia more recently (this is my eighth trip, if I remember correctly) where I had the pleasure of starting a CGI group in August 1997, and then attending the Feast of Tabernacles in “the land down under” in the fall of that year.

Recent history of the Australian work

With this brief background, let me introduce you to our newest elder, Mr. Herbert Haupt (Herb pronounces his surname as “Hope”) and his wife Tui. As I am writing this article on my brand new laptop, I am currently winging my way there from Salt Lake City, via Sydney, to their home town in Boonah, near Brisbane, Queensland, to keep the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread with the Australian CGI group, and

to ordain Herb to eldership! He's already a deacon and, with his wife Tui, does a tremendous job taking care of the far-flung Australian work. He and his wife have been very faithful servants of Jesus Christ and extremely loyal to the Church of God International. Unfortunately, health problems have not allowed him to come to the United States to be ordained, which the Ministerial Council approved many months ago.

My wife Lois and I traveled down there in August of 1997 where I conducted campaigns in both Sydney and Brisbane. From this tiny beginning, we were able to start a group in the Brisbane area, and to begin a small work in Australia, led by Herb and Tui.

Each year thereafter, the CGI has been able to send U.S. ministers there for God's Feast of Tabernacles. You might be interested in what the CGI has been able to do:

2003—Roger King; 2002—Frank Marang; 2001—Tom Kauffung; 2000—Richard Williams; 1999—Hal Bryant; 1998—Loren Chamberlain; 1997—Benjamin Chapman

That's quite a wide range of guys (and gals, as they were able to take their wives)! And everyone is very thankful he had the opportunity to go! It was a wonderful feast for everyone! Just ask them if you don't believe me! And, each year Herb has been called upon to do more and more. In 2001, Tom Kauffung ordained Herb to deaconship.

The Haupt's

The Haupt's are an interesting couple. They returned to the Brisbane area, where Herb had been employed by Silverwood and Beck in the manufacturing of shop fittings for some twenty years, from nearby Russell Island, where he met and married Tui during his six-year stay. They have six children (Maree, Rosslyn, Sheree, Barclay, Paul, and Lincoln), now all grown, married, and with children of their own (the Haupt's have fifteen grandchildren).

While Herb takes care of the work here (answering mail, returning phone calls, sending out booklets, etc.), Tui generates a newsletter called *The Aussie Chat* to all the brethren each month, as well as answering the telephone after the *Armor of God* telecast. And she keeps the books and financial records of the work.

Herb and Tui maintain a wonderful relationship with their offspring, none of whom has been called into God's church yet, though several of them show some interest.

Boonah, Queensland

Some ninety kilometers south of Brisbane is the small township of Boonah, where Herb and Tui reside on a beautiful hillside overlooking cattle country. Occasionally, in the morning, horses and bulls (big ones!) come up to the property fence line to say hello. Their house sits on about an half acre plot in the middle of a paddock (Australian for fenced-in field). One can even see an occasional King parrot, with absolutely gorgeous bright red feathered breasts and heads and green wings, or a kangaroo! It's quite pic-

turesque, quiet, somewhat millennial in feeling. Boonah's population is only fifteen thousand, and from the center of town it's about a twenty-minute drive through paved and gravel roads to their home.

Their nearest neighbors, Dave and Loraine, with two nice boys, live about a half mile away. They think of Herb and Tui as grandpa and grandma. Of course, everybody knows everybody!

Herb and Tui have five cats and four chickens, and when they are away for the feast, their neighbors care for the animals.



Ipswich CGI fellowship on Sabbath, April 6, 2004

It's a style of life many of us would love to have, but the needs of the work right now prevent us from enjoying this kind of life! Boonah is situated near the famous Gold Coast with gorgeous white sand beaches. North of Brisbane is the equally famous Sunshine Coast, another very popular tourist attraction.

The Australian work today

Every other Sabbath (actually the first and third Sabbaths each month) the Haupt's motor up to Ipswich, about 40 miles north of Boonah, to conduct services. Their group is usually only about ten people, although with some word-of-mouth advertising twenty-four showed up for Sabbath services April 3!

Some have learned of the CGI through the Internet, which Herb maintains! The *Armor of God* TV broadcast is aired weekly and brings in a small response. Church growth is very slow, as God is not calling many here today. However, as the end gets nearer and nearer, I would not be surprised to see a substantial growth in interest by many Aussies. Is that not in all our prayers?

The drive to church is a very pleasant trip through beautiful countryside, now very green and verdant due to a recent much-needed heavy rainfall.

Ballina feast site

For the past six years the seaside township of Ballina has been chosen for the annual Feast of Tabernacles site. Attendees stay in motels and hotels downtown, then drive just a short distance northwest on North Creek Road to the meeting site, Tropical Gardens Function Centre. It's five acres of unique gardens, lake, bridges, and fairy lights. It's more than adequate for a large crowd. The management specializes in weddings, various kinds of parties, and conferences.

The drive from Brisbane Airport down the Pacific Highway is about three hours. Herb, Tui, and all the Australian members would love to have you join them! The costs are very reasonable: a self-contained two bedroom unit (complete kitchen) runs about \$28 (US) a night, and everybody usually stays ten nights. Airfare to Australia is another matter!



Ordination of Herb Haupt

Future plans

Now ordained as a minister of Jesus Christ, Herb can add to his duties anointing the sick or mailing out anointed cloths. As finances provide, Herb hopes to have the TV broadcast aired also from Sydney. Adelaide is another area of opportunity which he feels has been overlooked by the Church of God movement. Some months are so tough financially that Herb can hardly meet the current TV bills.

What can you do?

First, you can pray for the Australian work! It's a huge country approximately the size of the continental United States with a very small, but energetic, population of only twenty million who need to be told what's about to happen! And that takes open doors and money! Next, you can pray for Herb and his health problems. He suffers from hemochromatosis (a genetically caused disorder of an iron overload in the organs), and his doctors do not recommend he takes any long flights. His wife does a remarkable volunteer service for many shut-ins as a therapist. Pray that she remains in good health too.

Sometimes we too get a bit impatient with God and wish He would do more. Even the early apostles were impatient! Notice Acts 1:6–8:

“And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, ‘Lord, is it at this time you are restoring the kingdom to Israel?’ He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.’”

Well, Australia may not be the remotest part of the earth, but it is some eight to nine thousand miles from our home office in Tyler, Texas! These people do speak English (a joke, as you probably already knew that, but very easy to grasp their accent and Australian expressions) and understand many things in business, politics, science, and commerce. They're not dumb, only spiritually blind. They do NOT understand the basic truths revealed in the Bible! Not many of them have had their minds opened to the truth yet. That's where we come in. We must fervently pray for a growing work down here! There's a lot to do in the “land down under.” They need more financial offerings and a lot more dedicated church members. The home office sends them booklets, tapes, and reprint articles and an occasional British Pounds offering. Our goal is to help them as much as possible. This, indeed, is a worldwide work. Pray for the Australian work!

CGI opens a new TV studio on the North Coast

It's been just about four and one-half years since the CGI started to contract outside professional television studios to film the *Armor of God* television program. These studios were located in two different areas. One was near the home office in Tyler, TX, while the other was located in Cleveland, OH, where for the last two years the post-production of the program has been conducted.

With costs continuing to escalate and schedules of the studios and commentators becoming increasingly more difficult to coordinate, along with digital video technology becoming more affordable, the



The Rusinko "demo team" strikes a pose after starting the demolition.

media department began to explore the possibility of constructing our own "sound studio" for filming the *Armor of God* telecast.

After reviewing budgetary considerations and comparing our present costs with contracting our own outside filming company, the advantages of having our own studio became obvious. So with a nominal investment for "studio lights" and "set materials," it was decided to rent some space near Cleveland, OH. It made more logistical and economic sense to locate in the Cleveland area since the media department and all our post-production work is located and conducted there.

In the month of February, a "demo" team of two, Dave Rusinko Sr. and Dave Rusinko Jr., commenced with some minor remodeling requirements necessary to enlarge and soundproof the filming area of the facility. Wayne Hendrix, pastor of the Toledo, OH, and Pittsburgh, PA, churches, took the oversight of conducting the installation of all the electrical changes, which included the installation of thirteen new circuits to accommodate all the studio



Angelo Lamarco, our videographer/engineer, confirms camera angles and positioning.

lights. The Bath congregation of the CGI has also rallied in support by providing funds and additional labor to ease the construction expense necessary to provide a "state-of-the-art" sound studio for filming the *Armor Of God* program. This has been a wonderful cost-saving benefit to the CGI and a great example of brethren working together for the promotion of our mission of presenting the

gospel of Jesus Christ.

The *Armor of God* media team is also excited about this new opportunity and what it provides for the *Armor of God* program. After considering the additional flexibility and added camera angles to the telecast, our viewers can look forward to an improved, more interesting video presentation.

Having our own studio will allow us to move the program into new areas that will continue to help us enhance the presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ and His warning message to an evil and hedonistic generation.

On May 7, soon after finishing construction of the studio, we did our first success-

ful shoot. We will continue to keep you informed of our progress as we go forward with this new asset.

We are all very grateful for this new venture, and what appears to be a stronger evangelistic position. We hope you will pray, along with us, that God will continue to open doors for the *Armor of God* telecast to expand its coverage more powerfully and boldly throughout North America and, God willing, other parts of the world.

Bill Watson



Wayne Hendrix and Margie Watson review the installation of some new wall switches.



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