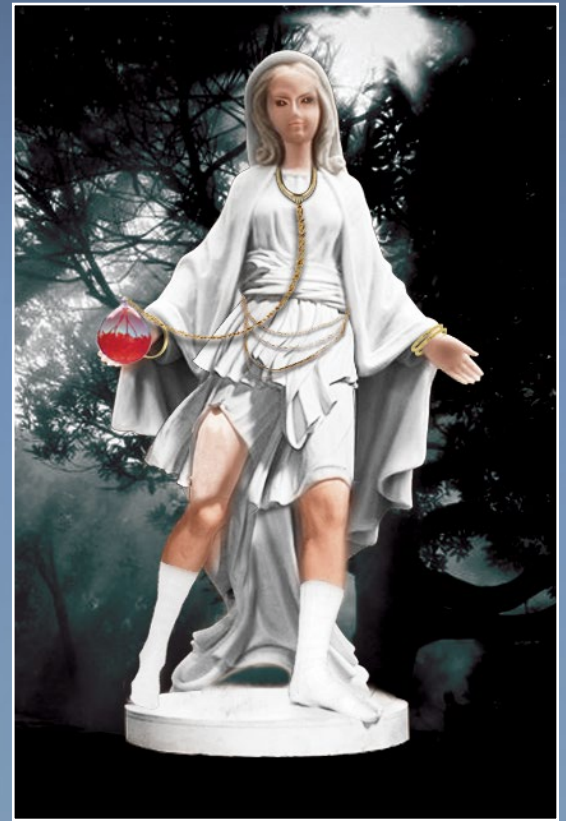


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BIBLE NEWS PROPHECY

What Appeared in Fatima?



**Pentecost, Dreams,
and Spiritual Gifts**

**Apparitions, History,
and the Church of God**



BIBLE NEWS PROPHECY



3



10



23



33

IN THIS ISSUE:

- 3 Apparitions, History, and the Church of God** Does God use apparitions? Does Satan use apparitions? How have apparitions changed the world?
- 10 What Appeared in Fatima?** What appeared in Fatima, Portugal in 1917? Why is that relevant now? Does Fatima give another clue about Satan and his plan?
- 13 Study the Bible Course Lesson 2: Here's good news . . . the MESSAGE sent from Heaven** This is the second lesson of course to help people study and better understand the Bible.
- 23 Pentecost, Dreams, and Spiritual Gifts** Various spiritual gifts are mentioned in the Bible. Are any obvious now? What about dreams? What are interpretation, knowledge, discernment, and love?
- 30 Are you just enduring to the end?** Some in God's Church simply intend to "tough it out" until Christ returns. Literally, they are "ENDURING to the end" (Matt. 24:13) – but not the way Christ intended.
- 33 Evans Ochieng and the Continuing Church of God** This article gives an introduction to Evans Ochieng a minister for the *Continuing Church of God* who lives in Kenya.
- 35 Psalm 23: A Psalm of Comfort** Is the Lord your Shepherd? Do you really trust Him?

Back Cover: Internet and Radio This shows where people can find the message from the Continuing Church of God.

About the Front Cover: A comparison of a statue in Fatima (photo by Joyce Thiel) and a composite statue based upon the description of what allegedly appeared in Fatima in 1917 (artwork by Brian Thiel and James Estoque). The 'Lady of Fatima' actually appeared wearing a short skirt.

BibleNewsProphecyTM is published by the *Continuing Church of God*, 1248 E. Grand Avenue, Suite A, Arroyo Grande, CA, 93420. <http://www.ccog.org>

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Photos: All photos come from the Thiel family or public domain sources such as *Wikipedia* (if an attribution is not given, it is because it is believed that the source released the photo into public use without any conditions).

APPARITIONS, HISTORY, AND THE CHURCH OF GOD



Claimed 'Lady of Guadalupe,' Mexico City

(Photo by Jan Zatzko)

What is an apparition? Have apparitions changed the world? Are apparitions ever biblically-sanctioned? Are claimed visits from apparitions only an issue for Roman Catholics or have they also affected the Church of God? If so, how have they affected it?

Will apparitions affect the Church of God in the future?

What is An Apparition?

Here is a definition of an apparition, according to Dictionary.com:

ap·pa·ri·tion [ap-uh-rish-uhn] noun

1. a supernatural appearance of a person or thing...

Many with the Church of Rome believe that Jesus' deceased mother Mary has appeared throughout history as an apparition. Other claimed apparitions and enchantments have also played important roles in the rise of that church and certain related churches.

The Bible and Apparitions

Are apparitions at all biblical? Should they ever be believed? How can one tell if they are from God or the devil?

The Bible is clear that God sometimes uses angels to give messages sometimes in person and sometimes in dreams. This is clear both from the Old (Genesis 16:7-12; 21:17-18; 22:11-18; 31:11; Numbers 22:22-31; Judges 2:1-4; 6:11-22; 13:3-21, etc.) and New (Matthew 1:20-24; 2:13-20; 28:2-7; Luke 1:11-38; Revelation 5:2-3, etc.) Testaments. Biblically, apparitions can be from God.

The Bible shows that angelic apparitions were used to announce the birth of John the Baptist (Luke 11:1-20), the conception of Jesus via the Holy Spirit within Mary (Luke 1:26-38), the resurrection of Jesus (Matthew 28:2-7), and more.

Furthermore, the New Testament specifically reports that angelic apparitions were part of early Church of God history (Acts 5:19-20; 10:3-7; 12:8-11; 27:23-26).

God-approved "apparitions" have changed the world.

Messages of Three Angels

The Bible shows that God will use appearances of angels in the future.

In addition to the warnings by God's two witnesses for 3 ½ years and God's remaining people, as well as various signs and trumpets from God, God is going to provide a warning of repentance to the world by way of three angels. Thus, in at least this way, apparitions will be part of the final phase of the work:

6 Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people— 7 saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water." 8 And another angel followed, saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." 9 Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured

out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name” (Revelation 14:6-11).

We in the Continuing Church of God need to realize that God wants people to repent and will use angelic beings to get His gospel message out. Actually, because of deception (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12) and because much of the rest of the world will prosper at this time (cf. Revelation 18), they will ignore real angelic apparitions from God. That is probably part of why the Bible teaches that “the day of the Lord will come as a thief” (2 Peter 3:10).

The Bible Warns About Apparitions

Although God has and will use “apparitions,” most who claim to have seen apparitions have not seen apparitions from God. And one of the most famous deceptive ‘apparitions’ was when Satan appeared as a serpent in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-4; Ezekiel 28:11-15; Revelation 20:2).

Scripture warns against heeding the teachings of demons, which would include false apparitions:

1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons (1 Timothy 4:1).

A few ‘doctrines of demons’ that have reportedly come through apparitions (or were reportedly confirmed by them) include the “Holy Trinity,” rosary, “immortal soul,” acceptance of icons, Jesus’ mother Mary’s alleged current role in salvation, the so-called “immaculate heart of Mary,” and the prophesied rise of the “Great Monarch” (who scriptures seem to warn against as the final Beast of the sea and King of the North) and prophesied rise of the “Angelic Pastor” (who scriptures seem to warn against as the final Beast of the earth, final Antichrist, and False Prophet). While versions of some of these doctrines already existed in paganism, their acceptance by the Greco-Roman churches was facilitated by demonic apparitions. The world has been impacted by these demonic apparitions.

The New Testament also warns that Christians are to:

1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. (1 John 4:1)

Christians are to “test the spirits.” If all were true or none were true there would be no reason to have to test them.

Notice two ways to determine if the spirit or claimed

apparition is false:

8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed. (Galatians 1:8-9)

1 “If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, 2 and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, ‘Let us go after other gods’ — which you have not known — ‘and let us serve them,’ 3 you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the Lord your God is testing you to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. 4 You shall walk after the Lord your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice; you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him. 5 But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken in order to turn you away from the Lord your God. (Deuteronomy 13:1-5)

So, any valid message from a dreamer or prophet must be consistent with the true gospel and also should not be opposed to God’s commandments.

Apostolic Issues

According to the New Testament and some post-New Testament documents, the apostles had to deal with at least three people who seemingly had encounters with apparitions.

The Apostle Paul had to denounce and cast out a demon from a woman who seemingly prophesied because of demonic influence (Acts 16:16-22). Paul was beaten and jailed because of what he did (Acts 16:23).

The Apostle Peter condemned Simon Magus (Acts 8:9-23), who (according to certain religious writers in the 2nd century) apparently indicated some type of encounter with angels/demons/apparitions/spirits (cf. Acts 8:9-23). It may be of interest to note that even those now considered to be early supporters of the Roman Catholic Church condemned Simon and his followers for doctrines such as statues, revering a woman, the doctrine of the immortal soul, incantations, mysteries, mystic priests, claiming divine titles for leaders, accepting money for religious favours, preferring allegory and tradition over many aspects of scripture, having a leader who wanted to be thought of as God/Christ on earth, and divorcing themselves from Christian biblical practices considered to be Jewish.

In the second century, Irenaeus wrote about an incident

involving the Apostle John and an apostate named Cerinthus which apparently occurred in the late first century:

There are also those who heard from him that John, the disciple of the Lord, going to bathe at Ephesus, and perceiving Cerinthus within, rushed out of the bath-house without bathing, exclaiming, "Let us fly, lest even the bath-house fall down, because Cerinthus, the enemy of the truth, is within." (Irenaeus. *Adversus Haeres.* Book III, Chapter 3, Verse 4)

Cerinthus essentially claimed to get his doctrine from "angels" and his personal biblical insights. Cerinthus taught allegorizing of scripture, taught that non-biblical tradition was more important than scripture, blended Gnostic teachings with the Bible, claimed to be an apostle, came up with improper festivals, and claimed that angels gave him messages. Though Catholics have denounced him, several of his teachings were eventually adopted by the Church of Rome.

The Bible Warns About a 'Virgin' 'Lady'

There have been a lot of reports of 'female' apparitions since the third century A.D.

Might the Bible have warnings about alleged female apparitions?

Well, in the Old Testament, the Bible warns of a "virgin" that uses enchantments who is also called the Lady of Kingdoms:

1 Come down, sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: there is no throne for the daughter of the Chaldeans, for thou shalt no more be called delicate and tender...4 Our redeemer, the Lord of hosts is his name, the Holy One of Israel. 5 Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called the lady of kingdoms. 6 I was angry with my people, I have polluted my inheritance, and have given them into thy bend: thou hast shown no mercy to them: upon the ancient thou hast laid thy yoke exceeding heavy.

7 And thou hast said: I shall be a lady forever: thou hast not laid these things to thy heart, neither hast thou remembered thy latter end.

8 And now hear these things, thou that art delicate, and dwellest confidently, that sayest in thy heart: I am, and there is none else besides me: I shall not sit as a widow, and I shall not know barrenness.

9 These two things shall come upon thee suddenly in one day, barrenness and widowhood. All things are come upon thee, because of the multitude of thy

sorceries, and for the great hardness of thy enchanters. 10 And thou best trusted in thy wickedness, and hast said: There is none that seeth me. Thy wisdom, and thy knowledge, this hath deceived thee. And thou best said in thy heart: I am, and besides me there is no other. 11 Evil shall come upon thee, and then shalt not know the rising thereof: and calamity shall fall violently upon thee, which thou canst not keep off: misery shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know. 12 Stand now with thy enchanters, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, in which thou hast laboured from thy youth, if so be it may profit thee any thing, or if thou mayst become stronger. 13 Thou hast failed in the multitude or thy counsels: let now the astrologers stand and save thee, they that gazed at the stars, and counted the months, that from them they might tell the things that shall come to thee. (Isaiah 47:1, 4-7, 11-13, DRB)

Interestingly, the second of the seven wonders of the ancient world has been called, "Babylon the Great, the Lady of the Kingdoms, the glory of the whole earth." Might there be a tie between the old Babylon and the end time Mystery Babylon of Revelation 17?

The Bible also seems to connect the Lady's haughty comments in verses Isaiah 7 & 8 with those of the harlot of Revelation 17:1, 18; 18:7-8, 11 and the city in Zephaniah 2:15.

Some may be surprised to see this, but this immoral "Lady" also seems to have the title of "queen" and "harlot":

7 You thought, 'I shall be a queen forever.' 8...I am the only one who matters. I shall never be widowed, never know bereavement.' 9 Yet both these things will befall you, suddenly, in one day. Bereavement and widowhood will suddenly befall you (Isaiah 47:7, 8b, 9 NJB)

4 Because of the multitude of harlotries of the seductive harlot, The mistress of sorceries, Who sells nations through her harlotries, And families through her sorceries. (Nahum 3:4, NKJV)

5 Look, I am against you!-declares Yahweh Sabaoth- I shall lift your skirts as high as your face and show your nakedness to the nations, your shame to the kingdoms. (Nahum 3:5, NJB)

3 All the nations have drunk deep of the wine of her prostitution; every king on the earth has prostituted himself with her, and every merchant grown rich through her debauchery. (Revelation 18:3, NJB)

17:1...Come, I will shew thee the condemnation of the great harlot, who sitteth upon many waters...18:7 As much as she hath glorified herself, and lived in delicacies, so much torment and sorrow give ye to her;

because she saith in her heart: I sit a queen, and am no widow; and sorrow I shall not see. 8 Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be burnt with the fire; because God is strong, who shall judge her... 23 all nations have been deceived by thy enchantments (Revelation 17:1b, 18:7-8, 23 DRB)

So, understand that what will happen to the queen/Lady of the Kingdoms as well as to Babylon is warned against in Revelation and elsewhere. However, "Lady of the Kingdom" is a title various Catholics have given to Mary. The Taoists revere the goddess, Tian Hou, who is called the "Queen of Heaven." Various Chinese also revere a female apparition that has a similar title (and that may have direct ties to Satan as originally it allegedly was male).

Of course, neither the Bible nor the apostles referred to Jesus' mother Mary as any type of queen, nor "Lady of the Kingdoms."

Yet, at least partially because of statements from various ones who claimed to see apparitions of Mary, Catholics consider that Mary, the mother of Jesus, is the "queen of heaven" and/or "Lady of the Kingdoms." This is despite the fact that the Bible warns against one who is referred to as the "queen of heaven" (Jeremiah 7:18-19; 44:17-25) and certainly condemns one called the "Lady of the Kingdoms."

Since the Bible warns that an end time "queen" will have a role involving sorceries (cf. Revelation 18:7,23, NKJV) this is consistent with the view that some type of female-looking apparition may be involved in end time deception.

And there have been deceptions related to alleged Marian and other apparitions throughout church history.

Apparitions have Assisted the Rise of the Greco-Roman Churches

While true Christians do not accept that Jesus' mother Mary has been appearing to various ones, this does not mean that those who have claimed to see her or other false apparitions have not affected history or the Church of God.

Because of the warning in Isaiah 47:12 that the "Lady of the Kingdoms" would use enchantments and sorceries from her youth, I wondered when the first claimed Marian apparitions took place and how the Church of God could have been affected by this.

A few years ago I did some research and found that around 238-244 A.D. one named Gregory (died roughly 270 A.D.) seems to have been the first to have claimed to have seen an apparition of Mary. Gregory was trained by the apostate and allegorist Origen of Alexandria, in Egypt. This apparition allegedly appeared to him before he later

became Bishop Gregory of Neocaesaria (now in lands controlled by Turkey), and thus was probably a factor in him becoming a bishop. Gregory is also known as "Gregory the Wonder Worker" and "Saint Gregory Thaumaturgus" (wonder worker). Related to Gregory, scholars Roberts and Donaldson reported:

He was believed to have been gifted with a power of working miracles, which he was constantly exercising... the demons were subject to him...he could cast his cloak over a man, and cause his death...he could bring the presiding demons back to their shrine.

There is no example of God's servants causing death in manners such as those attributed to Gregory, so this should give all pause to recognize that the Gregory's powers did not come from God.

Yet, because Gregory's power over demons and other "wonders" were apparently accepted by many, he had influence. It seems that Gregory's enchantments and/or sorceries (cf. Isaiah 47:5-12; Nahum 3:4), along with Imperial persecutions, may have greatly assisted the Greco-Roman faction in eliminating the more organized faithful of the Church of God in Asia Minor. Gregory was also a factor in the rise of Marian cults around that time (some of which also had ties to the pagan goddess Diana). His writings teach praise and excessive devotion to the "Holy Virgin," including the blasphemous teaching that Mary (not Jesus) "blotted out" Eve's "transgressions." He was amongst the earliest ones who claimed Christ to promote the expression the "Holy Trinity" and the pagan idea that humans had an immortal soul.

Many do not realize that until possibly into the early third century, the number of Christians associated with the Church of God seems to have exceeded the number of professing Christians in the emerging Greco-Roman confederation. The apparition claiming Gregory was a factor here in increasing Greco-Roman influence.

Also, around this time is when "eucharistic miracles" seemed to have begun. Cyprian of Carthage reported that one sinner had some "eucharistic" bread immediately turn into ashes upon contact with him. Rumors of these wonders apparently spread and influenced many (cf. Isaiah 47:1-12). While "eucharistic" miracles are not necessarily the same as apparitions, they are consistent with warned against enchantments and sorceries. To this day, "eucharistic miracles" have major impacts on those who claim allegiance to the Church of Rome. Sometimes, Marian apparitions have also claimed responsibility for these alleged "eucharistic miracles."

Apparitions Affected the Roman Empire

The Catholic writer C.M. Mangan reported:

In 312, the Roman Emperor Constantine I the Great was in Trier, Germany where he had an unexpected vision of a cross that appeared in the sky with the haunting words, "In hoc signum vinces" ("In this sign you conquer"). The Emperor was buoyed by the apparition and encouraged his 20,000 troops for the upcoming bloody battle against Maxentius and his 100,000 men. Constantine's soldiers, the majority of whom were pagans, placed the sacred image of the cross on their shields.



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The "cross" what was seen allegedly was a spear crossed with a sword. While Jesus indicated that His people would not be part of carnal warfare in this age (John 18:36) and that long had been the position of not only of the Church of God, but also the Greco-Roman Catholics, Emperor Constantine had a different view and helped turn the Catholics into a frequently warring religion.

Historians realize that this alleged apparition, combined with a dream where Constantine claimed to see an apparition of Jesus, changed the course of world history. Emperor Constantine, himself, was thankful for these apparent apparitions and believed that this indicated that some things should change in his empire.

Constantine ended up making the first Sunday law, issuing an edict against those who would not accept his compromised religion, greatly exalting the political power of Greco-Roman bishops, and massively increased idolatry and military service amongst unfaithful professors of Christ. He also took away certain Church of God properties and ordered the death penalty to Church of God Christians in Jerusalem that would not eat pork.

He is known as Constantine the Great by the Roman and Eastern Orthodox Catholics for legalizing and essentially mandating their compromised faith throughout the Roman Empire. Other doctrinal compromises occurred because of him and afterwards. And note that apparitions were involved. It has also been reported that only two years earlier, Constantine saw an apparition of the sun god Sol in a grove of Apollo in Gaul in 310 (discussed in Rodgers, Barbara S. "Constantine's Pagan Vision," *Byzantion*, vol. 50, 1980, pp. 259–78). This should give all pause to realize that Constantine had a history of apparent demonic contact, but most have overlooked this.

Even after his alleged conversion to his claimed version of the Christian faith in 312 (if he was ever baptized, it was supposedly on his death bed in 337 A.D., despite him declaring himself a lay "Christian" bishop by 325), Emperor Constantine still put the sun god Sol on his coins. Here is one of his coins from 317:

The Latin expression SOLI INVICTO COMITI in English means "In honor of the unconquered Sun (god)." It is clear that in 317 A.D. (which is about five years after his supposed "conversion") Constantine was still publicly honouring the sun-god Sol also known as Mithras (the sun-god of war). This should also prove to all that his vision of apparitions was not from God, but instead he is called Constantine the Great.

How could this be?

The Apostle Paul warned that true Christians would "walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7), yet others ignore that and seemingly prefer to believe lies that they could disprove (cf. Revelation 22:15).

In the Bible it shows that many will accept various signs and lying wonders (including apparitions, cf. Revelation 16:14) because they do not have "the love of the truth" (2 Thessalonians 2:10). Although Jesus said that God's word was truth (John 17:17), many rationalize around the truth of the Bible and will accept a false gospel. Sadly, this has repeatedly been shown to be the case throughout history.

Apparitions Further Affected History: Russia

Claimed apparitions have been involved in deceit throughout the church age. Over time, the amount of claimed Marian apparitions has increased. This seemed to have been a factor in getting various ones in Europe and North Africa to accept the Greco-Roman religion as opposed to the true Church of God faith in the Middle Ages.

But other geographical areas were also affected. The Catholic Marian Research Institute has reported that there have been over 2,000 Marian apparitions. They reported nearly 800 in the 13th century alone—which tends to indicate that Europe had a lot of claimed apparitions which influenced it. Many Catholic prophetic understandings have come from apparitions, mainly those claimed to be Mary, but also from some claimed to be Jesus.

The Catholics of Rome, of course, are not the only ones to have claimed to see apparitions. In the fourteenth century, Sergius of Radonezh reportedly saw an apparition that he claimed was Mary.

Although Russia had some improper Marian concepts before, it is reported that Sergius became “the real architect” of getting Russia to embrace the Orthodox Catholic faith and it was he who “helped spread through Russia” the “importance” of “icon painting.”

But icon promotion was not an original practice of the church, and those types of paintings had been historically denounced by early clergy. Thus, it is not logical to conclude that Sergius saw Mary of the Bible. Sergius died in 1392.

Enchantments/sorceries also seem to have been involved with Sergius as his “incorrupt relics” (at least part of his “undecayed” corpse) were found in 1422 (certain Catholics believe that if a body does not decay for a time after death and someone led a sufficiently Catholic life, that this is proof of “sainthood”). Sergius is considered to be one of the most important “saints” by the Russian Orthodox Church and this is partially as the result of his claimed vision of an apparition.

“Guadalupe” and Latin America

One of the most important claimed Marian apparitions in history is the appearance of one in Mexico in the 16th century, known today as Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The Marian Research Institute posted:

Renaissance: During the sixteenth century, a new kind of apparition began. These apparitions had a public character and were intended to “re-animate faith” and to “surmount the world’s crises.” (Laurentin 88) The most significant case is Guadalupe (1531) which gave “birth to a new church on a new continent.” (Laurentin 88)

Notice that there was a change in the apparitions around the 16th century. Notice also the claim that the “Guadalupe” apparition reportedly gave “birth to a new church on a new continent.”

Antonio Socci reported:

The apparition of Guadalupe—according to the general acknowledgement of historians—was what attracted the Indians to Christianity. Therefore, it was precisely Guadalupe that gave birth to Latin American Christianity. (Socci A. The Fourth Secret of Fatima. Loreto Publications, English Translation 2009, p. 143)

Dr. Jeanette Rodríguez, a Catholic scholar, wrote:

Juan Diego...said, “She calls herself ‘Tlecuauhtlaucepueh.’” To the Spaniards this sounded like “Guadalupe”... But the Nahuatl language does not contain the letters d and g; therefore our Lady’s name could not have been “Guadalupe”... The Nahuatl understanding of “Tlecuauhtlaucepueh” is La que viene volando de la

luz como el águila de fuego (she who comes flying like a region of light like an eagle of fire, Echeagaray 1981:21). The region of light was the dwelling place of the Aztec gods, and the eagle was a sign from the gods. (Rodríguez J. Our Lady of Guadalupe: faith and empowerment among Mexican-American women. University of Texas Press, 1994, pp. 45-46)

So, the apparition sounded a lot like an Aztec goddess. Notice also the following:

The Virgin of Guadalupe appeared in what is now Mexico City on the holy hill of Tepeyac, dedicated to Tonantzin, the Mother Earth goddess of the Aztecs. That is one reason why the bishop didn’t believe Juan Diego. He must have thought: “We know who appears on that mountain and it’s not the Virgin Mary but some pagan goddess!” Actually, the native Mexicans thought the same thing: “We know who appears on that hill: Tonantzin!” And so they referred to what we call ‘Virgin of Guadalupe’ as ‘Tonantzin’ for more than a century. To this day Mexicans know the Virgin if {sic} Guadalupe not as just another form of Mother Mary, but as a particularly Mexican Queen of Heaven. (Rozett E. Mother Mary and the Goddess. http://www.interfaithmary.com/pages/mary_goddess.html viewed 04/07/2011)

It has been claimed that “Tonantzin, the mother goddess of the Aztecs, then took the form of the Virgin Mary. Therefore Tonantzin was substituted...because of the necessity to convert to the Catholic religion under a new political regime.” (Breux JJ. Intransigence & Indifference: Essays Concerning Religion and Spirituality. Lulu.com, 2008, p. 85)

Not only was the apparition pagan and definitely not Mary (the mother of Jesus), it was originally denounced, then accepted.

Many believe that this claim of this apparition resulted in the vast majority in Latin America accepting Roman Catholicism, which many in Latin America still do this day. This apparition was further promoted by Pope Francis who endorsed it in 2013. Pope Francis also endorsed other forms of Marianism when he visited the largest country in Latin America, Brazil, in 2013.

Warning from the Eastern Orthodox

The following was written by a member of the Orthodox Church and is warning people that false apparitions claiming to be Mary will lead people to Antichrist:

“Mother goddesses” known in the ancient world were

not just confined to the Near East and Mediterranean but are universal. The Kogi Indians, among whom we lived in Columbia, worship a spirit called Nabuba, the "Ancient Mother." When Roman Catholics missionaries attempted to evangelize the Kogi in the last century, they used a not-uncommon strategy for drawing pagan peoples into Rome's fold: rather than explaining the differences between the pagan mythology and Christian truth, they found "equivalences," Christ, under this syncretistic view, corresponds to the Kogi Sejukukui (a trickster god who faked his own death by hiding in a cave), while Nabuba is said to be the Virgin Mary. This confusion has led the Kogis to call their pagan temples "cansamaria," a corruption of "casa de Maria" (house of Mary).

Given these Roman Catholic "evangelistic methods" of more than a century ago, is it any wonder that contemporary "apparitions" of Mary are invariably accompanied by ecumenistic messages promoting the idea that all religions are equally valid and Orthodox Christianity is but one "path" among many? A recent issue of *Orthodox Tradition* (1966) contains the account of Matushka (wife of a Russian Orthodox priest) Katherine Swanson's trip to Medjugorje, Croatia, to investigate the most famous of the recent cases of apparitions of Mary in the Roman Catholic world. In it she recounts a telling episode:

Our guide took our group for an audience with the "seers." During this audience, a pilgrim asked one of the children the following questions: "Does the Virgin say that the Catholic Church is the true church?" The response given by the child provides clear evidence of the ecumenical content and religious relativism which, oddly enough, increasingly mark the "revelations" at Medjugorje: "Our Blessed Mother says that all religions are equally pleasing to God."

The *Life* magazine article, then, is yet another contribution to this line of thought. Given the idea that all paths are equally valid, then all "Marys" are equally valid, too. The author describes several of the Marys of our times: Mysterious Mary (such as at Medjugorje), Mediator Mary (Who, as the author quotes Fr. Andrew Greeley saying, lets people into Heaven through the "back door"). Mediator Mary of the feminists, and Mother Mary. This last one, Mother Mary, is the role which the author considers the most appealing to non-Catholics: "The emotional need for her is so irresistible to a troubled world that people without an obvious link to the Virgin are being drawn to her. It is known that Muslims revere Mary as a pure and holy saint...Interdenominational Marian prayer groups are

springing up throughout the world. Many Protestants, even some who still reject notions of a supernatural Virgin, miss Mary."

To which Mary are Muslims and Protestants being drawn? The Protestant Reformation rejected the distorted view of Mary which had developed in the West since the Schism of 1054, and which would ultimately result in the Roman Church's proclamation of their dogma of the Immaculate Conception. But Protestantism did not just reject the Western view of Mary; it ignored Her altogether, in effect denying Her role in the Incarnation and, consequently, the part She plays in our salvation. As Rome began to see her more and more as a "goddess," a fourth Hypostasis of the Trinity, as it were, the Protestants reacted by down playing Her position and refusing to honor Her at all, this in spite of the Gospel words: "All Generations Shall Call Me Blessed."

Today, as heterodox Christians become more and more ecumenist and work toward creating a "One World Church," the search has begun for a Mary of universal recognition, one who will appeal not only to those who bear the name Christian, but apparently to Muslims and others as well, just as attempts are likewise being made to identify the "new Christ" with the Muslim concept of their coming Mahdi and with the Messiah still awaited by the Jews. This, of course, will be no Christ at all but the antichrist. (Jackson P. *ORTHODOX LIFE.*, No. 1, 1997., Brotherhood of Saint Job of Pochaev at Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, N.Y. pp. 18-22. <http://fr-d-serfes.org/orthodox/theotokos.htm> viewed 05/11/09)

Since Muslims accept the virgin birth and tend to venerate Mary (Mary is possibly the only woman mentioned in the Koran and her name is mentioned more than that of Jesus), they may well temporarily accept the ecumenical religion that the Bible teaches is coming (Revelation 13:4,8). Marian apparitions may well be part of the signs and lying wonders (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12) that will deceive all but the elect (Matthew 24:24).

Apparitions have had a lot of influence and have long been part of Satan's plan. As Christians, we are to be aware of Satan and not to be "ignorant of his devices" (2 Corinthians 2:11).

Summary

God has and God will use apparitions in the future. Apparitions had involvement with Jesus and the Church of God. The future use of messages from at least three angels (angels also have additional involvement according

to the Book of Revelation) is part of God's end time plan to proclaim the gospel to the world as a witness.

Yet, most seem to ignore how God has used them. Many are afraid to consider that spirit beings can still be part of His plan. But the Bible is clear that they are (e.g. Revelation 14:6-10).

However, throughout the history of the Church of God, Satan has also used apparitions to minimize Christian influence while working to increase the influence of the Greco-Roman faiths. Satan has major success using claimed apparitions

Claimed visions of apparitions contributed to the rise of the Greco-Roman religion in the third century in Asia Minor. In the fourth century they contributed to a major change of the old Roman Empire. In later centuries, Europe and Africa, were again affected. In the twelfth century Russia was greatly impacted. In the sixteenth century Latin America changed. There have been impacts from claimed apparitions in scattered locations throughout the church age.

Since Satan has successfully used apparitions as part of his plan in the past, I would suspect that he intends to use them more. And it appears that he will again, for a time, be successful per 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 (more on this is in the article Fatima and other 'Marian' Apparitions, also in this issue).

Few seem to recognize the magnitude of the impact apparitions have already had.

We in the Continuing Church of God recognize that God can and will use apparitions, but we also recognize that Satan has and likely will do so in the future as well. False apparitions are part of Satan's plan, while real ones remain part of God's plan.

WHAT APPEARED IN FATIMA?



Fatima Sanctuary, Portugal

By Bob Thiel

On May 13, 1917, a female apparition that referred to herself as the "Lady" and the "Lady of the Rosary," began to appear monthly before three children in Fatima, Portugal. Fatima was the name of Islam's Mohammed favourite daughter, and the town was named after a Muslim princess who converted to Roman Catholicism there.

What appeared in Fatima in 1917?

Certainly not Mary, the mother of Jesus. Various facts, including its appearance, disprove the possibility of that apparition being her. What appeared was a demon with feminine features. This seems to have been the most famous demonic apparition in the 20th Century.

Contrary to common belief amongst Catholics, the "Lady of Fatima" never referred to herself as Mary, the mother of Jesus. Several other famous Catholic-accepted "Marian" apparitions also did not refer to themselves as Mary.

What Was Seen?

Beginning on May 13, 1917, three children (Lúcia dos Santos, age 10; Jacinta Marto, age 7; and Francisco Marto, age 9) said they saw some type of female apparition six times, once per month. The monthly appearances culminated in a visit where tens of thousands of people claimed to witness some type of "miracle"/change in the sky on October 13, 1917.

The oldest child (Lúcia) and her priest (Manuel Marques Ferreira), initially and correctly, thought the apparition was from Satan, for various reasons, including its culturally

outrageous appearance.

The “Lady” that was seen was immodestly dressed, and in a manner that not even harlots tended to appear publicly in 1917 Portugal:

The parish priest’s interviews with the visionaries were made into a report. This was their first interview by the Church and it can be read in the book, *Os Mouros Fatimidas e as Aparicoes de Fatima*...The extraordinary thing about the first version of the first vision is that the children said that the Virgin wore a skirt down to her knees and wore white socks unlike the Virgin had ever done before. She wore a necklace with a medal on it... her eyes were black which must mean she had eyes like an alien. This description prompted some to insist that the Lady was really the daughter of Muhammad, Fatima, and not the Virgin Mary. Later the Church manipulated the children to say that the Virgin looked the way she is depicted in holy pictures with long dresses. The short skirt was considered immodest. (Fraud at Fatima. <http://www.miraclesceptic.com/fatimafraud.html> 04/26/11)

In 1917, the parish priest, Manuel Marques Ferreira, interviewed the children, and reported their description of the Lady that appeared:

The clothing was a white mantle, which fell from the head to below the skirt, which was golden from the waist to below the [two] strings, which crossed above and below at the hem. The skirt was all white and gold...[and] fell only to the knees; the coat was white... no shoes, but white socks with no gold; about the neck there was a gold chain with a pointed medallion. (Interrogatórios de Artur de Oliveria Santos, Doc. 53, Documentação Crítica de Fátima I. Fátima Sanctuary, 1992, p. 375 as cited and translated in Fernandes J, D’Armada F. *Celestial Secrets, The Hidden History of the Fátima Incident*. Anamolist Books, San Antonio (Texas), 2006, p. 152)

The children were also interviewed by the Catholic priest Canon Manuel Nunes Formigão, whose report stated:

Jacinta confirms that Our Lady’s dress fell only to the knees... Our Lady obviously could not have appeared other than dressed with the utmost decency and modesty...{This} constitutes a serious problem, opposing the very validity of the Apparition, giving rise in the spirit to the dread that this whole affair is a mystification, prepared by the Prince of Darkness. (Fernandes, p. 153; also Santo ME. *Os Mouros Fatimidas e as Aparições de Fátima*. Assírio & Alvim, 2006, pp. 271-218)

So at least two priests reported that at least two children claimed that what appeared in Fatima had a short skirt. A skirt that was culturally immodest and wholly improper for 1917 Portugal (the “Lady” that appeared seems to have resembled the pagan goddess Diana). There is no way that Mary would have appeared that way (cf. 1 Timothy 2:9). So, while Fatima is not a normal hoax, it certainly should be considered as a scam as there is no way that Jesus’ mother would have appeared that way.

Despite knowing this, a huge sanctuary compound was constructed with multiple buildings. The Fatima Sanctuary compound is large and reminded me a bit of Vatican City.

The front cover of this Bible News Prophecy magazine shows the encased statue that is at the site where the apparition appeared. This is what most Catholics seem to wish to believe appeared in Fatima (as that is what most have been led to believe). The truth is that the image next to it, with the shorter skirt, actually matches the only descriptions that the three eye witnesses gave that the “Lady of Fatima” looked like. That image was not Mary, yet it was a short-skirted apparition that appeared in 1917.

Some, sadly prefer to believe the lie (cf. Revelation 22:15) that Jesus’ mother Mary appeared in Fatima and gave God’s messages to the world—this type of thing, when those without the “love of the truth” will believe a lie will happen again (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12).

Millions visit the Fatima Sanctuary each year, and most believe that Jesus’ mother appeared there. They believe she gave prophetic messages that have been fulfilled and others that need to be fulfilled. Yet, the Bible never hints that Mary, the mother of Jesus, would have a role in making supernatural appearances after her death to impart prophetic information or change doctrine.

(Several of the messages that the “Lady of Fatima” gave were also blasphemous and may be covered in future editions of this magazine).

Fatima and Other Religions

Other, non-Catholic, religions have had interest in Fatima.

Although Mary is not part of Buddhism, the leader of the Tibetan Buddhists, the Dalai Lama, prayed at the little Fatima chapel in 2001. People of other pagan faiths have as well as the ‘mother goddess’ appeals to many, and that is how certain ones view the “Lady of Fatima.”

Despite Catholic claims, certain Muslims believe that it was Mohammed’s daughter Fatima that appeared to the children in 1917, so certain Muslims also venerate the site and sometimes visit it. If a future apparition says something publicly to Muslims there or elsewhere, this could be a

factor in getting Muslims to, at least temporarily, support the Beast power (cf. Revelation 13:4,8).

Hindus have long been drawn to Marian apparitions and statues. Hindus were allowed by certain Catholic leaders to hold their own pagan ceremony to the Lady of Fatima on the grounds of the Fatima Sanctuary on May 5, 2004. Although this outraged certain Catholics, the fact it was allowed supports the idea that other Catholics will compromise, use “Mary,” and/or use various improper means for their ecumenical agenda.

Notice also a report about ‘Mary’ and India:

“Mother Mary is revered with great devotion by the Indian community as a mother and a spiritual figure of maternal protection,” said Friar Jayaseellan Pitchaimuthu...The friar explained that the Marian feast day is particularly important in the Indian context because of its relation to other faiths.

Members of other religions, including Hindus and Muslims, “regard Marian devotions in esteem,” he said. Thousands of devotees “both Catholics and non-Catholics” flock every week to the Marian apparition site at Velankanni, near Chennai in South India, and other shines that have recorded various miracles, he said. In this way, the friar explained, “Marian devotion also leads to a platform for inter-religious dialogue.” (Gonzales AA. Indian migrants in Holy Land prepare for Marian feast. (<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/indian-migrants-in-holy-land-prepare-for-marian-feast>))

Not all support this. Various ones have concerns. Bishop Kennedy of the Celtic Orthodox Church wrote that Fatima was deceitful:

The great deceiver of Fatima promises salvation to those who embrace devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary... We can be very certain that God did not send Mary to earth to change God’s eternal plan of salvation. It is just this kind of deceit that leads to other false statements about Mary; Mediatrix of all graces etc. The devil’s deceit is felt far and wide within the Church as is evidenced in the number of well meaning but deceived souls proclaiming Mary is Mediatrix of all graces. How would have such a statement sounded to the Apostles? This salvation we enjoy is from God in Christ; “The man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as ransom for all”. (1 Timothy 2:1, 3-6 NAB)... We should STOP THE DEVIL in his tracks and proclaim the vision of Fatima to be a fraud, a work of the devil and an abomination to God, Mary and to the Church. (Kennedy BJ, Bishop. The Fatima Affair. [http:// www.celticorthodoxchurch.com/fatima.html](http://www.celticorthodoxchurch.com/fatima.html) viewed 05/17/12)

Some want Fatima to be used ecumenically, others consider it deceitful. And Fatima is deceitful.

Fatima and Pope Francis

Despite the deceit of Fatima, Pope Francis asked Cardinal José Policarpo of Lisbon to dedicate his pontificate to the “Lady of Fatima” on May 13, 2013, in mark of the anniversary date of the first appearance of that apparition.

Furthermore, Pope Francis had the statue, shown encased on the front cover of this magazine, flown to the Vatican so that he could dedicate the world to the so-called “immaculate heart of Mary” on October 13, 2014. The anniversary of the so-called ‘miracle of the sun.’ That “miracle” sadly has convinced many that Fatima was from God.

Pope Francis has been the most “Marian focused” pontiff in start of his pontificate of any pope in recent history. I believe that he is attempting to set the world up for wider acceptance of his Marian doctrines.

What Can Fatima Teach Us?

Is there anything that real Christians can learn from Fatima?

Jesus warned:

24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 25 See, I have told you beforehand. (Matthew 24:24-25)

But, even though we are not there yet, many have been deceived by Fatima. They either do not know or discount the truth about what was seen there.

The Apostle Paul taught in the time of the end the deception will be worse:

13 But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. (2 Timothy 3:13)

How does Fatima, or many of the other apparitions, fit into this? Fatima was allegedly seen by three young children, plus if people would pay attention to what was described as seen, they should easily be able to determine that the “Lady of Fatima” is a Satanic fraud.

But since the “Lady of Fatima” is an imposter and imposters will be worse, what will happen if one or more “Marian” apparitions appear in public? So much that it will be undeniable?

Most people will walk by sight and not by faith and believe the lie. Christians are not supposed to do that (2 Corinthians 5:7).

Notice also the following:

6 And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. 8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. 9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, 12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (2 Thessalonians 2:6-12)

I cannot help but feel that perhaps the apparition that appeared at Fatima in 1917 may have only had permission to appear in a short skirt and not claim to be Mary from God (cf. Job 1:9-12; 2:4-6; 1 Kings 22:20-22 DRB; 1 Kings 22:20-22 NKJV) in order that those who were interested in the truth would realize that it really could not have been Mary of the Bible who appeared then. This is despite the “miracle of the sun” (of which there were enough differing explanations that I believe that Satan’s influence in even that was restrained). I also believe that this is why certain other apparitions have been recorded to make statements that are false (e.g. Medjugorje), appeared as a goddess (e.g. Guadalupe), did not claim to be Mary (e.g. La Salette), and/or only appeared to one or few persons— God has had Satan’s power restrained.

Yet, the time is coming when future apparitions may not have such restrictions (cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:7), which may be why almost all will be deceived according to Jesus (Matthew 24:24; Mark 13:22). But God still has a way for His faithful to escape (1 Corinthians 10:13) the deception.

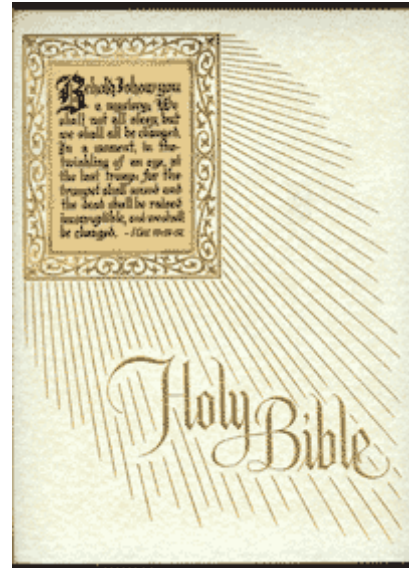
For those that have a “love of the truth” (2 Thessalonians 2:10), “You can trust that God...with any trial will also provide a way out” (1 Corinthians 10:13, NJB). Despite credibility problems of any human being, the word of God is the credible source that all past and future apparitions, signs, and wonders should be judged by (cf. Jeremiah 23:28; Revelation 20:12; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:16).

The Lady of Fatima was a demonic manifestation that people could clearly prove was not Mary, yet multiple millions have believed lies about it anyway. The time will come when something like this may actually be public.

Pray that you will have the faith to “walk by faith, and not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7), even when nearly everyone else will be deceived.

STUDY THE BIBLE COURSE

Lesson 2: Here’s good news . . . the MESSAGE sent from Heaven



Bob Thiel, Editor-in-Chief.

Published 2014 by the Continuing Church of God

Preface: This course is highly based upon the personal correspondence course developed in 1954 that began under the direction of the late C. Paul Meredith in the old Radio Church of God. Various portions have been updated for the 21st century (though much of the original writing has been retained). It also has more scriptural references, as well as information and questions not in the original course. Unless otherwise noted, scriptural references are to the NKJV, copyright Thomas Nelson Publishing, used by permission. The KJV, sometimes referred to as the Authorized Version is also often used. Additionally, Catholic-approved translations such as the New Jerusalem Bible (NJB) are sometimes used as are other translations.

Here’s good news . . . the MESSAGE sent from Heaven

WHY ISN’T the true gospel of Jesus Christ being preached by many today? Why haven’t most heard Jesus’ own gospel -- the message He preached?

Understand that JESUS came into the world not as a human philosopher or idealist but as A-MESSENGER DIRECT FROM GOD, the Creator of heaven and earth, the One who gives you your very life and breath, the One who is All-Wise, and who knows the end from the beginning. Realizing this, you

had better heed His message!

From the beginning to the end of the New Testament, that MESSAGE--that GOSPEL--is repeatedly taught. And yet we have multitudes of denominations, teaching a different message than Jesus did-- and all of them appropriating Christ's name.

Why?

The truth is that men seem unwilling to take JESUS' MESSAGE literally. Men fail to realize that the same God who inspired Isaiah, Daniel, Micah, and the other prophets to write of His coming Kingdom, was the One who sent Jesus into the world to PREPARE THE WAY for that Kingdom.

Jesus BEGAN His ministry when He came into Galilee:

"PREACHING the gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand: REPENT ye, and BELIEVE the gospel" (Mark 1: 14- 15, KJV).

Jesus proclaimed repentance in connection with the gospel of God's Kingdom, or government. You have to be willing to change -- to repent of your ways -- in order to enter that Kingdom.

Notice that Jesus didn't say, "Just believe in ME." He said, "Believe the GOSPEL." What was this gospel--or good news? Jesus came preaching the good news--not only about Himself as Saviour--but about the KINGDOM of God--the MESSAGE that God is Supreme Ruler of the universe, that He is soon going to establish His government on this earth, and that we should acknowledge His rule in our lives now. This is the true gospel! That is the message Jesus brought to this earth from God the Father!

Message Perverted Today

Most of you have heard a vague, sentimental gospel which DENIES the message Jesus brought from the Father about the SOON-COMING, WORLD-RULING KINGDOM OF GOD.

Often, you hear a lot of vague, spiritual-sounding ideas like the following: "By Christians everywhere working together to bring peace, tolerance, and brotherly love, the Kingdom of God may at last be established in the hearts of all mankind."

Have you heard this kind of talk? Probably you have, because this is the kind of philosophy set forth by hundreds of the more "modern" Protestant ministers throughout the world today. It is also consistent with the ecumenical pronouncements coming out of the Vatican and some of the Eastern Orthodox churches. In spite of the gripping fact of the prophesied DOOM of this present world which we studied in the first lesson, many of these MEN (and in the

case of certain Protestant ministers, WOMEN) apparently see no need of God's intervention in human affairs. They TRY TO "SPIRITUALIZE AWAY" this prophesied intervention, and to hide their eyes from REALITY, mounting world cataclysm!

The "Kingdom of God" is often used as a sort of catch-all phrase to define the state of idealism which humans hope to attain some day through their OWN efforts. Of course, the name of God is employed to give the idea a more "spiritual" flavour, but everyone knows that the results would depend on man's ingenuity.

Yes, most of you have heard humankind's gospel about the person of Christ, and sentimental theories about a so-called "kingdom" just to be set up in your "heart." But spiritual TRUTH does not proceed from human ideas and reason; it comes as a revelation from God. It is contained in His Word--the Bible.

Does your Bible reveal God's kingdom as an objective reality--A LITERAL KINGDOM which will rule this earth? If so, then who is to be the King of the Kingdom? What are its laws? When will it take over the rule of this earth?

As you study this introduction--and the questions to follow--keep these questions in mind. The answers are found in your Bible.

Gospel Revealed to Mary

Before Jesus was born, an angel told Mary of His destiny:

"He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father DAVID. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end" (Luke 1:32-33).

This inspired angelic messenger from God revealed to Mary important truths of which this world is in total ignorance! He revealed that CHRIST would someday take over an actual throne--an EARTHLY THRONE--the THRONE OF DAVID! History and prophecy both prove that David's throne is in existence today--awaiting Christ's return! (If you do not already understand this truth, you may read Dr. Thiel's paper on "Anglo - America in Prophecy & the Tribes of Israel" available at: <http://www.cogwriter.com/britishisrael.htm>).

The angel also said that Christ was to rule over the house of Jacob FOREVER. The angel did not say "reign spiritually, invisibly, in the hearts of believers." He said "reign over the house of Jacob" a literal nation. He was to rule from an actual earthly throne.

Jesus Preached the Real Gospel of the Kingdom

Jesus himself preached throughout His entire ministry “the gospel of the Kingdom” (Matthew 9:35) —the GOOD NEWS OF HIS COMING WORLD RULE. The apostles knew that He would return and bring this present “world” (the inspired Greek word means “age”) to an end by establishing His Kingdom over all nations. They asked Jesus for details, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?” (Matthew 24:3, NKJV) – “the end of this age.”

It is well known that the early New Testament church expected Christ’s return to this earth. To teach them that this would not occur until a great apostasy first set in, Paul was inspired to write that there would be a great “falling away” – a great APOSTASY from the truth – before Christ returned (2 Thessalonians 2:3). A version of it had commenced in the church even as he wrote these words: “there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ” (Galatians 1:7).

Then in our time -- at the crisis at the close of this age -- CHRIST SHALL RETURN TO “RULE

ALL NATIONS WITH A ROD OF IRON” (Revelation 19:15) for a thousand years, or millennium (Revelation 20:4) here on this earth (Revelation 5:10).

Stop and think. Do these scriptures indicate that the Kingdom of God was to be the church, or that the church -- humans themselves -- would improve this world’s society to the place that it would be called the Kingdom of God? No!

Even the world-recognized historian, Edward Gibbon, in his Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, shows us that the EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH BELIEVED in Christ’s literal return to set up God’s Kingdom here on earth. In his well-known 15th chapter on the Christian church, he says:

“The ancient and popular doctrine of the Millennium was intimately connected with the second coming of Christ. As the works of creation had been finished in six days, their duration in their present state, according to a tradition attributed to the prophet Elijah, was fixed at six thousand years. By the same analogy it was inferred that this long period of labor and contention, which was now almost elapsed, would be succeeded by a joyful Sabbath of a thousand years; and that Christ, with the triumphant band of the saints and the elect who had escaped death, or who had been miraculously revived, would reign upon earth till the time appointed for the last and general resurrection.”

Here is amazing proof even from a famous secular historian that Christ’s message of God’s rule here on earth was taught and believed by early Christians. Those who lived shortly after Christ, had the TRUTH. It had not been LOST yet! If one looks at early writings from the second century, it is clear that many leaders that professed Christ, taught the millennium and the seven thousand year plan.

Jesus and others in the New Testament taught it:

31 “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. 33 And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: (Matthew 25:31-34)

9...”You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, 10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth” (Revelation 5:9-10).

4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. (Revelation 20:4-6)

In the Old Testament, the Prophet Micah was inspired to write:

1 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the Lord’s house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And peoples shall flow to it. 2 Many nations shall come and say, “Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths.” For out of Zion the law shall go forth, And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. 3 He shall judge between many peoples, And rebuke strong nations afar off; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into

pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore. 4 But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, And no one shall make them afraid; For the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken. (Micah 4:1-4)

Both humans and animals will do better during this time. The New Testament confirms that the whole creation will benefit during this time:

19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; 21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God (Romans 8:19-21).

The time of the “glorious liberty of the children of God” that the Apostle Paul is speaking of, happens at the return of Jesus Christ and the establishment of His kingdom.

And this is a time when the people of God will be used to help restore a damaged planet:

12 Those from among you
Shall build the old waste places;
You shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach,
The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In (Isaiah 58:12)

Thus, the people of God will make it easier for people to dwell in cities (and elsewhere) during this time of restoration. The world will truly be a better place.

WHO said that Christ was to establish God’s rule here on earth? The answer is that this message was proclaimed by the Old Testament prophets, by the New Testament apostles and evangelists, by Jesus Christ himself, and is even referred to in numerous secular histories.

This message is the very heart of the true gospel. Study the following questions in your own Bible, and prove this with your very own eyes.

Final Important Instructions

Now we are ready for the actual lesson. Is your Bible in front of you? If not, please don’t read another word!

STOP RIGHT HERE! Go and **GET YOUR BIBLE**.

Also several sheets of paper, and a pencil or pen, so that you can **MAKE NOTES** to help you remember what you learn.

This course is based on the New King James Version because it is intended to be a literal translation and uses a version of the English language that people commonly use in the early 21st century. For most of the lesson, you can use other translations, but the questions and answers specifically refer to the NKJV unless otherwise stated. So, for most, the NKJV is the best choice to use with the Study the Bible Course.

Now we are ready to begin this lesson. Remember you must open your Bible to every passage we give you in this lesson. Do not simply believe us (the teams directed by late C. Paul Meredith and/or Bob Thiel)—believe what the Bible really teaches.

You must **READ**, and re-read, and actually study **EVERY PASSAGE IN YOUR BIBLE**. This is a Bible **STUDY** course—a study of the Bible, not just a study of these words we sent you. Our words are intended to show you where to look in your Bible—to help you to know how to study the Bible.

Now, with your Bible, a good **DICTIONARY**, and your note paper and pencil or pen on a desk or table before you, here is the method of study: Write down, neatly on your note paper, the caption “Lesson 2, Part 1,” and underscore it. **WRITE DOWN** the lesson heading and question section heading. Then, underneath, number each question, and write down the answer to each, in your own handwriting (some of you may prefer to type or text). As an **EXAMPLE**, for the question section, this is what you will write on your note paper: Coming Kingdom Proclaimed by Prophets of Old. Then write:

1. Amos 3:7—“Surely the Lord God does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.”

Also write in any other thoughts you want to remember. Study and understand this.

Keep these lessons and your own notes and answers fastened in the binder. **DO NOT SEND US YOUR ANSWERS TO THESE REGULAR LESSONS**. Keep them for reference. (It may be that we will offer a free certificate to those who complete the entire course and/or significant portions of it, but that would be after 2014, and we would expect to announce this online and likely elsewhere. If we do end up so, we would ask that you simply send in a copy of the lessons you completed.)

By writing down all these answers, and by writing down all the words of the every Bible passage that answers a question, you will find you will **REMEMBER** what you have learned. It takes a little more time, but you will really **LEARN** your lessons that way, and remember them.

Yet some ask, “Is this **WRITING** really **NECESSARY?**”

YES!

EXTREMELY so!

Why?

We want you to truly understand the Bible. Christians are to be teachers (cf. Hebrews 5:12) and need to know their Bibles well enough to “be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear” (1 Peter 3:15, KJV).

Writing down what you are learning will help you better remember.

Furthermore, YOU CAN QUICKLY REVIEW YOUR LESSONS, as necessary, if you have them in this form. Also, it will aid you greatly in explaining the Bible to others.

WE ARE GIVING YOU THE BRIEF, COMPREHENSIVE, TRUE OUTLINE OF THE BIBLE. You will want to refer to these lessons and the explanation of them in your own words time after time in future years as you apply them to clear up related points in the Bible. Remember, you are to spend at least a half hour every day studying your bible with this Study the Bible Course.

Now READ THE LARGE TYPE WORDS IN THIS FINAL INSTRUCTION SECTION right down to the end of this section—pay no attention to the small type. AND SUDDENTLY—YOU HAVE A FLASH REVIEW OF ALL THE IMPORTANT POINTS! These serve as an INDEX, too. Simple and effective. All the material in the Lessons is written this way. USE THE LARGE WORDS FOR THIS PURPOSE!

LESSON 2

Part I

Coming Kingdom Proclaimed by Prophets of Old

1. Does God intervene in world affairs without first revealing it to His prophets? Amos 3:7.
2. Hundreds of years ago did ISAIAH, the prophet, FORSEE a time when God shall establish His Kingdom here on earth? Isaiah 2:1-4. Is it pictured as being a LITERAL KINGDOM ON

EARTH? Will there be “mountains” (gentile nations) in heaven? Will there be strife and war in that Kingdom as there is now among nations? Verse 4.

3. Is God’s rule over this earth and changing its governance

FORETOLD BY DANIEL? Daniel 2:36-45. Note verse 44 particularly. Will other kingdoms still be in existence when Christ begins to set up His rule? Verse 44. What will happen to them? Does all this indicate that Daniel knew that God’s Kingdom would be a real kingdom with power over all the nations?

4. Did DAVID speak of God ruling over the earth? Psalm 67:4.
5. Did MICAH say God would establish His Kingdom on the earth in the future? Micah 4:1-5.
6. Where does JEREMIAH say the throne of this Kingdom will be located? Jeremiah 3:17.
7. Who did Isaiah prophesy will rule over the earth? Read Isaiah 11:1-4. Who is the “stem of Jesse”? Acts 13:22. Is it David or someone else? Then who is the rod or shoot? Verse 23. And who is the branch that grows out of Jesse’s roots? Jeremiah 23:5-6. Thus it is DOUBLY PROVED Christ will rule.
8. Did Daniel foresee a time when the Saints will be given rule over the earth in God’s Kingdom along with Christ? Daniel 7:18, 21-22, 27.
9. From our study, don’t we find that the Old Testament prophets and evangelists all agree in telling us that God will intervene in human affairs and establish His government -- His Kingdom -- here on earth under Christ? Does God’s basic purpose ever change? Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8.
10. Does Revelation show that Christians are going to reign on the earth with Jesus? Revelation 5:8-10, 20:4.
11. We have now seen that God, through many inspired Old Testament prophets, gave notice to the world of this coming marvellous event. But, in addition to this, did He also send Christ as a special messenger to proclaim in advance this glorious happening to us? And has He even sent ADDITIONAL MESSENGERS to proclaim the good news or gospel to us who live IN THESE END TIMES?

CHRIST – the Special Messenger

1. Was JESUS SENT WITH A MESSAGE? John 6:38; 12:49; 14:24.
2. From where did Jesus come to this earth? John 3:13. Who sent Him? Verse 34.
3. To whom was He sent? Matthew 15:24; John 1:11.

Comment: Christ was sent primarily to “His own” nation—the House of Israel—with His message of the Gospel! CONCERNING THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

Later, however, He prophesied His disciples would proclaim the MESSAGE TO THE WHOLE WORLD: Matthew 24:14; 28:19-20.

4. In the first sermon directed to Gentiles, Peter tells more which verifies what we have learned, and adds to our knowledge about this New Testament message. Read Acts 10:36-37 and answer these questions: (1) Who sent this word, or message? (2) To whom was it sent first--to Gentiles? (3) By whom was it preached? (4) Where was it published or preached? (5) Where did Christ begin preaching it? (6) When did this message first begin?
5. Read Mark 1:14-15. (1) When did this Message begin? (2) Who preached it? (3) From where did He begin preaching it? (4) What was the message, sent from God, that He preached?
6. In Mark 1, compare verse 1 with verse 14. Is the gospel of Jesus Christ the very gospel He preached--the news of the coming of the Kingdom of God? It is NOT PRIMARILY A MESSAGE ABOUT HIMSELF PERSONALLY.

Comment: Few know “the gospel of Christ.” PEOPLE TODAY are taught in the churches that the “gospel of Christ” concerns only the events in the life of Christ, and of His being their Savior. They are NOT TOLD THE ENTIRE GOSPEL MESSAGE he brought—the gospel of the coming kingdom!

7. What does the expression in Mark 1:15, “the Kingdom of God is at hand,” mean? Remember, the gospel of the Kingdom which Jesus preached was not a message about restoring self-rule to the people in Judea 2000 years ago. How do we know? Let’s read on.
8. When the Jews wanted to make Jesus their king, what did He do? John 6:15. When the disciples asked if Jesus would restore the Kingdom then, what was His reply? Acts 1:6-7. Did Jesus deny the Kingdom would be of that age? Did He imply it would OCCUR IN a future age—OUR AGE? Matthew 24:3, NIV. (Recall that the Greek word for “world” means age—not earth.) Rather, the meaning of Mark 1:15 is that the time is “at hand” for us to repent so we can qualify to enter the Kingdom.

Comment: The word “GOSPEL” MEANS “GOOD NEWS,” or “Glad Tidings” of the Kingdom! God knows far more than we can realize; what a joyous place it will be! FOUR THINGS are necessary to constitute A KINGDOM: (1) territory of a (2) king or Ruler, over (3) subjects or citizens, with (4) laws and government. Therefore we might define the true Gospel as “the good news of the territory of a king ruling over subjects with laws and government.”

The TRUE GOSPEL, THEREFORE, INCLUDES the message about Christ who is the King—but it is more than that. Christ, when He comes, will become Ruler over all nations. It includes the message of salvation, which means becoming a citizen in the Kingdom (Ephesians 2:19). God’s laws will be the law of the land.

Apostles Continue the Message!

1. Did Jesus command his MINISTERS TO PREACH this sample gospel? Luke 9:1-2. As the apostles went to the nations, were they to teach the same message Jesus had taught them? Matthew 28:19-20.
2. Did PHILIP, the evangelist, preach the gospel of the Kingdom to the Gentile Samaritans? Acts 8:12.
3. Did PAUL preach the gospel of the Kingdom? Acts 19:8 and 14:21-22. Among the Gentiles in Ephesus, what gospel did Paul preach? Acts 20:25. What gospel did the Jews at Rome finally reject? Acts 28:23-28.
4. Following the Jews’ rejection of the gospel, did Paul preach the same gospel to the Gentiles? Verse 31. Then Paul preached the gospel of the Kingdom of God to both Jews and Gentiles didn’t he?
5. Would FALSE MINISTERS attempt to preach “DIFFERENT” GOSPELS—other gospels instead of the true gospel of Christ? Galatians 1:6. How many gospels are right, besides the one which Paul preached? Galatians 1:8. Are these other gospels actually perversions of the gospel of the Kingdom brought by Christ? Galatians 1:7.
6. Since there are false ministers, wouldn’t they have to PERVERT Christ’s message of the real territory, the rulers, the citizens, the laws, or the government of the Kingdom of God? Would they not sometimes appear to be true? 2 Corinthians 11:13-15.
7. What gospel is to be preached and published today? Matthew 24:14; Mark 13:10.

Comment: The preachers, as a whole, in these dark days do not preach the gospel of the imminent establishment of God’s personal control over the earth and the preparation which we should make in view of this. Rather, their energies are occupied with the “Ecumenical Movement”—a movement of men’s churches to band themselves together for mutual protection!

You have now seen that the gospel message is proclaimed from one end of your Bible to the other. It is not some idea of uninspired men, but has been proclaimed “by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began” (Acts 3:21). It is the world’s last hope for peace!

Let us REJOICE in this good news!

PEACE IS AHEAD! The next vital part of this lesson will reveal when Jesus Christ will return to set up the perfect rule or Kingdom of God on this earth. Let's understand this all-important question.

WHEN Will Christ Come?

The agnostic or the atheist may ridicule the teachings of Jesus Christ. But non-believers cannot deny that Jesus came over 1900 years ago!

It is one of the most conclusively proved facts of history.

Yet what few realize is that Jesus promised, "I WILL COME AGAIN!" (John 14:3).

At his ascension, the apostles were startled by the appearance of two divine messengers who said: "This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11).

Here we have two angelic messengers sent direct from God to confirm the words of Jesus that He would come again. The EARLY inspired New Testament CHURCH KNEW Jesus meant what He said. They believed it. They taught it. But the world has lost it.

Gradually, says Edward Gibbon in his famous history, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chapter 15, the fact that Jesus must come a second time to intervene in world affairs was regarded as unnecessary. Within a century and a half after Christ it was treated as a profound allegory--as a fable of the Jews. Finally, after the time of Emperor Constantine, it was regarded as rank heresy and punishable by death. The WORLD still RIDICULES THE IDEA because they do not wish to believe it!

Which Idea is Right?

In this frightening age of the atom and other weapons of mass destruction, some sober thought is once again being directed toward the possibility of divine intervention of Christ's return. Yet among those who realize that God alone can save humanity, there is utter confusion--there are literally hundreds of human ideas concocted to explain when, how and why Jesus will return.

The CHURCHES are IN CONFUSION and doubt. Most do not believe God will intervene, yet they are afraid that man will obliterate human life!

It is high time we realize when Jesus will fulfill His promise, "I will come again!"

Outstanding among the hundreds of differing ideas are THREE GENERAL CONCEPTS about

Christ's return.

Is the Church the Kingdom?

Certainly the most deeply rooted is the assumption that the churches today constitute the kingdom of God and that Jesus Christ came the second time through the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). Since Jesus declared in the gospel that He would return to rule, it is taught that Jesus committed to the apostles and their successors the right to rule and judge the nations.

From this concept developed the practice in the Middle Ages for the Church to rule over nations and to impose its will on the temporal rulers of this earth. This made the church--which called itself the kingdom of God -- a part of this world, a part of this system of human rule. It OVERLOOKS the fact that Jesus said: "My Kingdom, is not of this world"--this system (John 18: 36).

This is the age of mortal human rule guided by the influence of Satan (Luke 4:5-6). Jesus' Kingdom is NOT OF THIS AGE. It is of the world tomorrow --"the world to come" (Hebrews 2:5).

When asked if He would restore the Kingdom at that time, Jesus replied to the apostles: "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me . . . and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:6-8).

Never did Christ command His apostles to rule the nations of this world. Instead, He commanded them to witness and preach the gospel!

Notice that the apostles were not to know the time of the establishment of the Kingdom, but they were to be filled with the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. The coming of the Holy Spirit could not have been the second coming of Jesus Christ. Instead, the apostles were empowered by the Holy Spirit to be witnesses -- of what? -- of the resurrection and the gospel of the Kingdom. Jesus ordered the disciples to "teach all nations." He promised to be with them in Spirit until the end of this age -- the end of this present world of human misrule (Matthew 28:19-20).

"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come" said Jesus (Matthew 24: 14). The end of what? This age, this world order -- when Jesus will come again! (Matthew 24:3). The Great Tribulation will begin and the world will undergo tremendous change (Matthew 24:21-22).

Christ did not return to found the Kingdom in the days of the apostles. Instead, He ordered the gospel preached to prepare the world for His return -- His intervention in human affairs to rule this world for 1000 years (Revelation 20:4).

After the Millennium

Another and more modern concept is the doctrine that Jesus will come only after peace and harmony permeate the earth and all nations are in perfect accord! Various Catholics and Protestants seem to believe a version of this. What WOEFUL MISUNDERSTANDING of world events and Bible prophecy! The Bible warns there will be false declarations of peace (e.g. 1 Thessalonians 5:3).

The restoration of peace and harmony follows the intervention of Jesus Christ. Jesus is now in heaven. It is He "whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration" (Acts 3:21).

When Jesus returns, "The ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly. The highways lie waste" (Isaiah 33:7-8). The earth will be in chaos -- not at peace -- before He returns.

CHRIST DOES NOT COME AFTER A MILLENNIUM (1000 years) of perfect human rule.

It is to abolish human misrule and establish the Kingdom -- the rule -- of God that Jesus returns a second time. Resurrected Christians "lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years" (Revelation 20:4, last part). If they reign with Christ, Christ must already have come before the 1000 years commence!

Before the Millennium!

The third general teaching is that **CHRIST COMES BEFORE THE MILLENNIUM**. This was the doctrine taught in the early new testament church before the truth was lost! The early inspired apostolic Church knew that Christ was to come before the millennium.

The second coming of Christ is a vital part of the plan of God. It is all through the Bible -- Old and New Testaments. God has been declaring the end or conclusion of His plan "from the beginning" through His prophets and apostles. But the world has not heeded their message (Isaiah 46: 10).

Jesus made **VERY PLAIN** just before His ascension that He would return visibly after a fixed

sequence of events. He gave an outline of these events to His disciples upon the Mount of Olives. You will find it recorded in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21.

About sixty years later He gave the Revelation to John, giving

a more elaborate and detailed account of world events that lead up to the Lord's day -- the day of the Lord, the day when Christ returns.

In Matthew 24:32-33 Jesus gave a parable so that we might know the time of His return. Since Jesus put such stress upon watching and waiting lest that day come when we are not aware, it is high time that we study and grasp the significance of the second coming of Christ!

LESSON 2 Part 2

When Will Christ Return?

1. Did the people in Jesus' day anticipate that the Kingdom of God would be established in their time? Luke 19:11. What did Jesus speak to provide an answer to this mistaken idea? Verse 12. Compare Matthew 25: 13-30 with the parable in Luke 19:11-27.
2. In this PARABLE is Jesus picturing Himself as THE NOBLEMAN mentioned in Luke 19:12?
3. Is heaven, in a sense, a far kingdom? Will Christ receive a kingdom while away in heaven? Compare Luke 19:12 with Daniel 7:13-14. Doesn't this parable plainly cover the present church age after which Jesus returns from the far country -- heaven?
4. Is there a duration of time during which the servants must trade and increase their talents? Who are the servants in Luke's parable? Are Christians ever called servants? 1 Peter 2:16, KJV; John 18:36 NKJV.
5. What duty must the servants fulfil before the end of this age and the second coming of Christ can occur? Matthew 24:14. Did Jesus promise to be with His Church in its preaching of the gospel of the Kingdom until the end of the age? Matthew 28:19-20.

Comment: Today, do the Greco-Roman churches preach a gospel about Christ the person -- and not the gospel message He came to preach? Their gospels are not the true gospel of the kingdom of God -- Galatians 1:6. What was Paul's gospel? Acts 28:31.

The GOSPEL of the Kingdom must yet in these final days GO TO ALL NATIONS BEFORE THE END comes! Matthew 24:14.

6. Not long after the New Testament Church began, did false teachers arise proclaiming that the day of Christ had already occurred? 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2. Did Paul reject the doctrine that Christ had already returned a second time? Verses 2-4.

7. Was there to occur a falling into error -- an APOSTASY -- at the close of the apostle's ministry, and also before Christ returns? Verse 3.
8. Were apparent brethren prophesied to depart from the faith? 1 Timothy 4:1, NKJV ("fall away from the faith" Young's Literal Translation; "abandon the faith" NIV).
9. Did the Apostle Paul give his "falling away" warning in 2 Thessalonians to brethren? 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4.
10. Who then is promised to be saved? Matthew 24:13.
11. What else should Christians do? Luke 21:34-36; Matthew 24:20; Luke 21:27-28.
12. Does Jesus come before or after the Great Tribulation referred to in Matthew 24:21? Matthew 24:29-31.

Notice, too, that the apostasy marks only the beginning of a long sequence of events, including tests and trials, covering 1900 years and culminating in the return of Jesus Christ!

Jesus Gives a Warning!

1. Will the day of God's intervention and the second coming of Christ be universally expected? Matthew 24:42, 44. Or will it COME AS A SURPRISE? Cf. Luke 21:34-35.
2. To what period in earth's history did Jesus compare His return? Matthew 24:37. Did the people before the deluge realize that God would intervene supernaturally? Do the most people of today realize God will intervene in our day? Cf. Luke 17:26-30?
3. Will Christ come at the moment that we, would suppose He should? Luke 12:40. Are Christians promised to know the day and hour of His return? Matthew 25:13.

Comment: Is Jesus' warning especially for our generation -- those who are living "when he comes"? Notice Jesus' reply in Luke 12:43 again. Jesus told us to WATCH world events so we could know perhaps even to the exact year -- so that we could be ready whenever He comes.

4. Can we know very near the actual time of His return? Matthew 24:32-34. Had Jesus already given in this chapter the SIGNS of the times to which He referred?
5. Did Paul teach that true Christians had to have the end come unexpectedly to them? 1 Thessalonians 5:1-5.
6. What did both Paul and Jesus teach that Christians should do? 1 Thessalonians 5:6; Mark 13:33-37.
7. Does God ever act in human affairs without first making known his plan of action? Amos 3:7 and Isaiah 46:10.

Isn't supporting the final phase of the work through the spreading of the gospel of the Kingdom before the end of the age a preparation for the time of Christ's return to rule the nations?

8. Some denominations and sects have spread the doctrine that Christ is already here. Did Jesus warn that such ideas may be claimed by some not too long before He really returns? Matthew 24:26.
9. Would others, however, believe that it is far off in the future or that it will not happen? 2 Peter 3:4-7 and Matthew 24:48.

Are either of these right?

10. Despite what may some consider slackness, will not Jesus return? 2 Peter 3:8-13.

A Sequence of Events Tells!

1. Daniel gives a definite SEQUENCE OF EVENTS which must occur before Christ will return. Read Daniel, chapter 2, especially verse 44. Notice the ORDER OF GENTILE WORLD KINGDOMS described in verses 36 through 42.
2. During a FINAL UNION OF 10 KINGS in Europe, symbolized by the toes (Daniel 2:42) and ten horns (Daniel 7:24; Revelation 17:12-13), will the God of heaven set up His kingdom? Daniel 7:7, 17, 18.
3. Will this kingdom be left to mortals of yet another nation? Daniel 2:44. Or will Christ take this kingdom? Daniel 7:13, 14.
4. In the parable recorded in Luke's gospel, did Christ receive a kingdom? Luke 19:11, 12. Aren't these accounts dealing with the one kingdom, the Kingdom of God?
5. Jesus gives ANOTHER SEQUENCE OF EVENTS in Mark 13 and Luke 21. Before you proceed further, be sure you read both of these chapters. Now turn to Matthew 24. Does Jesus describe a tremendous noise which will rend the air? Matthew 24:30-31. Does Paul mention a TRUMPET'S SOUND at Christ's return? 1 Thessalonians 4:16.
6. Is this the time of the resurrection? 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. Which trump sounds when the resurrection occurs? 1 Corinthians 15:52.
7. Now notice in Scripture what is to happen at the last trump. Revelation 10:7 and 11:15. Is this the time of Jesus' return? of the resurrection? of the establishment of the Kingdom? This tells us when Jesus will return.

Comment: In Revelation 11:15-18, John is describing the same momentous event as Paul in 1 Corinthians. Thus we see that Christ will return at the mighty blast of a great trumpet, which will be heard by all the earth and all who understand will know that Christ has come!

7. We now see that Christ and His armies of angels will descend in clouds and that the saints (the righteous – both dead and living) will rise to meet Him in the air. How is this meeting accomplished? Matthew 24:27. As He and His angels travel SWIFTLY AROUND the EARTH, the SAINTS JOIN Him and remain forever with Him.

HOW Christ Will Return

1. Will Christ return in the SAME MANNER AS HE DEPARTED? Acts 1:11. How did Christ depart? Acts 1:9. Was He taken up in a cloud? Will He return in a cloud? What does Matthew 24:27, 30, say about this? Did He leave from the Mount of Olives (Mt. Olivet)? Acts 1:12.
2. What will happen in the day that he comes? Zechariah 14:4. Will His feet stand upon the mount of olives “in that day?” “Day” here refers to a very brief period of time -- a 24-hour day. And who will appear with Him? Zechariah 14:5, last three words (NKJV).
3. Did Christ VISIBLY ascend from the Mount of Olives? Acts 1:9-11. Will all see Him coming? Revelation 1:7. Does this, then, say there will be a secret rapture of the saints from this earth?

Comment: When Jesus returns visibly and in great glory (Matthew 25:30-31). He will travel as LIGHTNING from east to west around the earth to gather the elect (Matthew 24:27). This is the only possible way by which every individual on a round earth could see Him.

John 14:19 is often misapplied in an attempt to prove that Jesus will come secretly and invisibly. This verse does not say that the world will never see Jesus return. It says that the people then living – 2000 years ago – would see Him no more because He went to heaven. He will be seen visibly when He returns.

4. Note 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. At what signal will Christ return? Will there be a SOUND to announce His coming or will He come secretly?
5. Does the word “we” which is mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 mean everyone or just the saints – those who will rise to meet Christ at His coming? Will they be with Christ forever? Verse 17. Does 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 verify the above points? Who is King of the saints? Revelation 15:3.
6. Do the HOLY ANGELS also come WITH Christ? Mark 8:38. When Christ came to the earth the first time, did He come with power? Or was He scourged, mocked, and abused? Isaiah 50:6; John 19:1. Will His second coming be with POWER and GREAT GLORY? Matthew 24:30. Will ARMIES of angels follow Him? Revelation 19:14.

GENERAL SUMMARY

GOD HAS A PLAN! Through the prophets He has given a fixed sequence of events leading up to the return of Christ.

The manner of Christ’s return has been WOEFULLY MISUNDERSTOOD. He comes visibly to a God-rejecting world in order to enforce peace. He comes at the beginning of the millennium.

The false doctrine that the churches can bring about a millennium of peace before Christ comes is utterly impossible. World events prove it.

National leaders now realize that the only hope of saving our civilization from self-destruction is the formation of a strong world government. But all attempts at this encounter suspicion, distrust, and hate. The hard fact is that MAN HAS CONSISTENTLY FAILED – and will continue to fail to attain this objective.

HUMAN NATURE HAS NOT CHANGED.

Men are still quite willing to spill the blood of their fellows to satisfy their lust and greed. Do the men of this world really know the way to peace? God Almighty says of sinful men in general: “the way of peace have they not known” (Romans 3:17). We hear a lot of sentimental platitudes about the hopes of achieving peace through the United Nations – but the pitiful results confirm Paul’s inspired statement that carnal men simply do not know the way to peace.

The history of human woe cries out that in trying to govern himself man has been trying the impossible. It shows that within himself as he is now created, man has neither the proper desire nor mental capacity to master this world. The churches cannot reform this civilization. Christ must return to inaugurate the promised age of peace!

Why are men so in ignorance of this vital subject today?

Because they are in ignorance of the countless prophecies which clearly reveal that God has ordained that Christ shall rule this earth, teach men the way to peace, and show all men the right way to live. Your Bible shows that this is to occur after a definite series of events – and after man has had time to write a lesson in human suffering to show once and for all that humanity’s own ways lead to death

(Proverbs 14:12).

The WORLD IS UNHAPPY today. Just look around the earth at the awful misery! Think of the great slaughter of human beings prophesied for the immediate future! Christ said, "I have come that they may have life [here and hereafter], and that they may have it more abundantly!" (John 10:10).

PEOPLE WILL BE HAPPY WHEN CHRIST RETURNS TO RULE. They will live abundantly happy lives! Under His guidance the necessary changes will be made in mankind so all may attain these things. "Jesus [the Savior], . . . will save His people from their sins!" (Matthew 1:21).

PENTECOST, DREAMS, AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS



Artist's representation of Jacob's ladder dream (Genesis 28:10-17)

By Bob Thiel

The Feast of Pentecost begins at sunset June 7th and continues through sunset June 8th in 2014.

Notice the following from the first Pentecost after Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection:

1 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

5 And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. 6 And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. 7 Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? 8 And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? 9 Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretans and Arabs — we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of

God.” 12 So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “Whatever could this mean?”

13 Others mocking said, “They are full of new wine.”

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. 15 For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. 16 But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

17 ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. 18 And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy. 19 I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord. 21 And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the Lord Shall be saved.’

22 “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know — 23 Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; 24 whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. (Acts 2:1-24)

The above Day of Pentecost started off with miracles. The disciples spoke and other people heard the speaking in their own native tongues. Peter mentioned that God’s Spirit was being poured out and that some followers would have dreams and some would prophesy.

Then, in Acts 3:1-10 it was recorded that a miraculous healing took place. While most Christians accept that God can heal, many are confused about spiritual gifts such as dreams, prophecy, and interpretation.

What about dreams, prophecy, and other spiritual gifts?

Do dreams, interpretations, and prophets have any place in the Christian Church today? Are any related to the Continuing Church of God (which did not officially form as a

declared entity until December 28, 2012)?

The Bible records that God often has used dreams to give messages (Genesis 20:3-7, 28:10-17, 31:10-13, 31:24, 37:5-10, 40:5-18, 41:1-32; Numbers 12:6; Judges 7:13-15; 1 Kings 3:5-15; Daniel 2:3-45, 4:4-27, 7:1-28; Matthew 1:20-25, 2:12, 2:13, 2:19, 2:22; Acts 16:9).

The Bible shows that God often chooses to work with prophets through a dream:

6 “Hear now My words:
If there is a prophet among you,
I, the Lord, make Myself known to him in a vision;
I speak to him in a dream. (Numbers 12:6)

Notice that the above says that God will speak to His prophet in a dream. Notice also:

28 The prophet who has a dream, let him tell a dream (Jeremiah 23:28)

A few years ago I had a dream, which while I did not understand it at first, as it became more and more fulfilled over the years, I began to understand it and believe it was from God.

I was 50 at the time (which essentially makes me an ‘old man’ per Numbers 8:25; cf. John 8:57). The Prophet Jeremiah at least once wondered about a message he received and later determined it was from God (Jeremiah 32:6-8), and the Apostle Peter at least once had a vision that he did not understand (Acts 10:9-17) until later as well (Acts 11:5-17). The same goes for Daniel (Daniel 8).

In my dream, there seemed to be two parallel lines. The presiding evangelist of the Living Church of God (LCG) Roderick Meredith was on the top line and I was on the line much below. In the dream, I kept calling up to Dr. Meredith, but he never would respond. This lack of response made no sense to me during the dream. Then after what seemed to be a long time, the lines-crossed with his line dropping and my line going up.

One reason that I did not understand it at the time was that I was on relatively close speaking terms with Dr. Meredith then, so that aspect made of the dream made no sense. Also, since I had no intentions of leaving Living Church of God then (and certainly no plans to start a separate church), it was not clear what the dream was saying. Another reason I was unsure about the dream then was that I had not had any anointing for the Holy Spirit beyond baptism when I had it.

But these matters changed eventually. For one, I was

unexpectedly anointed for a 'double-portion' of God's Spirit (cf. 2 Kings 2:9) on December 15, 2011 by an LCG minister named Gaylyn Bonjour.

Furthermore, over time, Dr. Meredith became more distant from me, would not keep various promises to me, and ultimately stopped speaking with me. And after I got a letter from him on 12/28/12, it was clear to me that there was no way that the Philadelphia mantle could be with him or any of his remaining leaders. These subsequent events showed me that the dream was being fulfilled. This dream gave an outline of what would happen in the future and that has happened.

I also had another dream (and do not recall precisely when, but it was prior to 2012) reminiscent of a vision that Isaiah. In that dream, I recall responding to a request from God and saying, "Here I am, send me" (cf. Isaiah 6:8).

Related to dreams, the Bible also teaches:

8 "And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions. 29 And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. (Joel 2:28-29)

28 And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? 30 Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? (1 Corinthians 12:28-30).

11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love (Ephesians 4:11-16).

Despite what the Bible supports, most Church of God groups

do not seemingly accept that there are any prophets today, nor do they seem to accept that God actually sometimes speaks in dreams in the 21st century—some, oddly, seem indignant of the very idea. Part of the reason for this is that those self-proclaimed 'prophets' outside of the Continuing Church of God have tended to be proven to be false.

But that does not mean God doesn't ever use dreams or have any in the office of prophet. The Bible shows that God can pour out a 'double-portion' of His Spirit (cf. 2 Kings 2:9-15) as what happened when an ordained minister so prayed and anointed me on December 15, 2011.

Herbert W. Armstrong on Dreams

But first, let us start here with something that the late Herbert W. Armstrong wrote about dreams:

Let me say here that in about 99,999 times out of 100,000, when people think GOD is speaking to them in a dream or vision in this day and age, it is pure imagination, or some form of self-hypnotism or self-deception. I have only come to believe that this dream was a bonafide call from God in the light of subsequent events. (Autobiography of Herbert Armstrong, Volume I, chapter 10)

And that is correct. Most dreams are not from God, even if people think that they are. Dreams from God are shown to be correct in the light of subsequent events (though just because a dream ends up being correct, that does of itself, not prove that it was from God as there can be other factors, cf. Deuteronomy 13:1-5, but God Himself does sometimes use dreams, Numbers 12:6; Acts 2:17-18).

Though many discount all dreams, many also forget that Herbert W. Armstrong believed that his wife Loma Armstrong had a dream from God, although it took him some years to accept the validity of it:

Within 30 or 60 days after our marriage God spoke to my wife in what might have been an intense unusual dream, or a vision — but it was years later before we came to realize that this really was a message from God. (Armstrong HW. Brethren and Co-worker letter, November 28, 1956; see also, Autobiography of Herbert Armstrong, Volume I, chapter 10).

So, there was a dream from a woman that preceded the start of the old Radio Church of God that Herbert W. Armstrong led.

Would God Give a Dream to Another Woman?

A question to ponder is have there been any dreams from God in more recent years?

In addition to my dreams (which seemed consistent with Number 12:6, Isaiah 6:8 and Acts 2:17), there also seems to have been at least one other dream related to the Continuing Church of God that I would like to mention in some detail here that someone else had.

Unbeknownst to me until late September 2013, a woman named Fesilafai Fiso Leana of New Zealand had a dream after going to bed on December 8, 2012. Here is a report that Fesilafai Fiso Leana wrote about her dream:

A few months before my dream, my husband and I noticed a contradiction in practice, regarding the sabbath commandment in LCG, from there we started to pray continuously for God to lead us to where the truth is. It seems God has answered our prayers through the dream.

The dream began with myself and approximately 70 New Zealand Living Church of God brethren, then suddenly LCG vanished (I was wondering where is LCG?) and I was left standing with approximately 10 people excluding myself, on a very high building. We were standing on the very top of the building, where I couldn't see the bottom, there were no other buildings, just this building. I could not see the bottom of the building but just clouds below the building and clouds surrounding the building which led to a beautiful white mountain – a mountain that had no ends on either side. The building was pretty close to the mountain, I could see the top of the mountain. The mountain was all white and so beautiful. I remember that I began to be filled with joy and peace. But also wondering how we got up on this building and confused why there were no other buildings but the clouds seemed like it was hiding the building and I felt protected or it felt like a safe place. I looked around there were still only about ten people there, the only person I could clearly recognize was Shirley constantly working, the approximate ten others were just sitting and standing around. So I walked around the building looking for the large crowd from LCG, but all I kept returning to was that Shirley was working and doing different types of work alone while the others were still sitting and standing around the building with me. I wondered why she was working a lot. I could not find LCG.

Then suddenly a message came to my mind: “There is a secret in the mountain”. And I was so happy to know that, I was still feeling elated and could still see the beautiful white mountain and wondered about

the secret. Then I asked: “What is the secret?” Then the message said, nobody knows the secret in the mountain but only you have received this message that there is a secret in the mountain. Then I asked ‘what is the secret in the mountain?’ I received a message to my mind that told me that “the secret in the mountain is the Ark of the Covenant”. Then the dream abruptly ended because I woke up. And immediately, I woke up my husband and recounted the dream to him, and I told my husband that it reminded me of when God gave Moses the Ten Commandments on the mountain and that the mountain was also covered with clouds.

On the same day after my dream, at church service Mr Penman warned us to be careful what we read from Bob Thiel's Obama book, because they do not support everything he wrote in it. At the time I kept your name in my mind as I did not know who you were then.

Then 3 weeks later Shirley contacted me regarding your Chronology – the exit from LCG. Shirley had all of the Chronology and gave us all a print out of it and went over it with my husband and I. Shirley kept stressing the integrity of the LCG leadership and administration was compromised as proven by your Chronology account. Then my husband and I had to make a decision whether we would continue with LCG or go with Bob Thiel (you) since Shirley, John and Kayla had already decided to be with you 😊

We decided to go with Bob Thiel and then left the meeting but a letter from Mr. Penman and a visit from the new New Zealand minister Paul attempted to obstruct our departure and tried to dissuade us from leaving LCG and coming with you. This forced us to carefully rethink our decision.

My husband and I were alone, that's when my husband said to me, “remember your dream? This is what your dream means, that we need to leave this church and go with Shirley”. That's when we knew what to do. And this dream is the reason most of us in the kiwi CCOG knew that we are in the right Church, God told us to come to this Church. We reaffirmed with Shirley and others that we were going to go with Bob Thiel and my husband told them the dream for the first time and that the dream is the reason my husband and I decided to come.

Not having all the details of the dream, Shirley then prayed about the dream. She asked God for more understanding on the dream. Then the next day she was reading the book of Psalm and Psalm 25:14 JUMPED out at her: “The secret of the Lord is with those who fear Him, And He will show them His covenant.” (email

9/29/13)

Within several weeks of the dream, ten people in New Zealand, including Shirley Gestro (the Shirley above) began to attend the newly formed Continuing Church of God.

Biblically, mountains can symbolize government (Psalm 30:7; Isaiah 11:9; Daniel 2:35; Zechariah 4:7) and white purity or cleanness (Isaiah 1:18; Revelation 7:14, 19:14). Clouds around a mountain (or at least the top of it) could show a separation—maybe a separation that keeps many from seeing all of the truth (cf. Job 22:14; Lamentations 3:44) or recognizing top leadership?

The dream seemed to be a signal to confirm that the Philadelphia mantle was not with the Living Church of God, but instead was associated with someone that had something to do with the ark of the covenant. Prior to the dream Fesilafai Fiso Leana indicated that she had problems with how the leadership in LCG viewed the Sabbath, and that was one of the issues that I dealt within weeks of the formation of the Continuing Church of God.

Now, I (Bob Thiel) never heard of, nor learned of, this dream until after the start of the Feast of Tabernacles in September 2013 in New Zealand (which is where my wife Joyce and I began the Feast of Tabernacles in 2013).

Why is that potentially significant?

Back in 2006, when I was first asked to give a sermon at the Feast of Tabernacles, it occurred to me that never in WCG, GCG, nor LCG did I recall anyone actually fulfilling the requirement in Deuteronomy 31:10-13 about reading the “words of the law” in Deuteronomy every seven years at the Feast of Tabernacles. So, when the opportunity to give a sermon came up (in Guatemala in 2006), I attempted to go through that book of the law. In 2012, it occurred to me that since this was to be done every seven years, that somehow I would need to do this in 2013 (seven years later), but I was not sure how this would be done. However, once the Continuing Church of God formed, I realized that how this would be done at the Feast of Tabernacles in 2013.

After I began to cite Deuteronomy 31:10-13 and started reading the book of the law at the Feast of Tabernacles in New Zealand in 2013, Fesilafai Fiso Leana came up to me and told me about her dream. We discussed some points about it and the ark of the covenant, etc. As it turns out, one of the items that was kept besides the ark of the covenant was the very same “Book of the Law” (Deuteronomy 31:26) that I was reading in its entirety publicly during that Feast of Tabernacles. This is a connection that, humanly speaking Fesilafai Leana could not have known. (There are also other potential ramifications related to the ark of

the covenant that I may attempt to publicly address in the future.)

Subsequent events, events that Fesilafai Leana could not have known on December 8/9, 2012, confirmed her dream. She had no idea that the Continuing Church of God was going to form, and I had not made the decision to actually form it until after getting a letter on December 28, 2012. Fesilafai Leana’s dream is another witness as to the proper start, etc., of the Continuing Church of God.

Although some have chosen not to believe all the facts about how and why the Continuing Church of God began, recall that the Bible teaches:

16 ‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’ (Matthew 18:16)

19 Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses. (1 Timothy 5:19)

Of course, since Gaylyn Bonjour always freely stated that he did the ‘double-portion’ anointing, there long had been a second witness (though various ones have their own opinion about how to interpret that).

Yet, in addition to various facts, the dream from Fesilafai Leana looks like perhaps God was planning on making it clearer for true Philadelphians (who are in various organizations/fellowships) to see that the mantle location had truly changed.

I also received information about a dream from one affiliated with the Continuing Church of God in Africa that I am considering as potentially valid, and if certain types of events confirm it, I expect to eventually report about it as well.

Of course, some will discount dreams and their confirmation as proper proof of anything they do not wish to believe.

Test the Spirits, But Be Willing to Believe

The Bible teaches, “test the spirits, whether they are of God” (1 John 4:1). A former board member of the old Global Church of God, who is not part of the Continuing Church of God, wrote the following in late 2013 (bolding his):

When we need to know what is about to happen, God will show us through direct revelation and through the right Scriptures at the right time.

Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets (Amos 3:7).

The entire New Testament is like this...

1Cor 14:29-32 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge. But if anything is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

1Cor 14:37-39 If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord. But if anyone is ignorant, let him be ignorant. Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues...

1Jo 4:1-2 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God,

Note: If there were no true prophets, there would be no need to “test the spirits”—because every prophet would be a “false prophet”. But because there are both true prophets and false prophets, we need to “test the spirits”...

Many have said, “If God is still providing prophets to the church, where are they?” My church—even my whole denomination—does not recognize any.” Our national leaders do not recognize any either. That is “business as usual” when it comes to prophets. We must remember that God sends prophets to speak His messages and do His work, which often conflicts with the purposes of political and religious leaders...

The gift of prophecy is not vulnerable to electronic surveillance, network failures, police action, restrictive laws or religious censorship. It works in any language, custom or culture. It works no matter what other nations and churches do. (Edwards N. Need Prophets More than Prophecy. Shepherd’s Voice, Fall 2013)

Yes, because a group leader does not recognize a prophet, that does not mean the prophet is not valid. The above article also quoted several scriptures that demonstrate that.

But one that was not quoted and all should consider is the following:

41 He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward. (Matthew 10:41)

So, people should test the spirits (1 John 4:1) and accept the prophet at his word according to Jesus. People should also “search the scriptures” to see if these things are so (Acts 17:11).

Many do not believe that God would use His Spirit to ever speak through prophets today. (Note, just because I say or write something does NOT mean I am doing so as a prophet. Unless I am properly reading scripture or giving a direct message from God, which I would normally identify as such, I can and do make mistakes. The prophets in the Bible spent relatively little time actually prophesying and were mainly involved in biblical teaching, unless they also had secular jobs.)

Many want more dramatic signs (Matthew 12:38; 1 Kings 19:11-12), but God does not always do it that way (Matthew 12:39-42; 1 Kings 19:12-14).

Can you believe?

What About Interpretation?

Some have stated that one needs to be an ordained minister or evangelist or something similar to be able to interpret dreams and/or other messages from God.

But that is not a requirement according to the Bible.

Joseph of Genesis fame was an interpreter of dreams. In the case of his interpretations of the dreams of the butler and the baker, Joseph’s position was that of being a prisoner (Genesis 40:1-22). The Bible did not list that Joseph had any type of spiritual title when he did that.

Daniel was also an interpreter of dreams. He was a captive and his title may have been an advisor to one or more government leaders (Daniel 1:3-7). FWIW, I was appointed an advisor to the LCG evangelists by its Presiding Evangelist Dr. Roderick C. Meredith in the late Summer of 2005. Spiritually speaking, that title is not less than whatever title Daniel held when he is first listed as interpreting a dream (Daniel 2:1-45).

Furthermore, the Old Testament is actually fairly clear that one does not need any particular title to interpret dreams. Notice the following:

13 And when Gideon had come, there was a man telling a dream to his companion. He said, «I have had a dream: To my surprise, a loaf of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian; it came to a tent and struck it so that it fell and overturned, and the tent collapsed.»

14 Then his companion answered and said, «This is nothing else but the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel! Into his hand God has delivered Midian and the whole camp.»

15 And so it was, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its interpretation, that he worshiped. (Judges 7:13-15)

A «companion» is not a title and that companion was the interpreter.

Furthermore, in the New Testament, Pilate's wife is shown to have had a dream and given an interpretation that the Bible does not dispute (Matthew 27:19). She would not seem to have to have to have some type of biblical title and presumably she was pagan.

Additionally, while the New Testament does not list than an interpreter of dreams has a separate title, it does discuss interpreters of tongues. Notice what the Apostle Paul wrote:

27 If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret. 28 But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God. (1 Corinthians 14:27-28)

Paul is writing to converted Christians here. Thus, I believe that the New Testament allows for any who have God's Holy Spirit to interpret if they feel properly led to. Both myself and Solomona Leaana (husband of Fesilafai Fiso Leaana) who interpreted the dreams in this article were properly baptized and have had hands laid upon us for the Holy Spirit. It was Solomona Leaana who interpreted his wife's dream as specifically referring to me and the Continuing Church of God, thus it was not me who originally did that. Recall Jesus said that "by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established" (Matthew 18:16).

While an interpreter may possibly make a mistake, the scripture clearly does not show that one needs to have a title to be a legitimate interpreter.

What About Other Spiritual Gifts?

The Bible does teach about other spiritual gifts, such as discernment, which can be related to interpretation:

9 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, 10 that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, 11 being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. (Philippians 1:9-11)

Notice that Paul tied in real love, true knowledge, and proper discernment with righteousness. These are all essentially gifts of the Spirit (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:1-11).

Notice also the following:

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not

of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

Not only do we need the gift of faith related to salvation, we need faith to walk the Christian way of life.

The Apostle Paul further taught:

1 Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts...12 Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel. (1 Corinthians 14:1, 12)

He further wrote about various spiritual gifts, with some cautions:

1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant:..

4 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: 8 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills. (1 Corinthians 12:1, 4-11)

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. 24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. (Galatians 5:22-26)

True Christians possess one of more of the gifts of the Spirit. And sometimes, we do not know until later what are spiritual gifts or talents truly are. But all Christians are to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18), and knowledge is a spiritual gift (cf. 1 Corinthians 2:10-14). We should all have love, joy, peace, wisdom, faith, etc.

Notice, however, that while the Apostle Paul teaches that we are to desire the best gifts, that love is what profits:

12:31 But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.

13: 1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

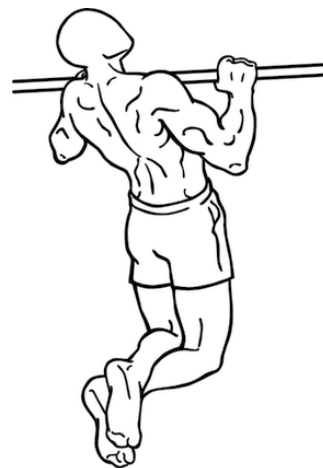
8 Love never fails...

13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. (1 Corinthians 12:31; 13:1-8,13)

Love is the most important spiritual gift that we can demonstrate and develop.

During this Pentecost season, consider that God still is on His Throne, He still pours out His Spirit, and all of us need to demonstrate more of the love of God. Including loving His word enough to have the faith to believe the truth about Him and His spiritual gifts and to walk as a Christian.

ARE YOU JUST “ENDURING TO THE END”?



(Drawing by Everkinetics)

By Richard A. Wiedenheft

Some in God’s Church simply intend to “tough it out” until Christ returns. Literally, they are “ENDURING to the end” (Matt. 24:13) – but not the way Christ intended. Are you making their mistake?

THINK BACK to the time just before your first contact with the message proclaimed by God’s Church. Your life had probably become somewhat frustrating and purposeless. You had problems and worries. You saw inequities and wrongs all around you. Perhaps you wondered, “What is it all about?”

Something was missing!

And then came the thrill and challenge of God’s truth. You saw in it the answers for many gnawing doubts, the solutions to problem are real, positive, workable principles that could make your life fuller, happier and more abundant.

You seized God’s way with zest and put those principles into action at the cost of your hobbies, perhaps of your job, your friends, even your family. But it was well worth the sacrifice because your life now had meaning and direction and you had the promise of eternal life. You abounded with the zeal that God calls the “first love” for His truth.

Routine of Christine Living

As the days, weeks and months rolled by, however, you

discovered that you were still you, that life still had its frustrations, disappointments and heartaches. Even as a converted and changed Christian, you continued to have trials and tests, some of which were burdensome and wearing.

And so your “first love” began to fade, your original childlike excitement now tempered with the mature realization that God’s way is not a magical, mystical solution to all ills but that it requires hard work on your part.

Are you now therefore one of those who are simply “waiting it out”—tolerating your problems and shortcomings—hoping that somehow when Christ appears in the clouds your whole mental attitude will be instantly changed? Are you looking for God’s Kingdom to bring you “instant happiness”?

Brethren, don’t be deceived. God is not going to end all our problems, trials and tests for us while we are rising to meet Christ in the air. We must be working on and conquering them now, by our own hard effort and magnified made effective through God’s spiritual help! God promises eternal spirit life and rulership in His Kingdom only to those who in this life develop righteous spiritual character—who practice love, joy, peace, happiness and overcome and solve their problems now!

God’s People Should Be Happy

Jesus explained to His disciples that one who is faithful in little will be faithful in much (Luke 16:10). If we learn here and now to lead full, happy, purposeful physical lives, to master and overcome our afflictions, God knows we can be happy for all eternity in His Kingdom.

In John 10:10 Christ told the Pharisees: “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” God intended our physical life to be an abundant one, not necessarily full of wealth and earthly possessions, but full of love, joy, peace and happiness.

“Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance . . .” are among the fruits of God’s Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). Notice that love, joy and peace head the list. These are the spiritual works by which God is judging us.

Can we really evidence love, joy, and peace if we are just “waiting it out”? Obviously not. Putting up with our shortcomings and allowing circumstances subject to our control to toss us about—hoping that Christ will return before our endurance runs out—is not the way to peace and happiness!

When Christ returns He wants to find His servants “so doing” (Matthew 24:46) actively and aggressively making

changes in themselves; actually solving problems, not simply “marking time” and putting up with their lacks, not relying on someone else to push them into overcoming. He wants to find in us ever-increasing joy and the sense of purpose that comes only with spiritual growth.

Take a test.

Can you say that since you were put into God’s Church you have been very blessed and that you are being spiritually blessed more all the time?

If not, something is amiss.

If you don’t feel very blessed and increasingly so as time passes, you may be “missing the boat.”

Trials, Yes! Unhappiness, No!

Certainly God did promise trials and tribulation for true Christians. Anyone who will live godly is in for some rough times.

But even in the face of trials, a Christian should not become unhappy and frustrated. James commanded, “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations [trials]; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience (James 1:2-3).

No crisis or dilemma seems cause for us to shout for joy, at least not in the immediate physical sense. But we are commanded by our Creator to rejoice in the long range good that a trial can produce. We can have the vision and foresight to know that God is absolutely in control, allowing a problem only for our ultimate spiritual good.

Trials can be traumatic; but they need not destroy the overall contentment and joy we have in knowing we are now learning how to live so we can reign for all eternity with Christ.

Nothing must be allowed to blur our vision of our goal. Then, nothing can destroy our happiness! Christ exhorted His disciples: “[. . .] rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you”—or because of any supernatural abilities we might be given—“but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven” (Luke 10:20). That is our cause for great rejoicing, regardless of our physical circumstances.

Be Deeply Converted

Although the temporary physical blessings of this life can add to our happiness, we must never let the lack or desire for them destroy or ruin our rejoicing. No attempt to base our life and happiness on physical things which can so easily be taken from us can ever succeed.

But to be able to get our minds off the physical things of this world, we must be deeply converted. We must strive to rid ourselves of the habits, aspirations and vanity of our carnal lives. We must understand and despise the carnality we see in our own minds. We must be willing to accept correction and admit our weaknesses and faults.

We should pray for God to show us our errors and shortcomings, to correct us in His mercy; and we should also ask God's ministers to help us see where we need to change. Admitting error, accepting correction, and then striving to overcome, must become a daily challenge for us; knowing that we are qualifying for an eternal goal which is the foundation of our happiness.

With this spiritual goal in mind, we can greatly appreciate any physical blessings God has granted us and use them to the fullest. Sin and unhappiness come from misuse or abuse but happiness, peace and joy come from the proper appreciation and use of all that God has created.

Enjoy the taste of delicious food; be inspired by beautiful music; be thrilled by the fellowship of other members of God's family; appreciate the glory of God's creation. In proper balance drink in of all of God's physical creation, but always seek His Kingdom first (Matt. 6:33).

Solve Your Problems

As true Christians, we must actually solve the problems of this life. Never think or say, "I can't do things any different. That is the way I am," or, "I can't help it if conditions are that way" and slip into a do-nothing attitude.

Too many of us are satisfied with second place, with less than a fulfilling marriage, with less than obedient children. We bounce from job to job without direction. We allow circumstances to shape our lives. We slip by from paycheck to paycheck just keeping our financial noses above water. We allow our own physical bodies to remain too fat, or enervated, or in pain, when it lies within our power to correct the situation if we only would exert the effort to do so.

Are you developing and using your mind, broadening your mental horizons, learning in fields you have previously ignored or had no opportunity? Then again, perhaps you are already too broad in your interests and need to narrow them down and begin to specialize in certain fields.

Granted, there are limitations to what we can alter in this life but are we really changing to the utmost? It's true that change is often arduous, embarrassing and traumatic, but are we really measuring it as we should in comparison to the jubilation beyond?

Are you solving and overcoming problems, putting them into the past? Or engaged in a simple endurance contest?

Accentuate the Positive

A basic human tendency is to see the negative side of things. It doesn't matter who you are, you can always find something to be discouraged about if you want to. There is always trouble in the world, in the nation, in every community. There are aches and pains, discouragement and disappointment in our personal lives.

But one thing is sure: worrying about these problems, brooding about them, being unhappy about them, won't make them go away.

So what should we do?

We must learn to thrust our problems into the hands of God through prayer and meditate about the positive aspects of our life and His way. We of all people do know who we are, we know where we're going. We have the absolute promise that "[...] all things work together for good to them that love God . . ." (Rom. 8:28). Before us lies the greatest goal that a human being could imagine—the promised goal of being in God's family for all eternity.

Brethren, let's accentuate the positive!

Let's recapture the original zest and happiness we experienced when we first began to walk in God's way of life.

Remember, this physical existence is the training and testing ground for an eternal spiritual life in God's glorious family. Eternal happiness is available only to those who learn true happiness here and now!

Originally Published as Are You Just "Enduring to the End"? Good News, July – September 1973, pp. 24-25

EVANS OCHIENG AND THE CONTINUING CHURCH OF GOD



By Evans Ochieng Kisiengo

I was born into the family of Prisila Oloo and Christopher Kisiengo. My parents were Catholics who were keeping Sunday. This is the church where I grew since it was the only denomination which was common in my area. Funny thing that I was never baptized in the Catholic faith.

I tried several times when my elder sister and my age mates were going for baptism, but I something always prevented it from happening. I can't tell why because it happened in such a way that was impossible for me to figure it out.

After Hearing Some Scriptures, I Became a Pentecostal

Eventually, I met a pentecostal preacher when he was teaching about baptism and was explaining how baptism can only be done in the river or a lake not by a small water in the glass or any container. I was surprised because he was explaining how Jesus was baptized in the river not by sprinkling water or pouring in the face.

And he read 1 John 2:6 (Anyone who says he is a Christian should live as Christ did) Psalm 119:105 (your words are a flashlight to light the path a head of me, and keep me from stumbling), Psalm 119:106 (I've said it once and I'll say it again and again: I will obey these wonderful laws of yours). I was shocked when I heard all these verses and turned my mind from being a catholic and changed to be a pentecostal where I was baptized in water. It brought some differences between me and my parents and all in all I was happy that I did what Jesus did.

I tried to talk with them about this Bible recommended

baptism but they could not listen to me because this kind of baptism was totally against the way it was done in Catholic. As Catholics we were not allowed to read the Bible, and we were always told that if we read it we will be totally sick that even we can die.

So I was very much afraid of reading the Bible, having been told that only the priest was allowed to read the Bible. So we were walking just in darkness of not knowing what is written in the bible. We could only follow the instructions from the priests. Again we were not allowed to read any book from any denomination apart from the once of catholic. So it was a total darkness that you could not see what was in the Bible.

When I was a pentecostal, I was free to read the bible. And I was told that I should be guided by the Bible because it is a breath from God and all the writings were guided by the ALMIGHTY FATHER

ABOVE (SOVEREIGN GOD) (2 Peter 1:20 ; For no prophecy recorded in scripture was ever thought up by the prophet himself. It was the Holy Spirit within this godly men who gave them true messages from God.) And it helps to instruct, direct and teach (2 Timothy 3:16). The whole bible was given to us by inspiration from God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives; it straightens us out and helps us to do what is right).

Then I Learned About the Sabbath

So I became a pentecostal youth leader and as a youth leader I was reading the bible always. Every time I was studying the bible, I found that the bible is guiding us to keep the Sabbath not Sunday, since it is one of God's ten commandments:

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. 11 For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. (Exodus 20:8-11)

And it is a sign between God and humankind (Ezekiel 20:11; There I gave them my laws so they could live by keeping them. If anyone keeps them, he shall live. And I gave them the Sabbath- a day of rest every seventh day-as a symbol between them and me, to remind them that is I, the Lord, who sanctifies them, that they are truly my people).

Even though I was studying God's Sabbath I was still keeping Sunday but under pressure, because when I was asking my

pastors questions about Sabbath, they were giving me negative answers and were ready to fight me because they were considering me as a person who is bringing division in the church.

Many people accepted my teachings about Sabbath but before the pastor most of them turned away from me and siding with the pastor simply because of fear. So it was a big problem to me till one Sabbath day morning when I made a decision in my mind to trace a place where I can get those who are keeping God's Sabbath.

After the Pentecostal Pastor Objected to the Sabbath, I Went with the SDAs

On my way I met Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) members who were going for Sabbath services. When I talked with about which day they are keeping, they told me that they are keeping Sabbath. That is how I became a SDA member.

At first, I was convinced that they are true Church of God simply because they were keeping Sabbath. I stayed in SDA till I became a preacher who can move every place to preach. One day when we went to open a new Sabbath school, I was the guest speaker for that occasion. It was a wonderful preaching and many turned to be SDA members and it was a total success to the church.

Then I Encountered Teaching of the Old Worldwide Church of God

At late hours we were in bible study, but among us was a man who had been a co-worker to WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD. This man started to go against our teachings like:

1. How we are keeping Passover? In SDA church we were partaking Passover 4 times a year. But the bible says one time per year. (Leviticus 23:5)
2. How come we (in the SDA church) were preaching about going to heaven after resurrection for 1000 years? The bible says no going in heaven for 1000 years but instead Christ is coming back to rule on earth for 1000 years. (John7:33; But Jesus told them," [Not yet] I am to be here a little longer. Then I shall return to the one who sent me. You will search for me but not find me. And you won't be able to come where I am!" John 8:21-24; later he said to them again "I am going away ; And you will search for me, and die in your sins. And you cannot come where I am going" The Jews asked, " Is he planning suicide? What does he mean, you cannot come where I am going?" Then he said to them, "you are from below, I am from above. You are from this world; I am not. That is why I said that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I

am the Messiah, the son of God, you will die in your sins"). Revelation 11:15;-For just then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices shouting down from heaven, "the kingdom of this world belongs to our Lord, and to his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." Rev. 5:10, Daniel 7:26-28 etc.

3. And what about the seven ordained feasts of God which we were not observing there in the SDA church? Lev. 23. The man had two booklets in his hand. And since I was wondering if he was biblical, I received those booklets from him to study them. They were titled "God's Holy Days or Pagans Holidays?" another one was "The Gospel of the Kingdom" by Armstrong."

This is how I was called in God's church. The Church of God is where there is the whole truth and is "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:14).

Became a Minister

I was baptized in WCG where I stayed till Tkach brought apostasy in God's church. This was the time I decided to walk out from WCG.

It took some period of time before we joined any group. Later we got the address of the United Church of God (UCG) and wrote to them. They sent Batholomew from South Africa who came and meet us in Kenya. We joined UCG and that year we kept the feast of Tabernacle with them in Kenya when they sent George De lap from Scotland and Nail Baker from South Africa. Soon after the feast Batholomew came back in Kenya with a sad information that UCG was divided, so each and every member should look where to join. It happened when I was reading the book of Ten Commandments by Dr. Roderick Meredith. I decided myself to place where Meredith was.

Because I knew that according to the book he wrote, he could not follow false doctrine of Tkach. This is why I joined Global Church of God (GCG). We kept the feast of Tabernacles with GCG that year.

Again after the feast we got a message again that Global had divided. Larry Salyer and his team went one way and Dr. Meredith and his team went a different way. It was a sad story actually. At that time, I decided to join Living Church of God (LCG) with Dr. Meredith.

In LCG I hosted five different groups and till it reach a time when they wanted to ordained me a deacon. So when the plans were ready for my ordination our minister in Kenya made a great mistake, which he did not repent of. So, I could not accept ordination by him. I refused that ordination after Dr Winnail came in Kenya to judge what was going on

between him, his wife and one of women in the church. I decided to leave LCG because of bad things this Kenyan man was doing.

Later I was appointed to be the representative of COG IN TRUTH, then. We, along with Bill Goff, were in COG IN TRUTH. He saw how that group was mistreated me in the work. And he decided to assist me in most of my trips. Later he also walked out of COG IN TRUTH. Eventually, we all walked out and start working together. We still have love and mutual respect. He is a man who is humble and really spare most of his time and wealth in God's work. I really thank him for his total sacrifice. I was ordained a minister by him.

I have been serving as a Church of God minister in Kenya for more than 10 years.

In 2013, I contacted Pastor Dr. Bob Thiel of the Continuing Church of God (CCOG). I knew of him back when I was part of the Global and Living Church of God. I was interested because of the zeal to do the work that CCOG had. I contacted him as wanted to learn more about the work that the Continuing Church of God has been doing.

After reviewing many CCOG articles, looking over CCOG literature, sending many emails, meeting with others here, and having conversations with Dr. Thiel, I asked to represent the Continuing Church of God as a minister here.

At present I am overseeing 20 congregations in Kenya and one in Tanzania and now do so as a minister for the Continuing Church of God. There are also others in Tanzania that I hope to meet with who are affiliated with the Continuing Church of God.

Editors note: As far as the character matter of the LCG minister back then, let me state that I heard something about it back then and prayed about it, but at the time was not convinced I (or LCG) knew all the details (I learned more about it later, which confirmed what I heard). I agree with Evans Ochieng's decision to refuse the ordination then and understand why he left LCG at that time. Others there also have had other character issues, which is why I had to leave when I did.

PSALM 23: A PSALM OF COMFORT

By Bob Thiel

The 23rd Psalm is a psalm of comfort:

1 The Lord is my shepherd;
I shall not want.
2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside the still waters.
3 He restores my soul;
He leads me in the paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.
4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow
of death,
I will fear no evil;
For You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.
5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my
enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
My cup runs over.
6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord
Forever. (Psalms 23)

Are you going through your own "valley of the shadow of death" Don't give up hope!

22 Cast your burden on the Lord,
And He shall sustain you;
He shall never permit the righteous to be moved.
(Psalms 55:22)

5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
And lean not on your own understanding;
6 In all your ways acknowledge Him,
And He shall direct your paths. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

God cares for you. God allows trials for our good.

2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. (James 1:2-5)

Have the faith to really trust God, even as if it sometimes seems like you are facing the 'shadow of death.'

*Fulfilling
Matthew 24:14
and
Matthew 28:19-20*



Continuing Church of God www.ccog.org
Daily Bible News Prophecy www.cogwriter.com

CCOG.ASIA This is a website targeted towards Asia. It has articles in Mandarin Chinese as well as some in English, plus other Asian languages.

CCOG.IN This is a website targeted towards those of Indian heritage.

CCOG.EU This is a website targeted toward Europe. It has materials in many European languages.

CDLIDD.ES La Continuación de la Iglesia de Dios. This is the Spanish language website for the Continuing Church of God.

PNIND.PH Patuloy na Iglesia ng Diyos. This is a website targeted towards those in the Philippines or those of related heritage.



BibleNewsProphecy channel
www.youtube.com/BibleNewsProphecy

ContinuingCOG channel
www.youtube.com/continuingcog

The leading pastor in *Continuing Church of God* is a regular radio guest using radio to reach audiences in many areas.

The *Continuing Church of God* also uses printed and electronic magazines, books, and weekly letters to the Brethren to also support Matthew 24:14 and Matthew 28:19-20

