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July-September

# Bible News Prophecy



Tel Dan Stela  
(9th Century B.C.)

Who is the Man of Sin  
of 2 Thessalonians?

Philadelphia Remnant:  
It's All About Love

## Bible News Prophecy

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*About the Front Cover:* This was taken by Oren Rozen of the *Tel Dan Stele*. This is considered to be one of the strongest early proofs, outside of the Bible, of King David of Israel. The whitish portion in old Aramaic (which is similar to Phoenician) says "House of David."

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**FROM THE EDITOR IN CHIEF: BOB THIEL**

## **The Philadelphia Remnant: It's All About Love**

What is the Philadelphia remnant of the Church of God really all about?

Is it simply a group or corporation who thinks it follows the right rules?

Within 25 hours of the formation of the *Continuing* Church of God, I posted that it was really all about love—the 'give' way of life.

While rules are important (cf. John 14:15; Matthew 23:23), what is most important?

According to Jesus, the apostles, and the late Herbert W. Armstrong, and the *Continuing* Church of God, love is what is most important.

God's plan involves love. Notice what Jesus said:

16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. (John 3:16-17)

But it is not just God who is to love. Notice some of what Mark recorded:

28 Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, "Which is the first commandment of all?"

29 Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. 31 And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

32 So the scribe said to Him, "Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but He. 33 And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

34 Now when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." (Mark 12:28-34)

The importance of love is confirmed by many in the New Testament. Notice the following statement from the Apostle Paul:

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

Notice some passages written by the Apostle John:

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

12 No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. 13 By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. 14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. 15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. 16 And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. 19 We love Him because He first loved us.

20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? 21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also. (1 John 4:7-21)

1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. 2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. (1 John 5:1-4)

The following is from Herbert Armstrong's book *The Mystery of the Ages*:

True religion—God's truth empowered with the love of God imparted by the Holy Spirit...JOY UNSPEAKABLE of knowing God and Jesus Christ—of knowing TRUTH—and the warmth of God's divine LOVE!...

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."... And what was Jesus' appearance? It was that of a human man, for he also was the Son of man...

Most important of all however is what is God's nature—his CHARACTER—like? One cannot know what God is unless he knows what his CHARACTER is!

THE CHARACTER of both God the Father and Christ the Son is that of spiritual holiness, righteousness and absolute perfection.

That character might be summed up in the one word LOVE, defined as an outflowing, loving concern. It is the way of giving, serving, helping, sharing, not the "GET" way.

It is the way devoid of coveting, lust and greed, vanity and selfishness, competition, strife, violence and destruction, envy and jealousy, resentment and bitterness...

God's law is spiritual and can be summed up in one simple but all-inclusive word—love. His law for the guidance of human conduct is subdivided into the two great commandments, love toward God and love toward neighbor. These, in turn, are subdivided into the 10 Commandments. Jesus magnified this law by showing how its principle expands to cover virtually every possible human infraction...

Bear in mind the government of God is based on the LAW of God, which is the way of life of outflowing LOVE, cooperation, concern for the good of the governed...

Full comprehension of God's LAW (his way of life) is imparted by God through the Holy Spirit. But the law of God requires action and performance, and LOVE is the fulfilling of God's law (Rom. 13:10), and it can be fulfilled only by the love of and from God (Rom. 5:5)...

In the plagues God caused against Egypt, God was turning the Egyptian gods and objects of worship against them to show them that these were not gods. Even the plagues were sent in LOVE for the Egyptians...

A Christian must grow and develop in grace, spiritual knowledge and godly character... showing more love or outgoing concern toward others...

The very basic teaching, belief AND DOCTRINE OF God's true Church therefore is based on the righteousness of and obedience to the law of God. That law is LOVE. But it is not human love. Human love cannot rise above the level of human self-centeredness. It must be "the love of God...shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy [Spirit]" (Rom. 5:5). Ancient Israel could not really obey God's law—they could have kept it according to the strict letter of the law. But since love is the fulfilling of the law and they had only human self-centered love, they could not have kept the law according to the spirit—because the Holy Spirit had not yet been given.

This basic teaching includes, therefore, all the "fruits of the Holy Spirit"—love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, etc.

The teachings of God's true Church are simply those of "living by every word" of the Holy Bible...

Men shall turn from the way of "get" to the way of "give"—God's way of love.

A NEW CIVILIZATION shall now grip the earth!

Proclaiming that new civilization is to come and be based upon love is a major part of what the true gospel of the kingdom is all about.

The Apostle Paul referred to part of it in one place as "gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24).

The Apostle Paul also wrote:

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. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

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

### **Why Is There a Philadelphian Remnant?**

The Laodicean Church is the last one mentioned in the book of Revelation (Revelation 3:14-22). As the last, it is the one that will be the most dominant at the time of the end. The word "Laodicea" can be rendered "the people rule," "judgment of the people," or the "people decide."

Jesus condemned the work of the Laodiceans.

Laodicea is characterized by a rejection of the governance accepted by the Philadelphians--the acceptance of church leaders in accordance with scripture (1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11-16), and by a general lukewarm attitude. Thus governance can be seen as a key distinction between Philadelphia and Laodicea. Laodicea places emphasis on self (of the individuals or the leaders as opposed to proclaiming the whole truth including the Gospel), thus it also waters down the Truth--and so is "rebuked and chastened" and counseled "to buy from Me gold refined in the fire" (Revelation 3:18-19).

Because Laodicea is dominant at the end of the age, Philadelphia cannot be predominant in numbers then. However, a portion of Philadelphia must still exist.

We know this because Jesus told the Philadelphians: "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. Behold, I am coming quickly!" (Revelation 3:10-11). The Philadelphians, those of the Philadelphia remnant of the Church of God, are the only ones promised protection! The Philadelphians are "given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent" (Revelation 12:14).



Furthermore, since Jesus praises the work of the Philadelphian church, and a major witness proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom of God must be done to trigger the end (Matthew 24:14), it must be the Philadelphian remnant that does that work.

Now what does love have to do with the Philadelphia remnant? Notice the following passage:

1 Let brotherly love continue. (Hebrews 13:1)

The Greek word translated as “brotherly love” is the word Philadelphia. The writer of the Book of Hebrews may have been inspired by God to convey two concepts:

That brotherly love needs to continue amongst those who believe that they are Christian.

And perhaps that Philadelphia itself needs to continue, and it can do so, because of its emphasis on love.

It is important for all to realize that despite flaws of Christians, including those of us of the Philadelphia remnant, that love is what God’s way of life and His kingdom are really all about. And that spreading that message of love and all of God’s ways is what the Continuing Church of God wants to be about.

This message was the subject of the first Sabbath service of the *Continuing* Church of God. It was also the first message that I gave in Kenya when I visited there in 2014 as well as in 2017.

*Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* shows that Philadelphia means “love of brethren” or “fond of brethren.”

When Jesus used the term *phileo* with Simon Peter (translated as “love”), what was Peter to do to show this type of love? He was to do the work.

17 He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “Do you love Me?” And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “Feed My sheep” (John 21:17).

A trait of Philadelphians is that they love the brethren and will sacrifice to do so. While some may argue that this only means taking care of those already in the Church, this is inconsistent with Matthew 28:18-19 as well as Jesus’ words in John 10:16: “And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.”

Philadelphians love others, not just themselves. As Herbert W. Armstrong wrote:

This era of the Church was to produce fruit (Mystery of the Ages, p. 290).

True religion--God’s truth empowered with the love of God imparted by the Holy Spirit...JOY UNSPEAKABLE of knowing God and Jesus Christ--of knowing TRUTH--and the warmth of God’s divine LOVE! (Mystery of the Ages)

As Jesus taught: “For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it” (Mark 8:35). Philadelphians will give their all to proclaim the Gospel.

Philadelphians have “a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name” (Revelation 3:8). They are not part of an especially strong church (or a large church by the world’s standards). They have kept God’s word without watering it down. They have not denied Christ’s authority (which is essentially how Strong’s defines the word translated as “name”).

The Philadelphians accept that “Christ is head of the church” (Ephesians 5:23), and accept authority within the Church:

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 (Ephesians 4:11-15).

Philadelphians are organized and they need to keep preaching to the world until the end comes, since they will be around until the end comes. Philadelphians have the love of God and their neighbors to do the proclamation work.

They will also assist in the preparation for the short work God will accomplish (Romans 9:28).

It is the highly dedicated in the real Church of God that will finish the final phase of the work before (Matthew 24:14) and during (Revelation 11:3-14) the Great Tribulation and Day of the Lord--and the final phase will also involve dealing with the ecumenical religion that will rise up (cf. Revelation 13:4,8; 14:9-13)--and this is what the *Continuing* Church of God is doing.

Although various ones do not understand, the true Philadelphia remnant is all about love. Love towards God, love towards one neighbor, and possessing a real love of the truth.

*(This was one of the topics that was covered during the Continuing Church of God African leadership in Nairobi, Kenya in February 2017.)*



## Who is the Man of Sin of 2 Thessalonians 2?



*German artist's rendition of the man of sin, 1498*

By Bob Thiel

The Apostle Paul wrote the following about the man of sin, the son of perdition, in 2 Thessalonians 2:

1 Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, 2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. 3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? 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 2:1-12)

This final man of sin will be a major player who will be involved with miraculous wonders that will affect the entire world.

Who is this man of sin?

Some teach the man of sin is the second Beast of Revelation 13. Others the first Beast. Which one actually is?

### **Looking at Daniel and Revelation**

Notice that the description of the King of the North in Daniel closely fits the description of that man of perdition:

36 "Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done. 37 He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all. 38 But in their place he shall honor a god of fortresses; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things (Daniel 11:36-38).

What Daniel 11:36-38 and 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 say about this man is essentially the same--this is the same man.

Notice also that the King of the North exalts himself above all the gods. This includes the god of fortresses, which (as I have long suggested) is apparently the Roman (Catholic) god. And this would also have to include the two-horned beast of Revelation 13.

The Bible shows that the first Beast will be worshipped and that the second Beast (called "another beast below") causes the world to worship the first Beast:

1 Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea...3... And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. 4 So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?"... 7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. **And authority was given him** over every tribe, tongue, and nation. 8 **All who dwell on the earth will worship him**, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world...

11 Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and **he had two horns** like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. 12 And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, **and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast**, whose deadly wound was healed. (Revelation 13:1,3,4,7-8,11-12)

Since the man of sin exalts himself above all that is called God (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4) and the second beast causes the world to worship, not himself but instead, the first beast (Revelation 13:11-12), the man of sin must be the first Beast.

Notice clearly that the two-horned beast (who is THE false prophet, cf. Revelation 19:20) gets people to worship THE FIRST beast, the ten-horned beast (*with accompanying signs--that he does so in the presence of the FIRST BEAST--cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10*). Hence the two-horned beast is NOT putting himself above all gods as he has people worship the ten-horned beast. It is the ten-horned beast who blasphemes, as he is also the blasphemous King of the North (Daniel 11:36-40). And it is the ten-horned beast who is granted "great authority," not the two-horned beast.

There is simply no verse that says that the second beast gets the worship that the first one does. The false prophet clearly promotes false worship, as opposed to being the object of it himself. While popes have long let people kneel down before them, I have found no scriptures that indicate that the false prophet himself tries to make *himself* the object of worship.

The Old Testament clearly concurs. Notice something that Daniel also wrote:

24 The ten horns are ten kings  
Who shall arise from this kingdom.

And another shall rise after them;  
He shall be different from the first ones,  
And shall subdue three kings.  
25 He shall speak pompous words against the Most High,  
Shall persecute the saints of the Most High,  
And shall intend to change times and law.  
Then the saints shall be given into his hand  
For a time and times and half a time (Daniel 7:24-25).

It is the ten-horned beast who speaks the pompous words against God, he is the one who exalts himself above all that is called God (2 Thessalonians 2:4).

Also notice that in the Bible, people are warned against worshipping the first beast:

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 (Revelation 14:9-10).

2 So the first went and poured out his bowl upon the earth, and a foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image...10 Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain (Revelation 16:2,10).

Even if the image is related to the Catholic Church (which to a degree it is), notice that it is the beast and HIS image and HIS kingdom that worship against is warned as opposed to mainly that of the false prophet. The beast is clearly above the false prophet and is the one that exalts himself above all that is called God.

If we let the Bible interpret itself, it suggests, that the description in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 fits very closely to the first beast, the King of the North, and not nearly as closely the second beast, the false prophet.

Notice that the first beast also fulfills the following:

15 Then he said to me, "The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. 16 And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. 17 For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. 18 And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth." (Revelation 17:15-18)

Notice that the harlot (the ecumenical Church of Rome) is devoured at this time. This is one additional way that the first beast, the ten-horned beast does not regard the desire of women as Daniel 11: 37 mentions (with the harlot church symbolized by a woman in Revelation 17) and exalts himself above all that is called god.

This destruction of the harlot also suggests that the man of sin, the son of perdition in 2 Thessalonians 2, is not the false prophet, but the ten-horned beast, and he and his supporters have the power and are taking actions on his behalf.

However, since the false prophet is still alive at this stage (Revelation 19:20), it appears that he either is a captive of the ten-horned beast or that he also betrays his church. But I strongly suspect the latter (as the second beast clearly promotes the worship of the first beast per Revelation 13:12)--he is complicit in the betrayal of the Church of Rome--which is another reason that I teach that the false prophet is a type of anti-pope.

### **Signs Will Accompany the Beast**

One major difficulties for many to see “the man of sin/lawlessness” as the King of the North (First Beast) instead of the False Prophet, is because they seem to not connect the “lying wonders and SIGNS” to him as they clearly can to the “false prophet” in Revelation 13:13.

BUT ... Revelation 16: 13-14 shows an actual connection:

13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 14 For they are spirits of demons, PERFORMING SIGNS, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

Again notice 2 Thessalonians 2:9:

9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, SIGNS, and lying wonders,

So now we have not only 2 Thessalonians 2:9 showing signs will accompany the ‘man of sin,’ but also Revelation 16:13-14 clearly showing that the BEAST literally performs some SIGNS as well.

### **The Man of Sin is Also Called the Son of Perdition**

In 2 Thessalonians 2:3 the man of sin is also called the son of perdition.

Perhaps it should be noted that the only times the term “perdition” (Strong’s #684) are mentioned in the Book of Revelation are in the following passages:

7 But the angel said to me, “Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. 8 The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. (Revelation 17:7-8)

11 The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition. (Revelation 17:11)

While the above is not absolute proof that the ten-horned beast is the son of perdition, it certainly seems to be supportive of that concept. Those verses in Revelation 17 specifically tie the Beast of the sea with perdition.

Now the Bible also teaches that Judas Iscariot was an earlier ‘son of perdition’:

2 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. (John 17:12)

1 When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. 2 And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. (John 18:1-2)

While Judas probably for a while thought he was a follower of Jesus, he also was deceptive and betrayed him.

Similarly, the King of the North, the Assyrian in Isaiah 10, will not think he means to destroy, but it is in his heart to do so:

5 "Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger  
And the staff in whose hand is My indignation.  
6 I will send him against an ungodly nation,  
And against the people of My wrath  
I will give him charge,  
To seize the spoil, to take the prey,  
And to tread them down like the mire of the streets.  
7 Yet he does not mean so,  
Nor does his heart think so;  
But it is in his heart to destroy,  
And cut off not a few nations.  
8 For he says,  
'Are not my princes altogether kings?  
9 Is not Calno like Carchemish?  
Is not Hamath like Arpad?  
Is not Samaria like Damascus?  
10 As my hand has found the kingdoms of the idols,  
Whose carved images excelled those of Jerusalem and Samaria,  
11 As I have done to Samaria and her idols,  
Shall I not do also to Jerusalem and her idols?'" (Isaiah 10:5-11)

Furthermore, the Bible shows that Judas used deceptive intrigue for thievery:

4 But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, 5 "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" 6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it. (John 12:4-6)

The Bible also tells that the King of the North will use deceptive intrigue to gain power:

21 And in his place shall arise a vile person, to whom they will not give the honor of royalty; but he shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue. (Daniel 11:21)

34 Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by intrigue. (Daniel 11:34)

23 "And in the latter time of their kingdom, When the transgressors have reached their fullness, A king shall arise, Having fierce features, Who understands sinister schemes...25 "Through his cunning He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; (Daniel 8:23,25)

The Bible shows that both Judas, 'the son of perdition' that betrayed Jesus, and the King of the North, the 'son of perdition' who will betray basically the world both used deceptive tactics. The Bible shows that both attempt to prosper through deceitful words.

The end time 'son of perdition' is the ten-horned Beast of Revelation 13 and the final King of the North of Daniel 11.

### **The End Time Philadelphia Remnant Must Not Misidentify the Man of Sin**

The understanding of the identity of the man of sin in 2 Thessalonians 2 is not merely an academic matter of doctrine as some believe it is. Actually, if certain non-biblical 'prophecies' are correct, the Philadelphia remnant of the Church of God must not misidentify the 'man of sin' as most other COG groups seem want to do.

Notice again something from 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12

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 2:9-12)

There are Roman and Eastern Orthodox Catholic 'private prophecies' that say their leader, often referred to as the "Great Monarch" will come with signs and be confirmed by wonders.

Notice one from the Eastern Orthodox:

*Anonymou Paraphrasis* (10th century): The one true King...is destined to become manifest [be revealed]...by means...of signs... The King will hear the voice and instructions by an Angel appearing to him...he has foresight and is cognizant of the text of the prophecies...the name of the King is hidden [concealed] among the nations...And the particular manner of the king's manifestation to the public [to the world] will take place as follows: A star will appear [will become visible] for three days long and during the third hour of the night, on the eve of the feast day of the Mother of the Most High (it will become visible) in the Middle of the City. And this star is not one among the planets...And a herald speaking with a very loud voice in the course of the three days will summon and unveil the hoped for one...There will become visible in the sky a 'nebulous firmament of the sun'...under that image will be suspended a **cross**...And the invisible herald from Heaven with his thunderous voice will say to the people: Is this man agreeable to you? At that moment everybody will be taken by fear and terror...they will elevate him on a high spot and will proclaim him (their) hereditary Monarch (Tzima Otto, H. The Great Monarch and WWII in Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Scriptural Prophecies. Verenika Press, Rock City (SC), 2000, pp. 30, 31, 32, 50-51,52,53).

The display of a cross associated with the Great Monarch (called the 'one true King' above), if it happens, will deceive people into following the Beast--the Bible warns that all the world will worship this Beast (Revelation 13:4,8) and most have not considered that a cross might be used by Satan.

A Catholic 'brother' claimed to learn the following from 'Mary':

Before the great tribulation, there is going to be a sign. **We will see in the sky one great red cross** on a day of blue sky without clouds...This cross will be seen by everyone: Christians, pagans, atheists, etc., as well as all the prepared ones... who will be guided by God in the way of Christ. They will receive grace to interpret the significance of the cross. (Flynn T, Flynn M. The Thunder of Justice. MaxKol Communications, Inc. Sterling (VA), 1993, p. 349)

So, the above coming supposedly through a Marian apparition says that people will be led to understand something about a cross in the sky. But as the Bible does not foretell such an event as a good thing, this, presuming it happens, should be understood as coming from Satan. Crosses were not symbols for early Christians. Crosses became widely accepted by many Greco-Romans claiming Christianity after the Roman Emperor Constantine and his mother Helena promoted them in the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

Notice that according to one of those 'prophecies' people will implore the 'immaculate heart of Mary' (Marian matters is in the article [Mary, the Mother of Jesus and the Apparitions](#)) and the 'King' (the biblical [King of the North](#)) is to rise up. 'Mary' and the 'Great Monarch' will be credited for bringing in 'peace.' The Bible also warns:

3 For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. (1 Thessalonians 5:3)

People will be deceived by claims, signs, and lying wonders, and some may well appear in the sky.

Because the [Continuing Church of God](#) correctly knows the identity of the man of sin, it will be easier for us to explain to those who are willing to listen that if a 'cross' is a sign that identifies the Great Monarch that this is not referring to a man that God chose, but instead to one that Satan chose (see also the article at [www.cogwriter.com](#) titled [Satan's Plan](#)).

### **Believe What the Bible Teaches**

Those who do not know who the 'man of sin' is will not realize that certain end time prophecies are being fulfilled when they are. Because they will not recognize him, they will not be able to properly warn their people nor the world what is happening. Those who do not know the identity of the man of sin are most likely not going to be protected from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world.

Jesus only promised to protect the true Philadelphians from that (Revelation 3:7-10) and not those who simply call themselves that (cf. Revelation 3:9). Most in the various COG groups do not know the proper identity of the man of sin. Since most Christians in the end are not truly part of the Philadelphia remnant of the Church of God, they will not be protected--but end up being subject to Satan's wrath per Revelation 12:17.

Most are relying on improper tradition as opposed to what the Bible teaches.

Jesus condemned religious leaders who relied on tradition over the word of God:

8 For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men... 9...All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition. (Mark 7:8-9)

So, in summary, what does the word of God teach on the identity of the man of sin? The New Testament teaches that the man of sin "exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped" (2 Thessalonians 2:4).



The Old Testament teaches that the King of the North “shall exalt and magnify himself above every god” (Daniel 11:36).

The New Testament teaches that “All who dwell on the earth will worship” (Revelation 13:8) the first Beast, the ten-horned beast (Revelation 13:1).

This worship is not directed towards the false prophet. And the Bible teaches that the false prophet, the second beast of Revelation 13 “causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast” (Revelation 13:12).

Read it for yourself in your own Bible.

Even though people will likely worship both beasts, the descriptions in the Bible that describe the ten-horned beast/King of the North are much closer to the man of sin discussed in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 than any about descriptions about the false prophet.

Those who truly understand prophecy and who prayerfully study the word of God for doctrine should realize this.

## The Man of Sin and the Ten Commandments



*Version of the Ten Commandments in Hebrew*

By Bob Thiel

Jesus disciples asked Him what to expect for the end times (Matthew 24:3). Here is some of what Jesus said to expect:

12 And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. 13 But he who endures to the end shall be saved. (Matthew 24:12-13)

Lawless is to abound and less love. Less reverence for God's commandments. Yet, the faithful that endure to the end will be saved.

Notice what sin is:

4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. (1 John 3:4, KJV)

4 Whosoever committeth sin committeth also iniquity; and sin is iniquity. (1 John 3:4, DRB)

The Apostle Paul wrote:

3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposes and exalts himself

above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? 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. (2 Thessalonians 2:3-7)

The man of sin will promote sin. He is involved with the 'mystery of lawlessness' also called the 'mystery of iniquity' because he will feign being religious and moral. People who have not accepted the true faith, will follow him.

The Bible provides support that this man of sin Beast power will violate all ten of the commandments.

Let's look at each of the Ten Commandments.

For the first commandment, notice the following about the man of sin, called "the king" below:

36 "Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done. 37 He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all. (Daniel 11:36-37)

The king above is the King of the North, who is called the Beast "of the sea" in Revelation 13:1 and the "first beast" in Revelation 13:12.

The Antichrist is the second "beast," and is the beast "of the earth" (Revelation 13:11). The final Antichrist will be supporting the first Beast and will try to force people against keeping the first commandment:

<sup>12</sup> And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. (Revelation 13:12)

As far as the second commandment goes, notice the following the Beast will do:

<sup>38</sup> But in their place he shall honor a god of fortresses; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things. (Daniel 11:38)

The Antichrist will try to force people against keeping the second commandment:

<sup>14</sup> And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. <sup>15</sup> He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. (Revelation 13:14-15)

Idolatry is definitely a mark of the beast (though the Beast power may use symbols, like crosses, that many will consider acceptable).

As far as the third commandment goes, notice the following:

<sup>25</sup> He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, (Daniel 7:25)

<sup>36</sup> “Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, (Daniel 11:36)

<sup>5</sup> And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. <sup>6</sup> Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. (Revelation 13:5-6)

As far as the fourth commandment goes, notice the following about the Beast and the Antichrist:

<sup>25</sup> He ... shall intend to change times and law. (Daniel 7:25)

<sup>16</sup> He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, <sup>17</sup> and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. (Revelation 13:16-17)

<sup>11</sup> ... they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name. (Revelation 14:11)

Perhaps the Beast will modify the calendar and change the days of the week somehow. Many have felt that Sunday-keeping was the ‘mark of the beast.’

The ‘mark of the beast’ involves commandment breaking.

As far as the fifth commandment goes, notice the following:

<sup>37</sup> He shall regard neither the God of his fathers (Daniel 11:37).

This implies dishonoring his parents, though that is not explicit. Furthermore, the beast will betray his harlot spiritual mother—and not be repentant:

<sup>16</sup> And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. <sup>17</sup> For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. <sup>18</sup> And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth. (Revelation 17:16-18)

As far as the sixth commandment goes, the beast will kill as a military leader:

<sup>4</sup> So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?” (Revelation 13:4)

The Beast will also cause others to be killed:

<sup>15</sup> ... the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. (Revelation 13:15)

<sup>32</sup> Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits. <sup>33</sup> And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet for many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering. (Daniel 11:32-33)

As far as the seventh commandment goes, the beast will be among those that commit fornication with Mystery Babylon the Great:

<sup>1</sup> ... "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, <sup>2</sup> with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication."

<sup>3</sup> So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. <sup>4</sup> The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. <sup>5</sup> And on her forehead a name was written:

MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. (Revelation 17:1-5)

The Beast will participate in and promote spiritual adultery (cf. James 4:4; Ezekiel 23:37).

As far as the eighth commandment goes, the beast will takeover other countries and take what they have:

<sup>39</sup> Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which he shall acknowledge, and advance its glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain.

<sup>40</sup> "At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through. ... <sup>43</sup> He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels. (Daniel 11:39-40, 43)

The Beast will take land and precious items.

As far as the ninth commandment goes, the beast will cause deceit to prosper:

<sup>25</sup> "Through his cunning He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; (Daniel 8:25)

<sup>23</sup> And after the league is made with him he shall act deceitfully, for he shall come up and become strong with a small number of people. (Daniel 11:23)

People who do not have proper “love of the truth” will believe the lie (2 Thessalonians 2:12). A lie encouraged by ‘miracles’ (2 Thessalonians 2:8-11; Revelation 13:11-15), economic blackmail (Revelation 13:16-18), and persecution (Daniel 11:31-35; Revelation 13:7).

As far as the tenth commandment goes, notice the following:

<sup>25</sup> ... He shall even rise against the Prince of princes; But he shall be broken without human means. (Daniel 8:25)

<sup>24</sup> He shall enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province; and he shall do what his fathers have not done, nor his forefathers: he shall disperse among them the plunder, spoil, and riches; and he shall devise his plans against the strongholds, but only for a time. (Daniel 11:24)

The Beast is covetous of power and possessions and will devise plans to take what is not his. He even wants God’s power.

The Beast will violate all of God’s Ten Commandments and expect his followers to do so as well.

Scripture refers to the violation of each of the Ten Commandments as sin. e.g.: 1<sup>st</sup> 1 Samuel 15:24-25 ; 2<sup>nd</sup> Exodus 32:22-30; 3<sup>rd</sup> Job 2:9-10 (cf. Psalm 39:1); 4<sup>th</sup> Nehemiah 9:14, 28-29; 5<sup>th</sup> Luke 15:18 (NIV; cf. 1 Samuel 24:11); 6<sup>th</sup> Genesis 4:7; 7<sup>th</sup> Genesis 39:9; 8<sup>th</sup> Matthew 5:30 (cf. Genesis 31:30,36); 9<sup>th</sup> Deuteronomy 23:21; 10<sup>th</sup> Romans 7:17.

Consider also that the Bible calls this commandment breaker “the man of sin ... the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped” (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4).

### **Perilous Times**

The Apostle Paul was inspired to write the following related to the end times:

<sup>1</sup> But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: <sup>2</sup> For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, <sup>3</sup> unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, <sup>4</sup> traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, <sup>5</sup> having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! <sup>6</sup> For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, <sup>7</sup> always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. (2 Timothy 3:1-7)

While the above includes many, including many politicians, consider how this describes the Beast.

- Lovers of themselves: The Beast will do this (Daniel 11:36). This is in contrast to loving God and neighbor, hence a violation of all the Ten Commandments.
- Lovers of Money: The Beast will steal the “the treasures of gold and silver, and over ... precious things of Egypt” (Daniel 11:43) and more.
- Boasters: The Beast will boast in his arrogance (cf. Daniel 7:25; James 4:16) in violation of the ninth commandment.
- Proud: This violation on the ninth commandment will be a trademark of the Beast (Daniel 11:36)

- Blasphemers: The Bible states that the Beast “shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods” (Daniel 11:36; Revelation 13:6) in violation of the third commandment.
- Disobedient to Parents: This is implied for the Beast in Daniel 11:37.
- Unthankful: The Beast will not be thankful to the true God (cf. Daniel 11:36).
- Unholy: The law and commandments are holy (Romans 7:12), but the Beast will exalt those that forsake the holy covenant (Daniel 11:30).
- Unloving: The Beast is an idolatrous, murderous, and persecutor (Revelation 13) who lacks even certain natural affection (Daniel 11:37).
- Unforgiving: The Bible does not suggest that the Beast will be forgiving (cf. Daniel 11:40; Revelation 13:10).
- Slanderers: The Beast will blaspheme, make outrageous statements of slander (cf. Revelation 13:5-6; 2 Thessalonians 2:10), and lie (cf. Daniel 11:27) in violation of the third and ninth commandments.
- Without Self-Control: The Beast will get enraged (Daniel 11:30), plus exalt himself excessively (Daniel 11:36-37).
- Brutal: The Beast will persecute the saints (Daniel 7:25; Revelation 13:7).
- Despisers of Those that are Good: The Beast will conspire against the people of the holy covenant (Daniel 11:30-32).
- Traitors: The Beast will encourage treachery (Daniel 11:30-32) in violation of the ninth and tenth commandments.
- Headstrong: The Beast will be headstrong (cf. Daniel 11:29-43).
- Haughty: The Beast will be haughty (Daniel 11:36-37; Revelation 13:5-8).
- Lovers of Pleasures more than Lovers of God: The Beast loves himself and what he wants more than God (Daniel 11:36-37) in violation of the first commandment.
- Having a Form of Godliness: The Beast will claim religion (cf. Daniel 11:38) and work with the false prophet (Revelation 16:13-14). But it will be a false idolatrous one (cf. Revelation 13:14-15).
- Denying God’s Power: The Beast will deny the true God and be lawless (2 Thessalonians 2:8-10).
- Making Captive the Gullible Through their Lusts: The Beast will employ ‘miracles’ (2 Thessalonians 2:8-11; Revelation 13:11-15), economic blackmail (Revelation 13:16-18), “pleasure in unrighteousness’ (2 Thessalonians 2:12), and persecution (Daniel 11:31-35; Revelation 13:7) to get people to worship him and receive his mark. All of God’s commandments are righteousness (Psalm 119:172).
- Never Coming to the Knowledge of the Truth: The Beast will claim various lies as truth, and sadly most will go along with it as they have not received the love of the truth to keep the commandments (2 Thessalonians 2:7-12).

Paul is clearly warning against people in the end who do not show regard towards God’s commandments. And that includes the commandment breaking “man of sin.”



# The Feast of Trumpets



By Bob Thiel

Most of the Greco-Roman churches do not keep the biblical holy days that generally occur in the Fall. Yet, these Holy Days portray many pivotal events in God's plan.

The Feast of Trumpets not only pictures the coming of Christ to resurrect the first fruits from the dead, it also pictures the terrible time of devastation just ahead and the intervention of Jesus Christ to save the living from total annihilation and to establish the Kingdom of God on earth.

Here is something about it from the Hebrew scriptures:

23 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 24 "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a sabbath-rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. 25 You shall do no customary work on it (Leviticus 23:23-25).

Let's understand how this festival fits into God's great master plan.

Consider that there is a major time gap between the Day of Pentecost and the Feast of Trumpets. Since the New Testament church began on Pentecost and basically ends when Jesus returns at the last trumpet (1 Corinthians 15:51-57), in a sense the period of time between Pentecost and the Feast of Trumpets can be considered as representing the church age—the age we are in right now!

The fourth Holy Day, the Feast of Trumpets, is observed in "the seventh month, on the first *day* of the month" (Leviticus 23:23-25).

The number seven in God's plan signifies completion and perfection. The seventh month of God's calendar (occurs in September and/or October) contains the final four festivals, picturing the completion of God's great master plan for us. The festival that falls on the first day of this month marks the beginning of the final events in God's plan.

As Leviticus stated, it is another annual Sabbath of rest from one's regular work, and it was to be a memorial of blowing of trumpets. It is also a time to learn God's ways (Nehemiah 8:2-3; cf. Ezra 3:1-7). Much of what happened to the children of Israel was written for our "examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come" (1 Corinthians 10:11). It is from the blowing of trumpets that the Feast of Trumpets draws its name.

There is a great deal of symbolic meaning tied in with the blowing of these trumpets, especially with regard to the end times in which we're living. It should be noted that the modern Jewish name for this date, Rosh Hashanah, is not biblical nor even original for the Jews. It was something that they adopted centuries after God gave it to them and after the Old Testament was written (Kramer, Amy J. Rosh Hashana Origins. Copyright © 1998-1999 Everything Jewish, Inc.).

The Bible teaches that Trumpets were blown to announce God's feasts, as well as to call people to assemble (Numbers 10:1-3, 10).

### **Book of Life**

Interestingly, Jewish scholars have tied the Feast of Trumpets in with the 'Book of Life' (Peltz M, Rabbi. What is in a Rosh Hashanah greeting? Haaretz, September 17, 2012). Why is that of interest?

Well, the Bible teaches that those who are listed in the 'Book of Life' (Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5) will be resurrected (Hebrews 12:22-23). When? At the seventh and last trumpet:

<sup>51</sup> Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed — <sup>52</sup> in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. <sup>53</sup> For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. (1 Corinthians 15:51-53)

The Book of Revelation clearly teaches that seven trumpets will be blown (8:2), punishment comes upon those who are not protected by God (9:4), and then God's kingdom and judgment will come (11:15-18). Finally, it teaches that those whose names are not written in the Book of Life will experience the second death (Revelation 20:14-15).

### **Trumpet Blasts**

Consider that the Bible shows that during Israel's history, which was heavily punctuated with conflicts and rebellion, trumpets continued to be used as warning devices, to call to arms or as preludes to important messages — always to mark an event of tremendous import to the whole nation.

God also used the prophets, among them Isaiah, Ezekiel, Hosea and Joel, to warn Israel about punishments He would bring upon them for their constant rebellion against His laws. These prophets were to use their voices like trumpets to blare their warnings to God's people.

<sup>1</sup> Cry aloud, spare not; Lift up your voice like a trumpet; Tell My people their transgression, And the house of Jacob their sins. (Isaiah 58:1)

We in the *Continuing* Church of God are working to do that today. We boldly tell of the sins of society and how world events are aligning with properly understood prophecy--which we also strive to explain.

But there will also be literal trumpet blasts coming in the future as the Book of Revelation teaches (Revelation 8:1-13, 9:1-18). But most will not heed those warnings.

Many are blown in the Book of Revelation, and a lot were to be blown on the Feast of Trumpets (Leviticus 23:24)--hopefully many can see the connection.

But the most important trumpet, in a sense, could be the last, the seventh one. Here is what Revelation teaches about that:

<sup>15</sup> Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" <sup>16</sup> And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, <sup>17</sup> saying: "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. <sup>18</sup> The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth." <sup>19</sup> Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail. (Revelation 11:15-19)

The Feast of Trumpets pictures the future blowing of trumpets and the reality that Jesus will come and establish the Kingdom of God on the earth. The good news of coming Kingdom of God is a big part of what Jesus wants His servants to proclaim now (Matthew 24:14; 28:19-20), and then the end will come (Matthew 24:14). The Feast of Trumpets points to Christ's victory over this world.

Greco-Roman historians, such as Jerome and Epiphanius (*Catholica Omnia Tabulinum De Ecclesiae Patribus Doctoribusque Materia Migne JP Argumentum Patrologia Latina Volumen MPL025 Ab Columna ad Culumnam* 1415 - 1542A, pp. 922, 930), recorded that the 'Nazarene Christians' continued to keep the Fall Holy Days into the fourth and fifth centuries. They were also kept by the faithful Christians in Jerusalem who claimed the original Christian building in Jerusalem into the fourth century until they were stopped by Imperial authorities (see Pixner B. Church of the Apostles Found on Mt. Zion. *Biblical Archaeology Review*, May/June 1990: 16-35,60).

The anti-Semite John Chrysostom specifically attempted to stop people from keeping the Feast of Trumpets in the late fourth century (John Chrysostom. Homily I Against the Jews I:5;VI:5;VII:2. Preached at Antioch, Syria in the Fall of 387 AD. *Medieval Sourcebook*: Saint John Chrysostom (c.347-407).

However, those trying to be faithful continued to do so throughout history.

The *Continuing* Church of God does so now.

# Is God Calling You?



*1896 telephone from Sweden*

By Alfred E. Carrozzo (*originally published in Tomorrow's World magazine, May 1971; with some scriptural expansion edits since by Bob Thiel*)

At this very minute God IS calling a people out of this sin-sick and dying world. It is a wonderful calling for a fantastic purpose. It is so awe-inspiring that some have difficulty believing it. Perhaps YOU are being called right now. You need to know, lest you ignore a direct call from the great God of all the universe. Read this article to find out whether God is calling YOU!!

THE COMMON idea of today's Christian world is that a battle is taking place between God and Satan. The idea teaches that God is trying to get everyone saved, and Satan is trying to get everyone lost. If that be true, then every honest person will have to admit GOD IS LOSING!

The vast majority of all people on earth today do not even profess Christianity. Yet, your Bible says there is no other name under heaven through which we can be saved (Acts 4:12 <sup>12</sup> Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."). Many millions of people have lived and died without ever hearing the name of Jesus Christ. What about those people? What about — A little babies that live only a few hours? Has God caused them to be doomed? What about the millions living under atheistic Communism? Are they lost forever?

ABSOLUTELY NOT! EVERYONE will have a chance!

## **Specific Calling Necessary**

The shocking fact is, God is not trying to get everyone saved now! It is a lack of understanding of God's plan that causes the evangelists to shout: "Give your heart to the Lord before it's too late!" The inspired Word of God reveals that NO ONE can come to Jesus Christ UNLESS THE FATHER SPECIFICALLY CALLS HIM (John 6:44 <sup>44</sup> No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.).

In other words, this IS NOT THE ONLY DAY OF SALVATION!! This is an absolute fact of your Bible.

All those who are not now called, or given a chance for salvation, will come up in the second resurrection. They will come up as physical human beings and be given their one and only chance for salvation. This resurrection takes place one thousand years later, after what Bible students call "the millennium."

Most professing Christians are in ignorance of this basic truth. Why such ignorance in an enlightened age? Why can't a people who bear the name "Christian" understand the simple statements of the One whom they claim to follow? It was Jesus Christ who said to His disciples: "... it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given" (Matthew 13:11). He

explained to His intimate followers that they had been called. He said: "... I chose you out of the world" (John 15:19).

The Bible is filled with positive PROOF that all Christians must receive a divine call from God.

### **Understanding Clouded**

Astounding as it may seem, God has deliberately clouded the meaning of His message so the vast majority cannot understand. God explains in Isaiah 28:10-13:

"For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept, Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little." ... That they might go and fall backward, and be broken And snared and caught."

God purposely wrote His Word so that it could be misunderstood. He intended that only those whom He is calling and choosing will understand.

Do you understand God's Word? Is God calling you? How can you know?

### **How God Calls and Chooses**

Many misunderstand how God calls. Some feel God calls by means of an audible voice. Others feel it is done by drastic intervention, such as accidents or fires. Still others desire a "good feeling all over" to be assured of a calling.

What is the truth? How does God call? Have you been called and chosen of God? The answer is really very easy to understand. Simply stated, God calls by His Gospel and through the Power of His Holy Spirit.

The Gospel is the good news of the coming government of God and is recorded in the Bible — God's Word to mankind. Through the power of His Holy Spirit, God opens the minds of those He is calling so they can understand the plain truths of His Gospel message. God's Spirit begins to work in a special way with those whom He is calling.

### **What God's Spirit Will Do**

How is the Spirit of God manifested in those whom He is calling? How does the Spirit of God work upon and through the human mind?

Initially, the Spirit of God will lead the one being called to believe He exists! In this age of skepticism and doubt, it is chic to deny the existence of God. But if God's Spirit is working with you, it will be impossible for you to deny God's existence. It is a sign that God may be calling you!

Also, God's Spirit will guide you to prove and profoundly believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God — God's Instruction Book to mankind. God's Spirit will lead you to know, "<sup>16</sup> All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." (2 Timothy 3:16.)

How can anyone really believe the Bible if he feels portions are uninspired? Yet, this is exactly what many "Christians," so called, believe today! Some regard the Old Testament purely as historical literature. Some go so far as to teach that the book of Revelation is the writing of a man obsessed with hallucinations.

Others say only the epistles of Paul should be accepted. WHAT NONSENSE!

All this doctrinal confusion is a direct result of choosing certain portions of the Bible to believe — refusing to accept all Scripture as given by inspiration of God.

We either believe ALL the Bible, or none of it. It's as simple as that. JESUS Christ said:

"... the Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35).

He said the Scriptures make a complete chain — they do not contradict one another. Yet, books have been written to expose assumed Bible contradictions. But Jesus said Scripture does not contradict itself.

Every supposed contradiction is the result of either a mistranslation or a misinterpretation. Unless you approach the Scriptures with this truth, you cannot hope to grasp the full meaning of God's Word. You will fool yourself into believing the Bible is full of contradictions and cannot be depended upon.

If you believe the Bible is God's Word — that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God — and that "the scripture cannot be broken," God may be calling you!

Another way God's Spirit guides those whom God is calling is to inspire them to take God at His word — believe He says what He means and means what He says.

Those whom God is calling through His Holy Spirit will believe the simple statements recorded in the Bible without coloring them with a myriad of preconceived ideas.

If God is calling you, His Spirit will lead you to believe Christ did not come to do away with God's Law but to fulfill and perform it (Matthew 5:17 <sup>17</sup> "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.). You will believe the Kingdom of Heaven is not in heaven, but here on earth. You will believe the plain statement that the meek shall inherit the earth — not heaven (Matthew 5:3, <sup>5</sup> *Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>5</sup> Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth.*).

If God's Spirit is working with you and calling you, you will reject the pagan idea of an immortal soul. You will believe the statement in Ezekiel 18:4, 20, (<sup>4</sup> "Behold, all souls are Mine; The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son is Mine; The soul who sins shall die. <sup>20</sup> The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.) that the soul is not immortal but can die!

You will begin to understand that virtually everything you have been taught about the Bible is probably the antithesis of the actual truth. Space will permit only the above few examples, but there are many dozens and scores of misunderstandings about what God actually says which could be pointed out.

If the Spirit of God is leading you, it will direct you to understand the plain truths of His Word.

In addition, God's Spirit will show you that you should NEVER try to interpret the Bible: "... no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation" (2 Peter 1:20).

Many cannot understand Scripture because they have not learned the Bible interprets itself! Many supposed contradictions occur because men have not learned to let the Bible interpret itself. Through diligent and earnest study, we can understand perplexing verses only in the light of other scriptures.

For example, Revelation 12:3 (<sup>3</sup> And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads.) mentions a "great red dragon" with seven heads and ten horns. There have been many interpretations of this verse. Some say the dragon is the false prophet. Others say it is the beast. Still others claim the dragon is mysterious symbolism picturing Red Russia or some form of Communism. But none of these interpretations is right.

God doesn't tell us in verse three what the great red dragon is. Reading verse three alone we would have to conclude we just don't know. Or we would have to come up with an interpretation. Or we could LET THE BIBLE INTERPRET ITSELF!

If we choose to let the Bible interpret itself, all we need do to KNOW what the red dragon represents is to read verse nine. In verse nine God reveals that the dragon is "that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan."

If God is calling you, His Spirit will eventually lead you to believe every statement of the Bible, and you will let the Bible interpret itself! But this isn't all.

God's Spirit will lead those whom He is calling to LIVE BY EVERY WORD OF GOD! (Matthew 4:4. <sup>4</sup> But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'") To really understand the Bible, it is paramount to live by every word of God, not just some portions or pet doctrines. Most professing Christians accept some Bible truths, but for the most part, they walk in dismal error. How can they live by the Word of God when they don't even know what it says? It is an appalling fact that the majority of professing Christians can't even name the first four books of the New Testament — the four Gospel accounts — the Gospel which they must believe!

Candidly speaking, nearly ALL professing Christians are NOT WILLING to live by every word of God. Some deliberately reject all but a relatively small portion which has no bearing on their personal lives. God gives understanding only to those who are willing to live by all of His Word!

Another way God uses His Spirit to call His people is by convicting and convincing them of His way. If God is calling you, you will begin to fully understand the Bible for the first time. You will begin to read and study the Bible with the appetite of a starving giant. And you will come to see there is a way that seems right to a man but ends in death (Proverbs 14:12 <sup>12</sup> There is a way *that seems* right to a man, But its end *is* the way of death.).

Man's way is the grasping, greedy, selfish way of "getting." It is a "do unto others before they have a chance to do it unto you" philosophy. It is the way of lust, envy, strife, murder, jealousy, wrath, drunkenness, revelings and the like. It is the cause of all man's troubles, heartaches and sorrows. It is the reason for the wretched conditions we see on earth today.

If God is calling you, His Spirit will convince you to begin to candidly, honestly, wholeheartedly admit you have been going man's way, the way that leads to death. You will begin to dedicate your whole life to God and His way. You will say, and mean it, "Thy will be done." You will repent!

Through Bible study and close contact with God, you will begin to see the whole world really is on' the brink of cosmocide because of man's way. You will come to know assuredly man is reaching the end of his rope. Man desperately needs help. And God is the only one who really has the answers to all this world's problems.

The answer to man's problems is simply to follow God's way of love — the way of outgoing concern — the way of giving, sharing, helping — the way of doing unto others as you would have them do unto you. It is the way to real happiness, joy, peace, contentment — the way of gentleness, goodness, meekness and self-control. It is based on the principle Christ gave to His disciples that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

If God is calling, convicting and convincing you of His way, you will begin to have inner peace. You will begin to fully trust God to solve the world's problems through His way of love. You will know and realize God truly has the answers. You will rejoice in the fact that God is giving the answers to those He is calling.

And then you will begin to comprehend that God is calling some now for a specific purpose. You will realize it is a specific calling for a specific Work. It is a special commission. It is a commission to preach the true Gospel of the Kingdom of God to all the world as a witness before the end of this age. It is a commission to teach all nations to believe everything Jesus Christ has commanded His true followers. It is a commission and a Work designed to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers to keep mankind from destroying himself! (Matthew 24:14, 21, 22 <sup>14</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. <sup>22</sup> And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be



saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened. and Malachi 4:6. <sup>6</sup> And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.")

If God is calling you, you will begin to wholeheartedly have a part in doing His Work. You will realize this tremendous knowledge of God's way is desperately needed by all the world. You will come to fully understand and know God's own physical people are actually being destroyed for a lack of this knowledge (Hosea 4:6 <sup>6</sup> My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.). You will see the urgent need to have a part in the very Work that is disseminating this vital knowledge — this Gospel message of God's way to all the world. You will zealously take part in the Work that is teaching all nations the way of peace, happiness and joy brimful and running over.

You will have the desire to GIVE, to share with and to help this wretched world. You will put your whole heart into God's Work. You will completely dedicate yourself to having a part in warning the world of the dramatic events to occur just before the close of this age. Soon you will realize nothing else matters.

This world is lost in a hopeless morass of confusion, wretchedness and depravity. Any thinking person will admit it can't go on much longer. You can have a part in telling the world today about the wonderful World Tomorrow. If God is calling you, you can rejoice in the fact that you can help spread the knowledge to all the world that God Himself is going to intervene in the affairs of mankind and save the world. You will be thrilled to have a part in telling the world there is a better tomorrow — that God does care — that God will act.

And when you think how upside down marriages can be put right-side up, how you can have a part in turning the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, to bridge the generation gap, cement the family unit, you will rejoice.

If you have a part in God's Work, you will take great satisfaction in the knowledge that you are helping teach the world how to have happy homes, happy children, happy marriages and everything good in a full and abundant, happy life. You will even be willing to sacrifice to have a part in helping this world understand God's way.

If God is calling you, please understand it is a fantastic, almost overwhelming calling to help save humanity by sacrificing to give this world what it needs most — God's way, that leads to life.

### **Is God Calling You?**

If you, through the {CCOG sermons, BibleNewsProphecy videos, booklets,} and the pages of this magazine, are beginning to believe the Bible means exactly what it says — if the Gospel message is perceived by you to be God's personal message to you — if you see your way is wrong — if you desire to give, share and help this world — then YOU ARE BEING CALLED OF GOD!

You are being called right now through the pages of this magazine. Are you going to heed that call? Are you going to respond to God's Holy Spirit and accept the truths you have been receiving?

Are you willing to live by every word of God — believe the Gospel and respond to the call from Almighty God to be among the firstfruits in His Kingdom?

Remember, those whom God is calling will have a part in saving this chaotic world. They will have a part in preaching this final warning message to this dying world before the end of this age. They will have a part in picturing the wonderful World Tomorrow. They will have a part in turning "The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers" (Malachi 4:5-6).

And finally, they will have a part in the Kingdom of God as kings and priests under Jesus Christ who will be here on this earth ruling all nations as King of kings and Lord of lords.

It is a fantastic calling you now have. No wonder Paul was inspired to write in Hebrews 2:1-3: “Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. <sup>2</sup> For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, <sup>3</sup> how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation.”

The call is out! It is a wonderful calling! You have heard, and read, and seen. The next move is yours!

*Since the old Worldwide Church of God has been replaced as the representative organization of the Philadelphia portion of the Church of God, you would want to contact the Continuing Church of God. Congregations and contact information can be found at [www.ccog.org](http://www.ccog.org)*

*Note: If one or more of your human parents are part of the true Christian church, you are already sanctified (1 Corinthians 7:14) and are being called if you will accept it (Matthew 22:14; Hebrews 4:7).*

# STUDY THE BIBLE COURSE

## Lesson 12b: Proof of Biblical History



**Bob Thiel, Editor-in-Chief**

**Published 2017 by the *Continuing Church of God***

This course is highly based upon the personal correspondence course developed in 1954 under the direction of the late C. Paul Meredith in the old Radio Church of God. Although much of the original writing has been retained, it has been updated for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and contains 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 King James Version (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.

**Note: This particular lesson was so long in the original, it was needful to break it into four pieces as it was longer than two regular-sized editions of this magazine. The next part, 12c, is planned for the next edition of this magazine.**

### **PROOF the Bible Patriarchs REALLY LIVED**

Did Abraham and his ancestors REALLY live or are their lives fables?

What PROOF have we that Abraham's relatives – Terah and Nahor, Haran, Serug, Reu, and Peleg – were actually HISTORICAL FIGURES? YOU will find them named in Genesis 11.

Do you know what is often taught today? Here are two quotations that will amaze you if you have understanding:

“The patriarchs of the sagas in GENESIS are LEGENDARY heroes artificially connected with Israel.” And again: “Through Moses, Jehovah (Hebrew: YAHWEH) became the god of Israel ... Jehovah was originally the god of a sacred mountain (Sinai or Horeb).” (From Langer’s *Encyclopedia of World History*.)

Today I think most archeologists would argue that there is no direct archeological *proof that Abraham*, for instance, ever lived. (Archeology of the Hebrew Bible. Nova, PBS, November 18, 2008)

Really?

So let us examine more proof.

Is God a superstition and the Bible a legend? – or is God the Creator and the Scriptural record historically true? One or the other of these ideas is TOTALLY UNTRUE!

Which is it?

1. First look in your BIBLE and see that for hundreds of years it has revealed that these people really existed. Read Genesis 11:-18-25, and particularly verse 25.

COMMENT: The PROOF has shocked thousands! Here are the facts reported many decades ago:

During the years 1934 to 1939, excavations were methodically conducted at ancient Mari on the southwestern bank of the Euphrates River near ancient Mesopotamia (present-day Iraq).

WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE THEY FOUND?

ANCIENT TOWNS AND CITIES IN MESOPOTAMIA WERE NAMED AFTER EVERY ONE OF THE PATRIARCHS!

Unearthed records of 3,000 years ago speak of the “city of Nahor” (named after the Old Testament patriarch Nahor) mentioned in Genesis 24:10. It was located near the city of Haran which still exists to this very day! Who said those men are legendary?

“Beside the definite location of the patriarchal cities of HARAN and NAHOR in northwestern Mesopotamia, hardly less clear indications of Hebrew residence in this region appears in the names of Abraham’s forefathers, which correspond to the names of towns near Haran: SERUG (Assyrian SARUGI), TERAH (TIL TURAKHI, ‘Mound of Terah,’ in Assyrian times) ... REU also corresponds to later names of towns in the Middle-Euphrates valley. PELEG, for example, recalled later Paliga on the Euphrates just above the mouth of the Habur.” (From Unger’s “Archeology and the Old Testament”)

The Elba tablets, which are about 4000 years old, mention Abraham as well as the terms Sodom and Gomorrah according to David Noel Freedman (see also his paper, “The Ebla Tablets and the Abraham Tradition, BYU, 1978).

The scoffers will still overlook these records and claim that the Bible is a book of legends. Their time of RECKONING IS around the corner and fast approaching! The Bible does not lie. But many so-called scientists cannot recognize the truth (1 Timothy 6:20), even when it is in front of them (cf. 2 Timothy 3:7).

## **Proof Joseph Really Was Pharaoh’s Right-hand Man!**

For decades doubters have laughed at the “romance” of Joseph. What PROOF IS there that Joseph was raised to be second in command in Egypt? Certainly if there were seven long years of terrible famine and Joseph was the only one who forewarned them of it – there ought to be a record somewhere!

1. Doesn’t your Bible clearly say Pharaoh placed Joseph over all Egypt? Genesis 41:41.

COMMENT: Is there such a HISTORICAL record? – or is the Bible a myth, a product of Jewish folklore?

THE ANSWER is found in the reign of Amenemhet III of Egypt's so-called Twelfth Dynasty. Amenemhet took great trouble to study the level of the Nile and carried out a great many irrigation works. He greatly enlarged the capacity of Lake Moeris in the Fayum. To the lake he CAUSED a new canal to be made. This canal is called the "BAHR YUSUF" by the Egyptians. The meaning of BAHY YUSUF IS "THE CANAL OF JOSEPH" – of course it is, for JOSEPH supervised the construction of it for this king! Seven years of terrible famine were soon to arrive!

Near Lake Moeris the King had a great "Labyrinth" built. It was an immense structure spreading over many acres. It served as general headquarters for the government and as a center of administration for the distribution of government provisions and storage for the 20% that was collected during the years of plenty (Genesis 41:34) to be used in the years of famine. Its existence and timing is consistent with the biblical account of Joseph's recommendation to store 1/5 of the produce during the years of plenty:

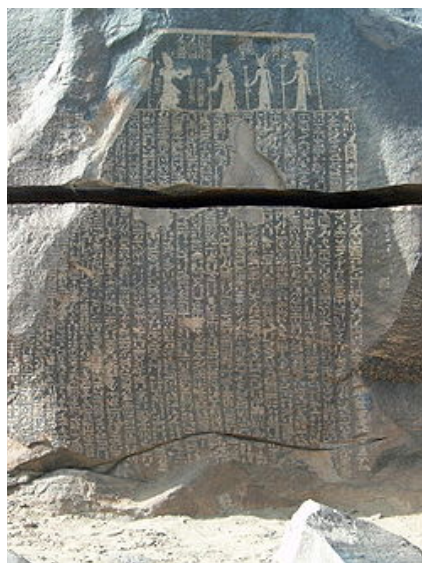
In the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, Herodotus wrote that the labyrinth was *"situated a little above the lake of Moeris and nearly opposite to that which is called the City of Crocodiles"* ('Histories', Book, II, 148).

The City of Crocodiles (Crocodilopolis) was an ancient city in the Heptanomis, on the western bank of the Nile, between the river and the Lake Moeris, southwest of Memphis. Just south of the site of Crocodilopolis, at the entrance to the depression of the Faiyum Oasis, sits Hawara, an archaeological site that is home to the pyramid of Amenemhat III, the last king of the 12th dynasty (c 1855-1808 BC). (Hollaway A. The Lost Labyrinth of Ancient Egypt – Part 3: Uncovering its Location. September 4, 2014)

But what about the record of a FAMINE for seven years?

"My heart is in great anxiety," said King Zoser of so-called Dynasty III, "for in my time the Nile has not overflowed for a period of SEVEN YEARS. There is scarcely any produce of the field; herbage fails; eatables are wanting. Every man robs his neighbor ... the children cry, the young people creep along ... the people of the courts are at their wits' end. The store-houses were built, but ... all that was in them has been consumed," he laments (from Barton's "Archaeology and the Bible", p. 305).

This information comes from what is called the Famine Stela. A stela/stela is an upright stone slab or column typically bearing a commemorative inscription or relief design.



*Famine Stela*

The late Dr. Hoeh's article *Who Built the Great Pyramid?* claims Amenemhet III (Upper Egypt) and king Djoser/Zoser (part of Lower Egypt) ruled concurrently during Joseph's time (Amenemhet III 1741-1692 BC & 7 years of famine 1727 to 1720 BC). While there is controversy associated with the date of this, it is of possible interest when you compare this with Genesis 41:29-32 and 47:13-27.

Genesis also preserves the story of Jacob's entrance into Goshen in Egypt, and of Israel growing into a nation of 2 ½ million men, women and children in a little over two centuries. Where is the RECORD that Israel actually lived in Egypt for this time? Doubters say there is no record – history says there is!

Yet, we quote from Weigall's "History of the Pharaohs", Vol. 2, pp. 129-130:

The base of a figure ... inscribed with the king's name [that is, with Amenemhet III's name] has been found at Tell el-Yehudiyeh, 'The Jew's Mount,' a place some 20 miles northeast of Cairo, on the direct route to the 'Land of Goshen,' the Wady Tumilat .... It seems to have been founded in the reign of Amenemhet III, and may have been from the start an Asiatic settlement, where, possibly, Joseph's RELATIONS took up their residence.

Of course it was! The Bible says so! (Some verses related to the Land of Goshen are in Genesis 45:9-10; 47:27.) It is just one more link in the thrilling tangible proofs of history – proofs that the Bible means what it says.

It should be stated that one reason that many cannot locate Joseph (or Moses for that matter) is that the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century B.C. date that is most often pointed to as the date of the Exodus by improper experts' is off by about 2 centuries as they think Ramesses II was the pharaoh then. The exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt actually occurred in the mid 15<sup>th</sup> century, around 1446 B.C.

According to certain readings of an inscription on the "Merneptah Stela," the ancient Israelites already occupied the land of Canaan during the 1213-1203 B.C. reign of Merneptah (Jürgen von Beckerath, *Chronologie des Pharaonischen Ägypten*, Mainz, (1997), pp.190). The "Merneptah Stele" was discovered in 1896. It tells of a battle, shows people dressed like Canaanites, and tells of Egypt's destroying seed of Israel. This seed would likely be grain as Egypt did not destroy all of Israel then.



*Merneptah Stela*

Anyway, the Merneptah Stele basically means that idea that the Exodus happened during the time of Ramses II impossible.

Why?



Ramesses II allegedly reigned until 1213 B.C. and the Bible shows that the children of Israel wandered for forty years in the wilderness (Numbers 14:34-35; 32:13) before settling in the land of Canaan. It would make no sense that a defeated Ramesses II could have reigned for at least 30 years (40 years, less the ten of Merneptah) after experiencing the plagues and loss of armies as described in the account in the Book of Exodus.

But errors from 'experts' compounded by other errors has prevented them from teaching the truth. The scripture, "always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Timothy 3:7) comes to mind.

## King David Leaves His Mark

What about King David?

Nearly all skeptics have doubted portions of the story of David's rise to fame under the Benjamite King Saul. What PROOF have we?

1. Does your Bible say that David gained an international reputation during the prominence of the tribe of Benjamin? 1 Samuel 18:7, 8 and 21:11.

COMMENT: Surely if David were so great a general, his reputation would have spread far and wide even to the Euphrates River which finally became the border of Israel. And if the tribe of Benjamin were PREDOMINANT among the Israelites in their struggle against the Philistines, it ought to be mentioned.

What is the historical evidence?

The late Dr. Herman Hoeh wrote that archaeological disregard of King David was wrong:

### **Saul and David in Archaeology**

But the strongest evidence against the modern interpretation of archaeology was discovered by the French at Mari on the Euphrates River. There it was discovered that during the lifetime of Hammurabi — who was mistakenly dated by historians in the time of Abraham — the Benjamites were in control of Palestine and men like David were famous! (See Werner Keller's *The Bible as History*, pages 49-52).

From the tablets found at Mari, we read these clear words: "The year in which Landulim went to Hen and laid hands upon the territory of the Benjamites," and "The year that ZimriLim killed the Davidum of the Benjamites."

Of course! Under King Saul, a Benjamite, the tribe of Benjamin was dominant. Gentile nations regarded all Palestine as the land of the Benjamites. And David was the greatest of all the generals of the Benjamites (1 Samuel 18:7; 21:11). David's fame spread so far and wide that the Gentiles called all the generals of Israel Davidum, or "Davids" — men like David — just as the world's "great" Roman Caesars gave their name to the Kaisers of Germany and the Czars of Russia.

How were the historians and archaeologists to interpret these astounding discoveries? Were they to date Hammurabi properly to the time of Saul and David? Not at all! Rather, they cleverly assumed that Benjamites were in Palestine long before Benjamin was born — that the name of David was famous for nearly a thousand years before David was born! They hoped thereby to keep their interpretations of the king lists and reject the Bible. Human reasoning was used to escape the AUTHORITY vested in the laws of the Bible! (Archaeology Proves the bible true! Plain Truth, September 1963, p.47)

Here is where the Benjamites are mentioned and their generals are called "DAVIDUM" or DAVIDS! King Saul was a Benjamite (1 Samuel 9:21) and had made David the charge of the leaders of his army (1 Samuel 18:5).



Just as the world's "great" Roman CAESARS gave their name to the KAISERS of Germany and the CZARS of Russia, so David's fame spread so far and wide that Gentiles called the officers and generals of Israel "Davids" – men like David! And Benjamin's fame spread so far that for a time that tribe gave its name to all of Israel as Ephraim and Judah later did.

How do the critics of the Bible get around this plain record of history in David's day? By saying that the Benjamites were in Palestine southwest of the Euphrates before Benjamin was even born – and 750 years before David lived there were leading generals who bore the title of "David."

BUT THEIR MISINTERPRETATION OF HISTORY WILL NOT STAND, for the RECORDS of those times contain statements that "Yahweh is God." God REVEALED Himself by the name "YAHWEH" or "The Eternal" or "Lord" at the time of the Exodus (Exodus 6:3). The Gentiles could have known of God's name only through contact with Israel, and at a time when Israel was expanding to the Euphrates River toward Mari! And when was that? – IN THE DAYS OF SAUL AND DAVID! (See 2 Samuel 8:3-10).

It should also be noted that the inscription "House of David" has been found on the Tel Dan Stele (9<sup>th</sup> century B.C.) and Mesha Stele (9<sup>th</sup> century B.C.) (Wood BW. The Tel Dan Stela and the Kings of Aram and Israel. Associates for Biblical Research, May 4, 2011).



*Tel Dan Stela*

This is conclusive proof that the Bible was correct and so-called 'experts' were wrong.

Often, scholars, in their human "wisdom," have reasoned around the clear, plain, simple evidence of history in order to destroy the authoritative record of the inspired Word of God!

## **Daniel Vindicated!**

Perhaps the most disputed book in the Bible is Daniel. Critics have placed its writing 400 years after the actual time of Daniel. Certain critics plainly declare it a forgery, masquerading under the name of Daniel (whose very existence they also question!).

You need to know what falsification the learned men of this world have attributed to the Bible. Says Driver, a DISBELIEVER, in his book "Modern Research as Illustrating the Bible":

"There was NO SIEGE of Babylon by Cyrus ... he ... entered it without striking a blow ... the account of Herodotus ... of the waters of the Euphrates having been diverted by Cyrus, and his troops then entering it while the inhabitants were feasting, is a romance; ... Belshazzar also was never king of Babylon ... Nor is there any room for 'Darius the Mede,' as king of Babylon."

This is the intellectual nonsense that some teach. The Bible tells the TRUTH about the fall of Babylon. Let's examine!

1. Does Daniel 5:24-30 say that the king of the Chaldeans – the Babylonians – would be slain and his kingdom taken? And wasn't this conquered kingdom later passed from Darius, the Mede, to Cyrus? Daniel 6:28.

COMMENT: Here are the facts, exactly in order as they occurred, preserved in the writing of Xenophon.

Xenophon, the Greek historian who wrote the "Cyropaedia" in the fourth century before Christ, says that:

"when Cyrus reached Babylon" in 539 B.C. he dug channels for the dispersal of the water in the river Euphrates which ran under the gates of Babylon. Then he and the Medo-Persian army secretly entered the river bed, climbed stealthily through the gates along the river and rushed to the palace "when he heard that there was a festival in Babylon, in which all the Babylonians drank and revelled the whole night." Upon reaching the palace where Belshazzar had seen the handwriting on the wall, they "burst in, and, pursuing those who fled, and dealing blows amongst them, came up to the king, and found him in a standing posture with his sword drawn ... [they] mastered him."

SO BELSHAZZAR THE KING IN BABYLON WAS KILLED THAT NIGHT EXACTLY AS DANIEL SAID.

Then, when peace had been restored, Cyrus determined to see his father in Persia. "When," wrote Xenophon, "they came to Media, Cyrus turned aside to visit [his uncle] Cyaxares. When they had embraced each other, Cyrus first told Cyaxares that there was a private house, and palaces, set apart for him in Babylon; that when he came thither" -- when Cyaxares would go to Babylon -- "he might take up his abode in his own home."

Who was this Cyaxares? He is believed to have been the one known as DARIUS the Mede! DARIUS the Mede, the uncle of Cyrus, "received the kingdom" while Cyrus returned to Persia to see his own father.

History again proves the Bible is true. Darius the Mede DID receive the kingdom from Cyrus. It was while Cyrus was with his father in Persia that his uncle Darius WAS "made [TEMPORARY] King over the realm of the Chaldeans"! (Daniel 9:1)

## **PROOF Jesus of Nazareth LIVED!**

Most people take the existence of Jesus of Nazareth for granted. They have never stopped to PROVE whether the New Testament gospel records of Jesus are REALLY true! Have you ever PROVED whether Jesus actually lived?

Decades ago, people were confronted with a daring book entitled "Jesus – God, Man or Myth?" by a professed atheist, Herbert Cutner. According to its publisher, this book is:

"the result of extensive research [and] proves that Jesus never lived. The non-historical character of the Bible Jesus is established," claims the publisher, "by carefully-sifted data that will surprise those who have given little thought to the subject.

"The cumulative evidence that Jesus is an INVENTED character," concludes the write-up, "is presented with telling force and the book shows also that the Jesus, the man who went around 'doing good,' was no ... flesh-and-blood man .... "

These are bold statements! But what of the proof? How HONEST have atheists and critics been with the facts of history?

If the facts of history prove Jesus did live, if His contemporaries and enemies give evidence of His message and of His miracles – then no atheist, no agnostic, no modernist doubter has any excuse!

What PROOF IS there, OUTSIDE THE BIBLE, that Jesus lived? That he performed miracles? that He brought Good News – the Gospel – to the world? That He was condemned to death under the Roman governor Pilate? And chose apostles? And what PROOF IS there that He was born of a young virgin?

The Bible, of course, states these as facts. But can we BELIEVE the Bible? What proof OUTSIDE of the Bible itself is there that Jesus was a historical figure? Certainly of all people the Jews ought to know! Let's see.

1. Does the Bible show us that Christ existed? Matthew 1:16, 18, 21; 2:1; 27:37.

COMMENT: There are more early records that Jesus existed than probably anyone in the ancient world. Yet, some 'experts' refuse to accept the evidence.

Of course, if Jesus did not exist, the Jews would have had no reason to reject Him! ALTHOUGH THE JEWS DISLIKED CHRIST, THEY WERE FORCED BY THE VERY CIRCUMSTANCE OF HIS POWER TO INCLUDE RECOGNITION OF HIM IN THEIR RECORDS.

What do the Jewish RECORDS admit?

What do atheists purposely overlook when they pretend to deny the reality of Jesus the Christ?

Jesus is often mentioned in the Jewish Talmud! The Talmud is a record of Jewish debates, doctrines, stories and traditions covering a period from before the birth of Christ to the centuries immediately following. These references have been known in detail by many scholars. Jesus Christ is never mentioned by name, excepting perhaps once or twice, where He is said to have been an idolator who worshipped a brickbat (Sanh., 107B). He is scornfully called "that man" or "Son of Pandera," or "dead dog," and "the hanged one," "the sorcerer," "Balaam," and "Seducer."

*The Jewish Encyclopedia* tabulates the places where Jesus is mentioned in the Talmud. This encyclopedia terms as a mere "subterfuge" the attempt of atheists to run from these references which apply to Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus is sometimes called, in the Talmud, "Son of Pandera" at times to hide the fact that He was born of a young virgin! Two talmudic-era texts that explicitly associate Jesus as the son of Pantera/Pandera are: "Jacob ... came to heal him in the name of Jesus son of Pantera" (Tosefta Hullin 2:22f) and "Jacob ... came to heal him in the name of Jesus son of Pandera" (Qohelet Rabbah 1:8(3)).

"Pandera" – a word meaning panther or leopard – is an anagram (a word made by transposing letters) for the Greek word "parthenos" meaning "virgin"! The Jews twisted Jesus' virgin birth to make it appear that He was figuratively the son of a panther or leopard! – for the Greek word "panther" is PANTHER which the Jews corrupted by Jewish idiom into PANDERA.

Those are really references to Jesus' virgin birth! But modern theologians, like agnostics and atheists, persist in rejecting it!

The miracles of Jesus were not denied by the Jews. INSTEAD, THE JEWS WHO SAW JESUS PERFORM THOSE MIRACLES SAID HE LEARNED SORCERY IN EGYPT – which is merely another way of stating what we read in Matthew 12:24:

Now when the Pharisees heard *it* they said, "This *fellow* does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.

The Talmud records Jesus' healing of the blind, the hurt, and the leprous. It also mentions His walking on the sea! There is also a full list of references to Jesus' mother, the virgin Mary. These events are therefore here PROVED to be historical FACT – they are recorded by Jesus' own enemies!

Jesus not only lived, but the Jews, in the Talmud, are witness to His miracles! Let the ignorant atheist deny that!

The Talmud subtly calls the gospel which Jesus preached an “avengil,” meaning a “blank paper.” They did not want to use the original word “evangel,” meaning good news. They did not like the good news of the Kingdom which Jesus brought. They did not want the Kingdom of God to rule over them – to tell them what to do!

Here are a couple of quotes about Jesus from Jewish sources:

**Epitome from Church History of Agapius  
(Arabic)**

At this time there was a wise man who was called Jesus. And his conduct was good and he was known to be virtuous. And many from among the Jews and other nations became his disciples. Pilate condemned him to be crucified and to die. And those who had become his disciples did not abandon his discipleship. They reported that he had appeared to them three days after his crucifixion and that he was alive. Accordingly he was perhaps the Messiah concerning who the prophets have recounted wonders.

**Babylonian Talmud**

On the eve of Passover Yeshua was hanged. For forty days before the execution a herald went forth and cried, “He is going to be stoned because he has practiced sorcery and enticed Israel to apostasy. Anyone who can say anything in his favor, let him come forward and plead on his behalf.” But since nothing was brought forward in his favor he was hanged on the eve of Passover. - Sanhedrin 43a

Yeshua is a reference to the one commonly called Jesus in English.

Now there is an unusual Jewish artifact that perhaps should be mentioned.



*Jeselsohn Stone*

This artifact has been called Gabriel’s Revelation, Hazon Gabriel (the Vision of Gabriel), or the Jeselsohn Stone. It has also been described as “Dead Sea Scroll on a stone.” It is a three-foot-tall (one metre) stone tablet with 87 lines of Hebrew text written in ink, containing a collection of short prophecies written in the first person and dated to the late 1st century BC.

Essentially, it has a claim that Gabriel says that the “prince of princes” will rise after three days. Some believe that this shows that Jews could have understood about Jesus’ resurrection before His birth and thus, the resurrection idea was not something that had no place in Judaism (e.g. Bronner E. Ancient Tablet Ignites Debate on Messiah and Resurrection. New York Times, July 6, 2008).

2. Does Scripture reveal Christ’s apostles? Matthew 10:1-12.

COMMENT: JOSEPHUS, the non-Christian Jewish HISTORIAN of the first century, also admits the historicity of Jesus and His disciples, as he does also of John the Baptist. He calls John the Baptist “the good man” (Antiquities of the Jews, xviii:5, 2). Scholars recognize the genuineness of Josephus’ account about the death of James, “the brother of Jesus who was called Christ” (Ant., xx:9, 1).

Here are two fuller quotes from the Jewish historian Josephus (first century):

**Antiquities 18.3.3** Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was the Christ, and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men among us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for he appeared to them alive again the third day; as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him. And the tribe of Christians so named from him are not extinct at this day.

**Antiquities 20.9.1** But the younger Ananus who, as we said, received the high priesthood, was of a bold disposition and exceptionally daring; he followed the party of the Sadducees, who are severe in judgment above all the Jews, as we have already shown. As therefore Ananus was of such a disposition, he thought he had now a good opportunity, as Festus was now dead, and Albinus was still on the road; so he assembled a council of judges, and brought before it the brother of **Jesus, the so-called Christ**, whose name was James, together with some others, and having accused them as law-breakers, he delivered them over to be stoned.

Did the Romans know that Pontius Pilate gave sentence for the crucifixion of Jesus? Says Cornelius Tacitus around 115 A.D., in Annals, XV, 44:

**Annal. 15, 44...**Christians...Christus, the founder of the name, was put to death by Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea in the reign of Tiberius. But the pernicious superstition, repressed for a time, broke out again, not only through Judea where the mischief originated..(Annals of Tacitus. As cited in Giles JA. Heathen records to the Jewish scripture history:containing all the extracts from the Greek and Latin writers, in which the Jews and Christians. James Cornish, 1856, p. 105)

So, secular sources from those that did not claim to believe in Jesus reported about Him.

Here is a quote from Suetonius. He discusses that around 49 A.D., the Roman Emperor Claudius banished all Jews from the city of Rome (this seems to be an incident also mentioned in Acts 18:2):

“He expelled the Jews from Rome, on account of the riots in which they were constantly indulging, at the instigation of Chrestus” (The Lives of the Caesars, Bk. V, 25).

*Chrestus* is believed to be a slang and derogatory reference to Christ. Suetonius was not a Christian and referred to Christians as holding to “a novel and mischievous superstition” (*Life of Nero*, 16.2, as cited in Bock DL. Studying the Historical Jesus: A Guide to Sources and Methods. Baker Academic, 2002, p. 48).

There is the PROOF Jesus lived!

This was not a Christian writing, but a pagan Roman historian who hated everything Christian! Tacitus had access to the government records. He had the PROOF Christ was crucified!

In the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, something called the James’ Ossuary was announced to the world (an ossuary is a chalk box that was used for containing the bones of the dead. This particular one is claimed to be dated from the 1st-century.



*James Ossuary*

It contains an interesting Aramaic inscription:

Ya'akov bar Yosef akhui di Yeshua

This translated as "Jacob (or James), son of Joseph, brother of Jesus." While the dating of the inscription is hard to absolutely prove, this item, if genuine, is clear proof that Jesus existed and had at least one brother.

James (Ya'akov) is mentioned in the Gospel accounts as a brother of Jesus (Matthew 13:55). The book of Acts reveals that he was at one time the leader of the Jerusalem church and the moderating host of the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15. James also wrote the Book of James. He is also spoken of a number of times in the writings of Josephus.

THERE IS THIS EVIDENCE OUTSIDE OF THE BIBLE – EVIDENCE THAT JESUS WAS BORN OF A VIRGIN – THAT HIS MIRACLES DID HAPPEN – THAT HE DID PREACH THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM – THAT HE DID CALL DISCIPLES – THAT HE DID HAVE BROTHERS!

These actual facts OUTSIDE THE BIBLE have been recorded by contemporary non-Christian historians. They stand as irrefutable proof that the person Jesus Christ is NOT a myth and that the New Testament record is TRUE!

Consider also what the Apostle Peter wrote:

15 Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease. 16 For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. (2 Peter 1:15-16)

The Bible is true and proper archaeology agrees. We are NOT following clever fables.



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

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**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 the Philippines oriented website with items in English and Tagalog.



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