

July – September 2015

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BIBLE NEWS PROPHECY

*Should Christians keep the
“Feast of Tabernacles”?*



Continuing CHURCH OF GOD FEAST OF TABERNACLES

**DO NOT FEAR, LITTLE FLOCK,
FOR IT IS YOUR FATHER'S
GOOD PLEASURE TO GIVE YOU
THE KINGDOM.**

LUKE 12:32



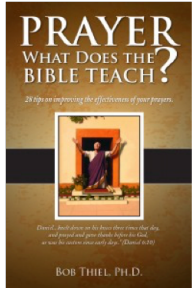
Is **RUSSIA** the King of the North?

*Some feel that Russia must be
the King of the North in Daniel 11.
Is that true?*

The **LAST** Great **DAY**

*What is this last day of the Feast?
What are some of its prophetic
ramifications?*

BIBLE NEWS PROPHECY



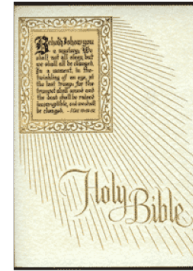
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Back Cover: Internet and Radio This shows where people can find the message from the Continuing Church of God.

About the Front Cover: The Bible tells of a confederation of Arabic, Turkish, and Cushite peoples. The rises of extremists elements in Islam seems to be encouraging the West to support this type of coalition.

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Is RUSSIA THE KING OF THE NORTH?

Some writers on biblical prophecy (like Ewiak Ryszard and Hal Lindsey) have claimed that the King of the North in the 11th chapter of the Book of Daniel will be Russia in the end times. I, and others, however, contend that the King of the North must be related to some type of Greco-Roman empire that will emerge in Europe.

Those who claim the King of the North is Russia tend to rely on certain passages in the 38th and 39th chapter of the Book of Ezekiel for much of their proof. However, the reality is that it is only in the 11th chapter of the Book of Daniel that the term “King of the North” is actually used in scripture and that should be a major focus to understand who the final King of the North will be.

All biblically-respectful writers that I am aware of all believe that there were certain individuals who fulfilled many of the prophecies related to the King of the North in Daniel 11. Most also believe that there will also be a final King of the North who will fulfill the latter verses of that chapter (precisely starting when is a matter of debate).

Essay by Ewiak Ryszard

Since there is a somewhat popular essay at ReligiousTolerance.org by Ewiak Ryszard that claims that Russia is the King of the North, I would like to quote and comment on parts of that article in order to provide an alternative viewpoint which has greater biblical support.

First of all, I wish to say that I do agree with Ewiak Ryszard’s references that biblical Magog is now represented by Russia and some of its close allies. However, the term Magog is not mentioned in Daniel 11 and I wish to mainly focus on what Ewiak Ryszard wrote about that chapter.

Second of all, I agree with Ewiak Ryszard when he claims that various Greco-Roman emperors fulfilled certain verses, in antetype, of Daniel 11 (though necessarily the same leaders), and hence several individually fulfilled part of the role of the “King of the North.”

Furthermore, I agree with him that there is an end time fulfillment of verse 27 of Daniel 11.

However, starting with his analysis of verse 27, he goes off

on what I consider to be an inaccurate tangent. Here is some of what he wrote:

Daniel 11:27

“And both these kings, their hearts (will be) to do mischief, and at one table (they) will speak a lie. But it will not succeed, for yet (the) finish to (the) appointed time.” (11:27, literal translation)

It certainly suggests that the verse does not concern to the ancient times. It describes the end of times right before the appointed time. (Compare Daniel 11:29a)

Russia and England (from second half of the XIX Century)...In 1907, an Anglo-Russian agreement divided Persia into English and Russian spheres of influence, a large Russian sphere in the north, covering the most valuable part of the country, a neutral sphere in the centre, and a smaller British sphere in the southeast.

His suggestion that a deal between Russia and England involving Egypt in 1907 fulfills the Daniel 11:27 prophecy involving a deal between the King of the North and the King of the South is in error. And while it is true that England had certain control of Egypt back then, I do not agree that England (which is far to the north of Jerusalem) could have been the biblical King of the South. Ewiak Ryszard’s assertion that England was the King of the South in 1907 is held by very few. (While the Jehovah’s Witnesses improperly teach that England was the King of the South in the early 20th century, they use 1914; the Jehovah’s Witnesses also teach that Germany, not Russia, was the King of the North then.)

Since England is not a southern power, it is not logical that it was the King of South then or ever. Therefore since England was not the King of the South, there has not yet been the final deal between the end time kings of the North and South as Ewiak Ryszard’s essay claims. Furthermore, I do not agree that the appointed time of the end began over a century ago (especially since Jesus taught that one generation would see many of the end time events per Matthew 24:34). While we are getting close, it has not yet begun.

For the next verse, Ewiak Ryszard wrote the following:

Daniel 11:28

“And (he) [“the king of the north”] will go back (to) his land with great wealth; and his heart (will be) against the holy covenant; and will act effectively; and turned back to his own land.” (literal translation)

History of Russia after World War II...

Daniel foretells here that “the king of the north” [Russia] will not only be successful in WW II, but also that he returns to his land with a great amount of goods...

The break-up of the Soviet Union and return to the country of Russian garrisons (the liquidation of Russian military bases).

I disagree with Ewiak Ryszard that this verse starts to tell the post-WWII history of Russia. Also, there is no evidence that Russia turned against the “holy covenant”—nor was any explanation of how that presumably was fulfilled in his essay. It also did not return with great amounts of wealth at this time. Thus, there is no way that Russia fulfilled Daniel 11:28 or certain other prophecies that Ewiak Ryszard contends.

And related to Daniel 11:29-30, Ewiak Ryszard makes the following claim:

Matthew 24:7 = Daniel 11:29,30 = WW III

And while this will lead to what could possibly be called WWIII, this is not. A naval conflict happens, but that is not WWIII (that seems to be Daniel 11:39).

Now, let’s skip down to Daniel 11:40, which states:

40 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.

Notice this is a battle essentially between the King of the North and the King of the South. This however is a battle between a European power and a North African/Middle Eastern power (Daniel 11:40-43).

Ewiak Ryszard wrote the following further in his essay:

Daniel 11:44,45
Russia again will attack Israel.

Now, this is a serious biblical problem.

Why?

Because Daniel 11:44 teaches the following about the King of the North:

44 But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many (Daniel 11:44, NKJV).

Notice that the King of the North is troubled by news from the east and the north. Thus, it would appear that Russia cannot be the King of the North as there are no nations that are north of Russia. But as Russia is north of Europe, Europe geographically better fits Daniel 11:44.

Furthermore, as Israel is also not east nor north of Russia (it is south and slightly west), Ewiak Ryszard’s assertions about it and Daniel 11:44-45 are in error.

Here is another passage from Ewiak Ryszard’s essay:

Ezekiel wrote that after “Gog’s” last attack he will fall and then be buried by the people. (Ez.39:4,11)

But that does not square with scripture for the King of the North. Notice that the Bible shows that the last time Gog attempts to attack is after the 1000 year millennium (which happens after there is no King of the North):

7 Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. 9 They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them (Revelation 20:7-9).

In another place, Ewiak Ryszard’s essay correctly shows the millennium coming after the King of the North’s attacks and after Armageddon.

Thus, asserting that Ezekiel 38 refers to the King of the North is in error. The tie to Revelation 20, after the 1000 year millennium, makes much more sense.

In Ewiak Ryszard’s essay he also claims:

Ezekiel Chapter 38 and 39 = Daniel 11:45 ...

But Daniel 11:45 states this about the King of the North:

45 And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him (Daniel 11:45).

The description in Daniel 11:45 is not the same as what is in Ezekiel 38 and 39. In Ezekiel 38 and 39 Gog/Magog is helped by “many” (Ezekiel 38:6,15) “peoples” (Ezekiel 39:4), which is not the case of the King of the North in Daniel 11:45.

Thus, Ewiak Ryszard's assertion that "Ezekiel Chapter 38 and 39 = Daniel 11:45" is not accurate.

The Final King of the North Will Be a European Power

Although it is in the north, the Bible (when more specific) appears to refer to those in Russia as part of the "far north" (Ezekiel 38:3,6, 14-15). Russia is currently the most massive military power of the "far north."

However, as Ewiak Ryszard and others have admitted, historically it has been Greek (and perhaps also Roman) emperors which have fulfilled past prophecies of the King of the North.

It would seem logical then, that the final King of the North would also be the ruler of some type of final Greco-Roman empire. And the seat of power for those empires was in Europe.

Daniel 9:26-27 describes the rise of a prince who came from the people who destroyed Jerusalem, the European Romans.

Matthew Henry's Commentary states the following concerning Daniel 9:

It is here foretold that the people of the prince that shall come shall be the instruments of this destruction, that is, the Roman armies, belonging to a monarchy yet to come...the sacrifice and oblation shall be made to cease...And when it is made desolate, it should seem, there is something more determined that is to be poured upon the desolate (v. 27).

These passages, according to many Bible writers, ties into the actions of the King of the North when his forces "shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation" (Daniel 11:31). Roman armies would be more closely tied to Europe than they would Russia.

The Great Tribulation will also not start before there is an actual King of the South and an actual King of the North--and while the "prince" will apparently help make a deal with Israel, Daniel 11:27 requires two kings, which suggests that the "prince" will gain more and more importance after the deal in Daniel 9:27. Daniel 9:26-27 shows that this prince comes from the people of the old Roman Empire. This prince rules the final Beast power of Revelation 13:1, the beast of the sea. Russia is not the 'beast of the sea' (but it is trying to expand its Eurasian Union, which currently has several members).

The Bible is clear that the "Great Sea," where the Beasts of

Daniel 7 come from, is the Mediterranean Sea (cf. Joshua 9:1, 23:4; Ezekiel 47:15). The Beast power is not a nation like Russia, which does not border the Mediterranean Sea, but an area like Europe which does. And after the European King of the North defeats the final King of the South, it will effectively control the northern and southern borders of the Mediterranean Sea like the old Roman Empire did.

Furthermore, the fact that Daniel 11:44 tells that the final King of the North will be troubled by news from the east and the north most certainly does allow for the final King of the North to be European. Russia, specifically, is both east and north of much of Europe.

Additionally, there are a couple of passages in the Book of Jeremiah that support this:

50:41 "Behold, a people shall come from the north,
And a great nation and many kings
Shall be raised up from the ends of the earth.
42 They shall hold the bow and the lance;
They are cruel and shall not show mercy.
Their voice shall roar like the sea;
They shall ride on horses,
Set in array, like a man for the battle,
Against you, O daughter of Babylon.
43 "The king of Babylon has heard the report about them,
And his hands grow feeble;
Anguish has taken hold of him,
Pangs as of a woman in childbirth..."(Jeremiah 50:41-43).

Thus, the European empire (the "daughter of Babylon") is to be destroyed by a northern (apparently Russian led) force. This force from "the ends of the earth" will apparently be those from the far north and the far east. This is consistent with Daniel 11:44. And the "many kings" is consistent with the "kings of the sunrise" of Revelation 16:12 (literal translation).

Notice that the "king of Babylon" the "daughter of Babylon" heard reports about them. This is totally consistent with the King of the North being troubled by "news from the east and the north" (Daniel 11:44).

And who is the end time "King of Babylon"?

Various end time writers (including some who claim Russia is the King of the North) believe that the final "King of Babylon" (the end time Babylon in the Book of Revelation) is going to be a European power.

Yet, this is the same European power that is the King of the North in Daniel 11:27-45 and is the same one that is

troubled by the news from the east and the north in Daniel 11:44.

Notice how the following prophecy ties Assyria in with the end time Babylon:

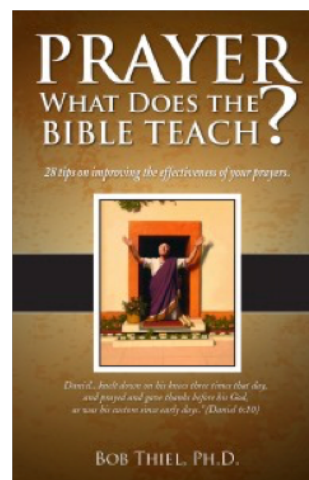
13 And He will stretch out His hand against the north,
Destroy Assyria,
And make Nineveh a desolation,
As dry as the wilderness.
14 The herds shall lie down in her midst,
Every beast of the nation.
Both the pelican and the bittern
Shall lodge on the capitals of her pillars;
Their voice shall sing in the windows;
Desolation shall be at the threshold;
For He will lay bare the cedar work.
15 This is the rejoicing city
That dwelt securely,
That said in her heart,
“I am it, and there is none besides me.”
How has she become a desolation,
A place for beasts to lie down!
Everyone who passes by her
Shall hiss and shake his fist. (Zephaniah 2:13-15)

Notice particularly that God, who will punish Assyria (as also confirmed in Isaiah 10:12) is stretching His hand against a power of the north. That this northern power is Assyria. The King of the North will rule over end-time Assyria and regions of the old “Holy Roman Empire.” We know that Zephaniah 2:15 is referring to end time Babylon as similar statements are made in by the woman of mystery Babylon in Revelation 18:1-8,19. Zephaniah 2:13-15 ties in a power in the north (the final King of the North of Daniel 11:45) to the end time harlot city (Revelation 17 & 18).

While the final time of the Gentiles is coming, the final King of the North cannot be Russia. Only a European power meets the criteria listed in Daniel 11. And that is consistent with other prophecies in the Bible, such as Jeremiah 50:41-43.

Because of Russia’s military moves in the past couple of years, some others are ascribing to it roles it does not have. Believe what the Bible teaches. While Russia does have end time roles, being the final King of the North is NOT one of them.

TWENTY-EIGHT TIPS FOR MORE EFFECTIVE PRAYERS: PART I



Continuing Church of God booklet on prayer

By Bob Thiel

This is the first of a multi-part series on prayer.

It has been said that, “The Church of God goes forward on its knees.” This has basically been used as an admonition to tell Christians that they need to pray.

So, what is prayer?

Prayer is simply talking to God. It can be out-loud, though it is often silent. Prayer is an important part in the worship of the Great Creator.

Prayer gives us an opportunity to express love towards others, explain our circumstances, and give thanks to God for the many blessings we are given.

We have an opportunity in prayer to ask God for help, for guidance, for strength, and to support His work.

Prayer is the completion of a two-way conversation between God and humans. God speaks to people through His Word, and people speak to Him through prayer.

When you pray, understand that this is not really doing God a favour. Believe it or not many people think that God should be grateful that we will try to talk to Him. Should it not be the other way around?

When you pray don’t you realize you are speaking to the most perfect and powerful being in the universe? Which of you should be honoured by that?

In this busy 21st century, in our busy lives, it can seem that there is never enough time to do all the things we want or need to do. When there is not enough time to go around, what do even some Christians neglect?

Prayer.

As never before, as we see the end approaching (Hebrews 10:24-25; Luke 21:34-36), true Christians should be drawing near to God in prayer. Yet some true Christians have confessed that they have not prayed for days, weeks, or even months.

We are not to wait long to talk to God, but should:

6 Seek the Lord while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near. (Isaiah 55:6, NKJV throughout, except where otherwise noted)

Also, don't you want to support the work of God as we get closer to Jesus' return (cf. Matthew 6:33; 24:14)? While that work ultimately involves the entire universe, God's work in this age includes HIS people.

Which means, that while many feel that they could better serve God if He answered their prayers a certain way, the reality is that YOU and your spiritual state are more important than you probably think. God may not answer prayers the way people want Him to, because God wants to help perfect His people more than probably most realize. Do your part, God will do His.

Notice what followers of Jesus have been told:

48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect. (Matthew 5:48)

28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. (Romans 8:28-30)

If you believe that ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD TO THOSE THAT LOVE GOD, TO THOSE WHO ARE CALLED ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE, then presuming you love God and were called, whatever God does in response to your prayers means that He has answered them in a way that HE KNOWS is best for you. He wants to help perfect you now.

On the other hand, it should also be understood that many seem to believe that God's work is primarily about helping

themselves physically in this age. This is a distortion of reality. This wrong belief is often the result of unrecognized selfishness and listening to ministers that promote it (cf. 2 Peter 2:1-3). God's work is MORE than just you or how you feel.

But getting back to prayer, can it change anything?

Certainly.

Throughout history, people have utilized prayer. Prayers and intercessions by Moses, Joshua, Ezekiel, and others have been shown to change outcomes.

Yet also throughout history, God's people have also had questions about how to pray. This booklet provides 28 tips about prayer to keep in mind that can lead to the type of answers that most should really want.

Tip Number 1: Pray to God the Father

Jesus' disciples wondered about how to pray. Notice:

1 Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."

2 So He said to them, "When you pray, say:

Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. (Luke 11:1-2)

We see here that we should normally direct our prayers to God the Father. We must first acknowledge the greatness of our heavenly Father. Our faith increases when we realize that what He has promised He can and will perform! He is the God of Heaven -- the Ruler of the whole universe. It is His name, His authority, that is to be hallowed—to be considered holy.

Even in Old Testament times, David realized that he should pray to God the Father:

10 ... David said:

"Blessed are You, Lord God of Israel, our Father, forever and ever. 11 Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, The power and the glory, The victory and the majesty; For all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, And You are exalted as head over all. 12 Both riches and honor come from You, And You reign over all. In Your hand is power and might; In Your hand it is to make great And to give strength to all.

13 "Now therefore, our God, We thank You And praise Your glorious name. (1 Chronicles 29:10-13)

Do you glorify the majesty, the power, and the wisdom of God in prayer like David did?

David realized that God was the Father, God was great, and that

His name should be praised. There are several concepts in David's prayer that Jesus shared with His disciples when they asked Him how to pray.

Jesus personally prayed to the Father:

25 At that time Jesus answered and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes. 26 Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. (Matthew 11:25-26)

41 And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, 42 saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." (Luke 22:41-42)

We should follow His example (cf. John 13:15; 1 Peter 2:21).

Tip Number 2: Worship God in Truth

Many people do not understand who or what God is. Because of that they often do not pray to the true God of the Bible.

Because of the 'progress' of the interfaith and ecumenical approaches to religion, many think that praying to some vague 'spirit being' or to an idol of a Hindu deity is the same as praying to the true God of the Bible. But that is not the case.

Notice something that the Apostle Paul taught:

5 For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), 6 yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live. (1 Corinthians 8:5-6)

Notice what Jesus Himself taught:

23 But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. 24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth. (John 4:23-24)

Many think that it does not matter what or how they

worship, only that they make some attempt. That is not what Jesus said that the Father wants.

Jesus also taught:

8 "These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. 9 And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:8-9)

People may pray out loud or silently, but notice that they can be worshipping God in vain if they are following the imaginations of their own mind or 'traditions' of human beings which are contrary to God's ways. Intentionally praying to the east (Ezekiel 8:16) and certain holidays that many who claim Christianity observe, do not come from the Bible, but from compromises with pagan "traditions of men" (see also our booklet Should You Observe God's Holy Days or Demonic Holidays?).

Since Jesus warned that one can worship God in vain and that the Father seeks those who will worship Him in truth, those who want to truly worship God and receive answers to their prayers should not rationalize away disobedience to Him and His ways.

Notice something that Jesus prayed:

1 Father, the hour has come... 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. 18 As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth. (John 17:1, 16-19)

Jesus also taught:

4 It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.' (Matthew 4:4)

The world compromises with the truth and does not adequately believe that the word of God is truth. While many pay lip-service to the idea of believing the Bible, most accept 'traditions of men' that the Bible does not condone above truly living by every word of God.

However, it is not that God never hears the prayers of those that do not really know Him, but if one truly intends to worship God, they should worship the true God.

Even if you do not believe that you are worshipping God in vain, consider examining your own life (Galatians 6:3-4) as there are probably areas in it that are not true to God. Do not overlook this tip as it also specifically applies to true Christians in these end times (cf. Revelation 3:1-22).

Tip Number 3: Believe God

The Bible warns that there are those who do not really believe God, and because of that, they do not get their prayers answered.

Notice:

5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. (James 1:5-8)

6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. (Hebrews 11:6)

Jesus taught that those who pray need to have faith in God:

22 So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God. 23 For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. 24 Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them. (Mark 11:22-24)

You need to believe that God will answer you. If it is God's will, yes, the prayers of the truly faithful can move mountains. The time will come when this likely will literally happen. Where does faith come from? The Bible says that "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). (For more on faith, check out our free booklet Faith for Those God has Called and Chosen.) Study and believe God's word.

While God is aware of all prayers, some prayers God listens to. Notice whose prayers God listens to:

2 Says the Lord. "But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, And who trembles at My word. (Isaiah 66:2)

Tremble at His word—do you really believe the Bible over false traditions of human beings?

In the Bible, God declares:

8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord. 9 "For as the heavens

are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. (Isaiah 55:8-9)

Do you really believe that? While that can seem to be hard to accept at times, the reality is that God "inhabits eternity" (Isaiah 57:5) and knows so much more than any of us possibly can. That is part of why it is good, wise, and right to submit to His will.

Jesus said:

46 "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say? (Luke 6:46)

Are you humble enough that you will believe God over your own opinions and feelings? All the time?

Really?

Tip Number 4: Obey God: Do More than the Demons

Christians are to obey God.

The demons believe that God is, but they do not wish to obey

God. Your faith needs to go beyond simply believing that there is a God. Notice:

18 But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe — and tremble! 20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? (James 2:18-20)

True followers of God realize that faith without works is dead. The demons have faith in God, but do not obey Him. They have the works of Satan the devil. And the demons have influenced many to go the way of Satan.

The demons accepted temptations and failed to be kept "from the evil one" (Matthew 6:13). Do not be like the demons, realize that Satan's temptations are not good to follow.

Speaking of the demons, even those who seem to have cast them out, are themselves subject to being cast out if they do not obey God:

21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in

that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' (Matthew 7:21-23)

Notice what the Apostle John wrote about who really knows Jesus:

4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. 6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked. (1 John 2:4-6)

The demons do not obey, nor do those that have been highly influenced by them. Do you?

More information on prayer can be found in our booklet Prayer: What Does the Bible Teach?

SHOULD CHRISTIANS KEEP THE "FEAST OF TABERNACLES"?



By Bob Thiel

The 'Feast of Tabernacles' is a 7-day Biblical pilgrimage festival, also known as the Feast of Booths, or Tabernacles (it is immediately followed by an eighth day, so normally it is considered to be a pilgrimage of at least 8 days).

Should Christians keep it? What are some of the reasons why?

In the 7th day Church of God groups, the Feast of Tabernacles is one of the most important feasts as it lasts the longest and normally requires a great deal of preparation and travel to be able to attend. But it is normally the physical and spiritual highlight of the year for those that do observe it.

This article covers subject from a Christian perspective and includes quotes from both the Old and New Testament.

The Hebrew Scriptures

The Hebrew scriptures (otherwise known as the Old Testament) discuss this Festival in many places.

The Book of Leviticus states:

2... 'The feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts. ...

34... 'The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the Lord. 35 On the first day there shall be a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work on it. 36 For seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. It is a sacred assembly, and you shall do no customary work on it. 37 'These are the feasts of the Lord which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering

made by fire to the Lord, a burnt offering and a grain offering, a sacrifice and drink offerings, everything on its day — 38 besides the Sabbaths of the Lord, besides your gifts, besides all your vows, and besides all your freewill offerings which you give to the Lord. 39 'Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep the feast of the Lord for seven days; on the first day there shall be a sabbath-rest, and on the eighth day a sabbath-rest. 40 And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palm trees, the boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days. 41 You shall keep it as a feast to the Lord for seven days in the year. It shall be a statute forever in your generations. You shall celebrate it in the seventh month. 42 You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths, 43 that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.'" (Leviticus 23:2, 34-43. NKJV throughout, unless otherwise noted)

Christians have interpreted the statement about dwelling in booths to include temporary dwellings, hence most stay in hotels, motels, or tents to observe it today (the idea that palm branch dwellings are not the only option which is consistent with Leviticus 23:43 for Christians per Hebrews 9:11-15; 13:10). And Christians normally observe it on the same days that the Jews celebrate Sukkot (which is based on the same verses in the Hebrew Bible).

The Bible teaches that the children of Israel were to have offerings for every day of the Feast. While we in the Continuing Church of God do take up offerings on the First Day of the Feast and the Last Great Day (which are times of holy convocations), we do not take up financial offerings on the other days. But one way for you to fulfil what God expects is for you to attend church services each day.

Notice something that the Apostle Paul wrote:

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (Romans 12:1-2)

Attending services each day is a way for you to offer yourself as a living sacrifice which is your reasonable service.

More information on this Feast is in the Hebrew scriptures, notice some others:

2 You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations which you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. 3 And you shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars, and burn their wooden images with fire; you shall cut down the carved images of their gods and destroy their names from that place. 4 You shall not worship the Lord your God with such things.

5 "But you shall seek the place where the Lord your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name for His dwelling place; and there you shall go. 6 There you shall take your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, your vowed offerings, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks. 7 And there you shall eat before the Lord your God, and you shall rejoice in all to which you have put your hand, you and your households, in which the Lord your God has blessed you.

8 "You shall not at all do as we are doing here today — every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes — 9 for as yet you have not come to the rest and the inheritance which the Lord your God is giving you... 11 then there will be the place where the Lord your God chooses to make His name abide. There you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, and all your choice offerings which you vow to the Lord. 12 And you shall rejoice before the Lord your God, you and your sons and your daughters, your male and female servants, and the Levite who is within your gates, since he has no portion nor inheritance with you. 13 Take heed to yourself that you do not offer your burnt offerings in every place that you see; 14 but in the place which the Lord chooses, in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I command you.

15 "However, you may slaughter and eat meat within all your gates, whatever your heart desires, according to the blessing of the Lord your God which He has given you; the unclean and the clean may eat of it, of the gazelle and the deer alike. 16 Only you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it on the earth like water. 17 You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your grain or your new wine or your oil, of the firstborn of your herd or your flock, of any of your offerings which you vow, of your freewill offerings, or of the heave offering of your hand. 18 But you must eat them before the Lord your God in the place which the Lord your God chooses, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, and the Levite who is within your gates; and you shall rejoice before the Lord your

God in all to which you put your hands. 19 Take heed to yourself that you do not forsake the Levite as long as you live in your land. (Deuteronomy 12:2-9, 11-19)

Christians have cited the following passages from Deuteronomy 14:22-27 (which has similarities to chapter 12) to explain how this festival attendance should be financed and to show that others are to be assisted with this financing:

22 "You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year. 23 And you shall eat before the Lord your God, in the place where He chooses to make His name abide, the tithe of your grain and your new wine and your oil, of the firstborn of your herds and your flocks, that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always. 24 But if the journey is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry the tithe, or if the place where the Lord your God chooses to put His name is too far from you, when the Lord your God has blessed you, 25 then you shall exchange it for money, take the money in your hand, and go to the place which the Lord your God chooses. 26 And you shall spend that money for whatever your heart desires: for oxen or sheep, for wine or similar drink, for whatever your heart desires; you shall eat there before the Lord your God, and you shall rejoice, you and your household. 27 You shall not forsake the Levite who is within your gates, for he has no part nor inheritance with you..

Most Christians who observe the Feast of Tabernacles save 10% of their income (normally referred to as second tithe or simply festival tithe) to finance this. They also point to those verses in Deuteronomy to show that they are to feast and rejoice during this time, which they feel points to the time when Jesus will reign on the Earth for a thousand years (the millennium). A time they say will be filled with great prosperity--a glimpse of which they get when they spend approximately 10% of their annual income for an eight-day (plus travel time) festival (sometimes, portions of that 10% are used for the other biblical holy days).

Christians who observe this festival believe that part of the reason that there will be peace is that people will all be taught the law of God, as teaching the law of God was an important part of this feast during the days of the children of Israel:

10 And Moses commanded them, saying: "At the end of every seven years, at the appointed time in the year of release, at the Feast of Tabernacles, 11 when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God in the place which He chooses, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing. 12 Gather the people together,

men and women and little ones, and the stranger who is within your gates, that they may hear and that they may learn to fear the Lord your God and carefully observe all the words of this law, 13 and that their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God as long as you live in the land which you cross the Jordan to possess." (Deuteronomy 31:10-13).

Christians who observe this festival sometimes point to the following in Zechariah, which they believe provides evidence that it has not been done away with:

16 And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. 17 And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, on them there will be no rain. 18 If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they shall have no rain; they shall receive the plague with which the Lord strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. 19 This shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. (Zechariah 14:16-19)

Since it is clear that the Feast of Tabernacles is to be kept in the future, this is another reason why Christians should be keeping it now.

How often should it be kept?

The Feast of Tabernacles is to be kept every year (Zechariah 14:16; Deuteronomy 16:16).

Where is the Feast of Tabernacles to Be Kept?

Some have wondered where is it to be kept.

The Bible teaches "in the place which He chooses."

Since God does not physically speak out loud to humans the physical locations for every year, the responsibility for this falls on His ministry (cf. Leviticus 23:1,4,37). In modern times, generally this will be near the area where enough Christians live or can travel too.

While some falsely claim that the Feast of Tabernacles from the past through current times must only be kept in Jerusalem, this is in error as the children of Israel were not even in Jerusalem for centuries after the commands for its observance in Leviticus 23 were recorded--hence Jerusalem was not possibly an initial option for them.

Furthermore, the Bible shows that the Feast of Tabernacles can be kept in cities other than Jerusalem (Nehemiah 8:15; cf. Deuteronomy 14:23-24). It may also be of interest to note Polycarp of Smyrna in the 2nd century and certain others in Asia Minor in the late 4th century (some of whom were called 'Nazarenes') kept the Feast of Tabernacles in Asia Minor, not Jerusalem.

In the 21st century, Christians have kept the Feast of Tabernacles on all inhabited continents as well as various islands.

The New Testament Examples

Christians point out that Jesus kept the Feast of Tabernacles. This is discussed in detail in John chapter 7:

10 But when His brothers had gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. 11 Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, "Where is He?" 12 And there was much complaining among the people concerning Him. Some said, "He is good"; others said, "No, on the contrary, He deceives the people." 13 However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews. 14 Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught. 15 And the Jews marveled, saying, "How does this Man know letters, having never studied?" 16 Jesus answered them and said, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. 17 If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority. 18 He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him. 19 Did not Moses give you the law, yet none of you keeps the law? Why do you seek to kill Me?" 20 The people answered and said, "You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?" 21 Jesus answered and said to them, "I did one work, and you all marvel. 22 Moses therefore gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. 23 If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath, so that the law of Moses should not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath? 24 Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment." 25 Now some of them from Jerusalem said, "Is this not He whom they seek to kill? 26 But look! He speaks boldly, and they say nothing to Him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is truly the Christ? (John 7:10-26)

Jesus kept the Feast and taught on what we tend to refer to as "the Last Great Day"(John 7:37-38).

The Apostle Paul, after Christ's death and resurrection, indicated that it was important to keep the Feast in Jerusalem--and this may have been the Feast of Tabernacles. As it is noted in Acts 18:21:

21 I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, God willing.

Notice some statements from the Apostle Paul:

17...Men and brethren, though I have done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers (Acts 28:17)

4 though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: 5 circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; 6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. (Philippians 3:4-6)

Since Paul kept the customs of his people, he, too, kept all the Fall Holy Days including the Feast of Tabernacles. If not, he could not have made that statement which is in Acts 28:17 nor the one being blameless in the law in Philippians 3:4-6.

Paul taught Gentiles to follow him as he followed Jesus:

1 Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1).

Jesus and Paul kept the feasts. Are you following their example?

Notice that Paul does commend those in Thessalonica (which is located in Greece) for imitating the church in Judea:

13 For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe. 14 For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus (1 Thessalonians 2:13-14).

The church in Judea kept the Feast of Tabernacles, etc. And those in Thessalonica were commended for receiving the word of God and imitating the practices of the church in Judea.

Basic Interpretation

The basic Old Testament understanding of the Feast of Tabernacles is that it was a seven-day celebration of the annual fall harvest and was observed by living in temporary dwellings for the duration of the Feast. (Leviticus 23:33-43).

The basic New Testament understanding is that it pictures the Millennium, the 1000 year period when the earth will be ruled by Jesus Christ and His saints.

Millenarianism (a literal thousand year reign of Christ on Earth, often called the millennium) was taught by the early Christians. The Bible teaches that the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth "as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9).

During the millennium, Christ will rule as King of kings, and His saints will rule with and under Him for 1,000 years (Revelation 20:4-6). God will restore Israel and will bless all nations that learn to worship Him. The Bible shows that there will be peace and prosperity throughout the earth (Amos 9:11-15, Isaiah 19:24-25). It will be an abundant time for all people and all nations (Micah 4:3-4, Ezekiel 36:33-37) who obey (there will problems for those who stubbornly will at first refuse to obey). Sickness and disease will be cured (Jeremiah 30:17; Malachi 4:2). Various problems will be removed from the earth (Isaiah 51:11-13; 35:4). The true worship of God and His truths will be taught throughout the world (Isaiah 30:21; Ezekiel 11:19-20, Hebrews 8:11-12; Revelation 20:1-6). The Feast of Tabernacles essentially helps picture God's kingdom on this earth. The Bible teaches that Christians are to pray, "Thy Kingdom come" (Matthew 6:10). That kingdom will usher in the time when the promise described in Revelation:

6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in this first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be the priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. (Revelation 20:6)

The millennial kingdom is part of the utopia that will come.

The Feast of Tabernacles and the Millennium

The idea that the Feast of Tabernacles pictures the millennium is not a new one. Real and professing Christians have long realized the connection.

As mentioned earlier, Church of God leader/bishop Polycarp of Smyrna in Asia Minor kept the Feast of Tabernacles. This is seemingly alluded to in at least one post-biblical document (Pionius. Life of Polycarp, Chapters 2 & 19. Translated by J. B. Lightfoot, The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 3.2, 1889, pp.488-506).

It should also be pointed out that those in Asia Minor also taught the millennium, in contrast to those in places like Alexandria, Egypt, which were dominated by Gnostic and other heretics who do not seem to observe the Feast of Tabernacles (Danielou, Cardinal Jean-Guenole-Marie. The Theology of Jewish Christianity. Translated by John A. Baker. The Westminster Press, 1964).

Although he was not part of the Church of God, the Greco-Roman bishop and saint Methodius of Olympus in the late 3rd or early 4th century taught that the Feast of Tabernacles was commanded and that it had lessons for Christians. And he tied it in with the teaching of the millennial reign of Christ:

...these things, being like air and phantom shadows, foretell the resurrection and the putting up of our tabernacle that had fallen upon the earth, which at length, in the seventh thousand of years, resuming again immortal, we shall celebrate the great feast of true tabernacles in the new and indissoluble creation , the fruits of the earth having been gathered in, and men no longer begetting and begotten, but God resting from the works of creation...

For since in six days God made the heaven and the earth, and finished the whole world, and rested on the seventh day from all His works which He had made, and blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, so by a figure in the seventh month, when the fruits of the earth have been gathered in, we are commanded to keep the feast to the Lord , which signifies that, when this world shall be terminated at the seventh thousand years, when God shall have completed the world, He shall rejoice in us. For now to this time all things are created by His all-sufficient will and inconceivable power; the earth still yielding its fruits, and the waters being gathered together in their receptacles; and the light still severed from darkness, and the allotted number of men not yet being complete; and the sun arising to rule the day, and the moon the night; and four-footed creatures, and beasts, and creeping things arising from the earth, and winged creatures, and creatures that swim, from the water. Then, when the appointed times shall have been accomplished, and God shall have ceased to form this creation , in the seventh month, the great resurrection-day, it is commanded that the Feast of our Tabernacles shall be celebrated to the Lord , of which the things said in Leviticus are symbols and figures, which things, carefully investigating, we should consider the naked truth itself, for He says, A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: to understand a proverb , and the interpretation; the words Of the wise, and their

dark sayings. (Methodius. Banquet of the Ten Virgins (Discourse 9, Chapter 1). Translated by William R. Clark. From Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 6. Edited by Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1886)

Comments by the historian Epiphanius and others in the late fourth century concerning the Nazarene Christians would also seem to support that those who kept the Fall Holy Days were located in several areas at that time.

Furthermore, in the late fourth century, John Chrysostom (of Constantinople) commented that people who professed Christ in his area were observing the Feast of Tabernacles (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) : Eight Homilies Against the Jews. Fordham University).

The Catholic saint Jerome reported that the 'Nazarene'/Judeo Christians kept the Feast in the fourth/fifth centuries (Migne JP Argumentum Patrologia Latina Volumen MPL025 Ab Columna ad Culumnam 1415 - 1542A, pp. 922, 930).

A Catholic report interestingly stated:

St. Jerome (PL 25, 1529 & 1536-7) speaking of how the Judaeo-Christians celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles... tells us that they gave the feast a millenarian significance... (Bagatti, Bellarmino. Translated by Eugene Hoade. The Church from the Circumcision. Nihil obstat: Marcus Adinolfi. Imprimi potest: Herminius Roncari. Imprimatur: +Albertus Gori, die 26 Junii 1970. Franciscan Printing Press, Jerusalem, pp. 202,297,298).

Here is a translation from Latin to English of Jerome's Commentariorum in Zachariam Lib. III. Patrologia Latina 25 that confirms this:

1529 Jews and Christian judaizers...Christian Jews...

1536 All, he says, those who remain survivors of the nations that come against Jerusalem, shall go up every year, to worship the King the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of Tabernacles. These also shall hope in, through the hollow devotion of Jews, a thousand years old promise of the future kingdom, whose festival this is the beginning of.

There are reports that Christians kept the Fall Holy Days in the Middle Ages (LESSON 51 (1968) AMBASSADOR COLLEGE BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place ..." Rev. 12:6) and other times (Liechty D. Sabbatarianism in the Sixteenth Century. Andrews University Press, Berrien Springs (MI),

1993).

Here is a more recent report from a Church of God related source in the 20th century:

We take for granted today, in the Church of God, the knowledge of the Millennium — the 1,000 years of God's rule over the earth through His Son Jesus Christ. But there was a time when this great truth was not fully revealed.

Not one of the prophets of old defined the length of the Messiah's rule over the nations, bringing them salvation. They knew there would be a coming spiritual harvest of human beings. They prophesied the gentiles would seek the Messiah. They knew the Feast of Tabernacles pictured that coming day. But all they could say was that it would be fulfilled "in that day."

Jesus' apostles asked Him in their day if the time had come for the fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles, when the Kingdom would be restored to Israel. Every Jew knew the week ended with the seventh-day Sabbath. They knew the Feast of Tabernacles fell in the seventh month of the year on God's calendar. Moses and Peter were both inspired to compare a day to a thousand years with God (Ps. 90:4 and II Pet. 3:8). But it was not until Christ revealed to John the book of Revelation that the picture became clear (Rev. 20:4,6). The Feast of Tabernacles in the seventh month pictures a millennial Sabbath (1,000 years) of rest from sin, following 6,000 years under the government of Satan.

This final revelation of the rule of Christ in the seventh 1,000 years of human experience came to the Church of God because it is a commandment-keeping Church and observes the Holy Days of God and His Christ! (Hoeh H. The Feast of Tabernacles - Its MEANING for New Testament Christians. Good News, August 1980)

In the 21st century, notice something from the official Statement of Beliefs of the Continuing Church of God:

The Feast of Tabernacles, which shows a time of abundance, helps picture the millennial reign (Revelation 20:4-5) of Jesus Christ and His saints on the earth (Zechariah 14; Matthew 9:37-38; 13:1-30; Luke 12:32; John 7:6-14; Acts 17:31; Revelation 5:10, 12:9). This future paradise, following the near total destruction that humanity will have brought upon itself through its activities and the Great Tribulation and Day of the Lord (Matthew 24:21-31), will help show humanity the advantages of God's way of life. Every seven years, the law is to be read during this festival (Deuteronomy 31:10-13).

The Feast of Tabernacles should be kept by all Christians today.

Keeping the Feast of Tabernacles

Jesus Himself attended the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7:10-26) and the Last Great Day (John 7:36-37).

So how do people keep it in the 21st century?

Normally, attendees at the Feast go to church services for two hours most days (longer in parts of Africa), and sometimes have two services on one or more of the Holy Days (first day of the Feast, the Sabbath, and the Last Great Day). Sermons often focus on the Kingdom of God, the law of God, and the Millennial reign of Christ, though pretty much any topic of Christian interest can be covered.

The Church normally has some type of family day activity for one day, often also a dance or social event at least one evening, and sometimes organizes group activities.

The time not at services or church activities is essentially 'free time.' People tend to go to restaurants, go sight-seeing, view the creation, meditate, participate in local activities, fellowship with others and/or otherwise attempt to enjoy being away from most of the cares of their normal lives.

Those who can will travel (Deuteronomy 14:23-26) to a Feast site.

Those who cannot travel to a site may wish to consider the possibility to not sleep in their houses during the time of the Feast. If they are physically and financially able, they may wish to try to sleep in some type of temporary dwelling like a hotel, motel, camper, or a tent (including perhaps one in one's own home). In ancient Israel, those who did not travel (as well as native Israelites that did) made 'booths' of branches on top of their roofs (Leviticus 23:40) and slept in them for the seven days of the Feast (Leviticus 23:42), and some slept for the entire eight days (though the Bible only mentions seven days).

Staying in 'temporary dwellings,' of whatever sort, helps convey that this age is temporal and a new millennial age is coming.

The first day of the Feast of Tabernacles is kept like a Sabbath, as it is also a day of rest and a holy convocation as is the eighth day, also known as the Last Great Day (John 7:37). Christians should pray and attend services and/or watch messages on each of the eight days. An offering is normally also taken up on the first and eighth day (cf. Deuteronomy 16:16). But the other days are NOT kept like the Sabbath, meaning that one can engage in regular physical work on

those days (unless one of those days is the weekly Sabbath, whereas it would be observed similar to other Sabbaths).

Starting with Jesus and continuing through the Apostle Paul and the more faithful throughout history, Christians kept the Feast of Tabernacles.

In 2015, it begins sunset on September 27th and runs until sunset October 5th.

Should you keep the Feast of Tabernacles? Or at least try to?

THE LAST GREAT DAY



For the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice (John 5:28)

By John Ross Schroeder Originally published in the Good News Magazine, September 1975

On an island west of Turkey, a man named John experienced a strange series of visions. He recorded them in the controversial biblical book of Revelation. Climaxing all the blood and gore pictured in the first nineteen chapters is a thousand-year reign of peace and prosperity revealed in chapter twenty. Following that utopian millennial rule is a period of time termed "the Great White Throne Judgment." This span of time corresponds with a biblical festival called "the Last Great Day." What does this period picture for you?

One of Christ's disciples wrote a book commonly called "the Gospel According to John." In it he penned the following words for posterity:

"On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and proclaimed, 'If anyone thirst, let him come to me and drink'" (John 7:37, Revised Standard Version used throughout article unless otherwise noted).

Jesus Christ was speaking at a festival Moses had inaugurated (not of himself, but directly at the command of God) 1500 years earlier. It was the seventh and final instalment of a series of feast days listed chronologically in the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus. Notice what God commanded Moses: "Say to the people of Israel, The appointed feasts of the Lord which you shall proclaim as holy convocations [commanded assemblies], my appointed feasts, are these" (verse 2).

Then God proceeded to enumerate His festivals to Moses. First, in the spring, was the Passover, followed immediately by seven days of eating unleavened bread (verses 5-8). Less than two months later was the Feast of Firstfruits (verses 10-22), called "Pentecost" in the New Testament. Then came four fall festivals: the Feast of Trumpets (verses 24-

25); the Day of Atonement (a day of fasting, verses 26-32); the Feast of Tabernacles (or "feast of booths," verses 34-43); and finally the Last Great Day (same verses).

This Last Day follows immediately after the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles. It is, as it were, almost an attachment to that seven-day festival. Both festivals are generally described together in Scripture; yet they are distinctly separate in a very important sense.

The Last Day in History

Wherever the Feast of Tabernacles is mentioned in the Bible, the Last Great Day can be tacitly assumed whether it is separately mentioned or not. Note Numbers 29:12: "On the fifteenth day of the seventh month [Jewish sacred calendar] you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work, and you shall keep a feast to the Lord seven days." This is the Feast of Tabernacles. Then in verse 35 Moses specified: "On the eighth day you shall have a solemn assembly: you shall do no laborious work...." Moses mentions the Feast of Tabernacles twice elsewhere in the Pentateuch (Ex. 23:16; Deut. 16:13) without specifically naming either the Last Great Day or the other two fall holy days.

Following a long lapse of disobedience to God in both Israel and Judah, there was a brief spiritual revival in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. Under Ezra the restored remnant of the nation of Judah "... kept the feast of booths [tabernacles], as it is written [in the Pentateuch] ..." (Ezra 3:4). You will note that the Last Great Day is not directly specified here, but the Bible does prove that this final festival was observed during that period of history.

Notice Nehemiah 8:14, 17-18:

"And they found it written in the law that the Lord had commanded by Moses that the people of Israel should dwell in booths [tabernacles] during the feast of the seventh month.... And there was very great rejoicing. And day by day, from the first day to the last day, he [Ezra] read from the book of the law of God. They kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the ordinance."

In New Testament times, Jesus Christ observed the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7:2, 10, 14). He also kept the Last Great Day (verses 37-39). Following Christ's example, the Worldwide Church of God observes this one-day festival even today in the twentieth century. What great meaning could this feast possibly have that would cause God's Church today to keep a festival inaugurated nearly 3,500 years ago? What great event in God's master plan does this feast picture?

The Resurrection in Prophecy

Turn to the twentieth chapter of Revelation. The beginning few verses document the thousand-year earthly reign of Christ. This period of priceless peace and prosperity is pictured by the seven-day observance of the Feast of Tabernacles (see Matt. 16:28; 17:1-9).

Then, right in the midst, as it were, of these verses describing the thousand-year reign is a parenthetical statement depicting what is to happen immediately after the millennium is over. Notice it in verse 5: "The rest of the dead did not come to life again until the thousand years were ended." So here is a statement that actually tells us when all "the rest of the dead" (those not raised in the first resurrection as spirit beings) will live. It is immediately after the millennium.

Verses 11 through 13 give more details:

"Then I saw a great white throne and him [God] who sat upon it.... And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened.... And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, by what they had done. [Greek, 'according to their works' — not exclusively those of their former lives now long in the past, but those works, or deeds, now being performed after being resurrected. This will become clearer as we proceed.] And the sea gave up the dead in it, Death and Hades [Greek 'the grave'] gave up the dead in them, and all were judged by what they had done [Greek, 'according to their works,' see KJV]."

Here John describes a prophetic vision of a great resurrection involving most of humanity who have ever lived on this earth. (The prophets, patriarchs and true Christians, relatively speaking a very small group, will have been brought back to life a thousand years earlier - verses 3-6.) This symbolic description is compacted in to a very few verses.

What is the true meaning of John's vision? Is this a resurrection to eternal life in hell fire? To eternal death? What is meant by the term "Great White Throne Judgment"? What is the relationship between the resurrection which immediately follows the millennium and the annual festival which immediately follows the Festival of Tabernacles (which prefigures the millennium)?

We must go elsewhere in the Bible to find the answers.

Meaning of the Day Known

The Jewish world of Jesus' day had some knowledge, though no doubt imperfect, of this great resurrection and

its relation to the Last Great Day festival. John II records a conversation between Jesus and Martha shortly before Jesus resurrected her brother Lazarus. Martha said to Jesus: "I know that he [Lazarus] will rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (verse 24).

Jesus, His knowledge of this day not being imperfect, since He knew the fullness of its great meaning, revealed details about it which are recalled in several verses that people today often overlook. Most of these little-known and even less understood scriptures were recorded by the apostle Matthew. A few are repeated in the Gospel of Luke.

Decrying and condemning the spiritual state of the "lost sheep of Israel," Jesus stated: "... It shall be more tolerable [bearable, Moffatt version] for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city" (Matt. 10:15, KJV). This is the first veiled reference to the Last Great Day in the book of Matthew. Later verses will shed much more light on the meaning.

In Matthew 11 Jesus returned to the same theme. Here Christ indicts three Galilean towns for their impenitent unresponsiveness to the marvelous miracles He had performed.

"Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable [bearable, Moffatt version] for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell [Greek, the grave]: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable [or bearable] for the land of Sodom in the day of Judgment, than for thee" (verses 20-24, KJV).

Repentance in That Day

Jesus declared, in effect, that if He had performed the same miracles in Tyre and Sidon (two ancient Mediterranean coast cities of the wicked Canaanites), they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes. Adam Clarke defines sackcloth and ashes as "an outward sign of deep repentance, and forsaking of sin" (Clarke's Commentary, vol. vi, page 130).

Since these two cities of antiquity would have repented had Jesus performed the same mighty miracles in their heyday, it logically follows that this period of Judgment (which will

go easier with them than with that generation who dwelt in Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum in Jesus' day) will afford their peoples an opportunity to repent of their evil deeds and enter God's Kingdom. Otherwise God becomes a respecter of persons, which the Bible constantly affirms He is not (see Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11; Eph. 6:9).

"According to tradition, Sidon was the first Phoenician city to be founded" (The New Bible Dictionary, p. 1184). It is traditionally said to be the mother of Tyre. "According to Herodotus (ii. 44), Tyre was founded c. 2700 B.C...." (ibid, p. 1302). It was the principal seaport and commercial center of the Phoenician coast — the New York of the ancient world! Both Tyre and Sidon, as prophesied, have been reduced to relative irrelevance in recent history.

Probably Jesus' reference to these two antiquated cities relates to their apex period when Ezekiel prophesied against them (Ezek. 26:2-21; 28:20-23). However, in relation to the Last Great Day, it refers in principle to most all of their residents from their beginning until now and on into the future. All except those few who will be in the first resurrection shall be resurrected in the Last Great Day.

Matthew's account jumps back in time from Tyre and Sidon to Sodom and Gomorrah. It was during the days of Abraham that these two cities reached the depths of homosexual degradation. God destroyed them by raining fire and brimstone upon them and their environs. Destruction was universal! That area became a desolate wilderness of drought and heat, salt and rock, to this day.

The spiritual point is this: if Jesus had come to even those two sin-filled cities as the humble carpenter of Nazareth, but performing mighty works and miracles, the ancient inhabitants would have repented of their revolting sex perversions and the cities would have still been extant 2,000 years later. Again, it logically follows that God will give even these ancient sinners an opportunity to enter His Kingdom. And when He does, they will have an easier time of it during that period of judgment than those during Jesus' earthly ministry who had every opportunity but refused to repent.

Truly, as Christ said to the religious types of His day: "... The tax collectors and the harlots go into the Kingdom of God before you" (Matt. 21:31).

Verse 24 of Matthew 11 speaks of this period as "a day of judgment." How long is this "day" — twenty-four hours or an indeterminate (to us) period of time?

Ancient Nineveh To Be Educated

For the third time in Matthew's Gospel, Jesus returns to

the same theme of "the day of judgment" (Matt. 12:36) in relation to the nonrepentance of His generation.

"The men of Nineveh [an ancient Gentile city — the capital of Assyria] shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here" (verse 41, KJV).

This scripture is highly significant and tells us much more than is readily apparent on the surface. Jonah's ministry occurred in the reign of Jeroboam the II (II Kings 14:25), 793-753 B.C His warning and witness to that ancient Assyrian city must have been some time in the eighth century B.C (see The New Bible Commentary: Revised, p. 747). At that time more than 120,000 people resided in the city of Nineveh (Jonah 4:11). Jesus referred specifically to those Ninevites who repented at the preaching of Jonah.

Now let's ask a question: How much did these ancient Assyrians, who heard Jonah, know about Jesus' generation prior to their death? The answer is, of course, absolutely nothing; they lived hundreds of years prior to Christ's first coming! How much do they now know? Still absolutely nothing: "The dead know not anything" (Eccl. 9:5). How much will they know when they are resurrected after the millennial period? At that moment, nothing.

Obviously they won't be able to condemn Jesus' generation immediately. It will require a substantial period of time for those resurrected Ninevites to learn the history of Jesus' generation. And soaking up that history will not, logically, be the first order of business after the great resurrection. Reorientation to the different conditions of life itself will take some little time. Remember, these people are not yet "judged" in the sense that Christians are now (see I Peter 4:17). They are once again, physical, flesh-and-blood human beings with a new lease on life (literally!).

So the Last Great Day is not comprised of a single twenty-four hour day. The conversion process requires time. First God must grant repentance (II Tim. 2:25; Acts 11:18; Rom. 2:4). Then a period of unlearning deeply imbedded false concepts and of growing in grace and knowledge must follow (II Peter 3:18). How long must this period be? We have previously postulated 100 years based on Isaiah 65:20...

The Queen of Sheba

But the story does not end with the Ninevites. Jesus caps off the subject with a final comparison.

"The queen of the south [or, Sheba] shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to

hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here" (Matt. 12:42, KJV).

Prior to this one, all the other examples in antiquity which Jesus gave were individually anonymous. Christ had reference to large groups of people — citizens of Sidon, Tyre, Sodom, Gomorrah, Nineveh — cities whose ancient inhabitants' personal names have long since been forgotten (except, of course, by God Himself).

The Queen of Sheba was a Sabaean monarch who journeyed to Jerusalem in the tenth century B.C to test King Solomon's wisdom. She went away very impressed (see The New Bible Dictionary, p. 1172). But at the time of her resurrection, the Queen of the South will not know a thing about the history of Jesus' generation. That she will learn over a period of time, evaluate and analyze it, and finally come to rightly condemn those who refused Christ in the flesh.

Outline of the Future Revealed

All of these scriptures from the book of Matthew, taken together, tell us even more. Details are revealed here that John omits in his description of the bare symbols he saw in vision (Rev. 20).

First mentioned are the peoples of Sodom and Gomorrah. Then in order: Tyre and Sidon, Sodom again, Nineveh in Jonah's time, and the Queen of Sheba. All of these examples (people who lived in different generations) are compared to the citizens living in the cities and towns of Jesus' generation. Jesus tells us they are all to be resurrected with the generation that lived in Jesus' time.

He gave enough representative examples of generations of people living at widespread and different times in human history to substantiate the fact that most of humanity will be alive together at the same time on this earth. There will be pre-Flood men and woman, all the Israelites (all twelve tribes including the Jewish people, see Rom. 9-11), those who lived during the Middle or Dark Ages, and everyone living even now who for whatever reason has not had opportunity to accept Christ and grow toward salvation (see John 6:44, 65). This group includes all people of all times everywhere on this earth, excepting of course those who will be in the first resurrection: true Christians and the godly patriarchs and prophets prior to Christ.

Whether or not all these people will be resurrected exactly at the same time, on the same hour, on the same day is an academic question. The Scriptures are not that specific. By gradual course and in order by nation and generation would seem to be God's mind on the matter, since He is not the author of confusion. He works out all things decently and in

order (I Cor. 14:33, 40)...

If many of these ancient people described in Matthew's Gospel would have repented if Christ had personally come to them in their day, will they not repent when He is actually ruling and reigning on an earth dominated by peace, prosperity and well-being?

The great last resurrection opens their period of judgment — not sentencing. Sentencing is merely the final act in the process of judgment. A decision must be rendered, based on how each individual responds to the Word of God. And since every individual will have the fullest salvation opportunity, each will be in effect rendering his own verdict. By making choices as he (or she) lives, each person will be judging himself.

It will be more bearable or tolerable for some peoples than others — depending on what they did or did not do in their former lives and how they have already shaped their respective attitudes.

But if a decision had already been rendered and the people were to be immediately sentenced — condemned to be burnt up in a lake of fire together — it is hard to see how their judgment would differ in any respect. How would it be more tolerable or bearable for one group of people than another?

The Last Great Day and You

If you are a true Christian and you remain faithful unto death (enduring to the end), you will be privileged to partake of a better resurrection (Heb. 11:35) at Christ's second coming. But what about your friends and relatives (living and dead) who have known little of Christ, His gospel, and the Kingdom of God? Are they lost forever — doomed to perish eternally in a lake of fire? No — not at all!

Here is your future legacy: After reigning and ruling with Christ for a thousand years (Rev. 20:3-6) in a world of generation after generation of new people who have never lived before, you will then be privileged to see the resurrection of your ancestors, kinfolks and acquaintances. You will help teach them God's way of salvation. All the more reason to remain faithful to Christ and to His Church — no matter what the future holds.

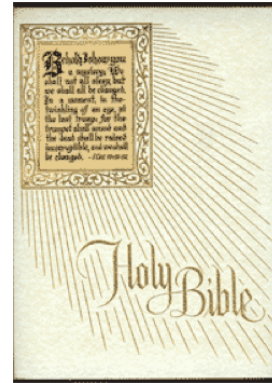
This, then, is the meaning of the Last Great Day — a one-day festival kept around the globe by the Worldwide Church of God. Can you begin to see why its members observe this annual Sabbath day year after year?

The old Worldwide Church of God no longer exists, but we in the Continuing Church of God keep it each year. Here

also is what our Statement of Beliefs teaches:

The Last Great Day helps picture that all who ever lived will have a real opportunity for salvation (John 7:37-38; Isaiah 52:10,13-15; 65:20; Luke 3:6)—an opportunity most will accept (John 7:37-39; Romans 11:25-26; Ezekiel 37:11-14; Hebrews 9:27-28). The New Testament name comes from the Apostle John who wrote, “On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” (John 7:37-38).

STUDY THE BIBLE COURSE



LESSON 6: UTOPIA!

Bob Thiel, Editor-in-Chief

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

EVERY KING IS CROWNED IN A CORONATION CEREMONY. JESUS IS NO EXCEPTION! He, too, must be crowned as Supreme Ruler—as King of kings—over this whole world.

Yet almost no one understands WHY!

Christ to be King

Notice what the angelic messenger said to Mary, the mother of Jesus:

31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. 32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. 33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end (Luke

1:31-33).

Jesus was BORN TO RULE. He was born to reign over the nations. Remember what He said to Pontius Pilate?

Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?"

Jesus answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world ..." (John 18:37).

Not Yet CROWNED

Remember that in Lesson 3, we learned that Jesus QUALIFIED to become ruler of this earth by His conquest of Satan. But Jesus Christ did not, at His first coming, replace Satan. He was not crowned King. Instead, He was killed!

Jesus was born to be king, though He did not then assume the responsibility of that office (John 18:37). But He WILL COME THIS TIME AS KING OF KINGS to bring the world PEACE AND PROSPERITY.

Yet almost no one has understood WHEN, WHERE, and by WHOM Jesus Christ will be crowned!

Does any human have the authority to grant Jesus the right to rule the world? Will He go to the people to have them elect Him to office? Will He be accountable to the people—or will the people be accountable to Him? Will any human be able to impeach Him? WHO has the only authority to put Jesus Christ into office?

After Jesus is crowned, WILL there BE A MARCH OF TRIUMPH climaxing His victory over the nations which are in rebellion against the rule and the Kingdom of God?

Since Jesus will become "King of kings," who will be the "kings" ruling under Him? When will they be given their power and responsibility?

Observe that Jesus Christ is not coming merely to be a figurehead King. He is coming to CARRY OUT HIS OFFICE—to BRING PEACE, HAPPINESS and genuine PROSPERITY such as this present world has never seen!

Why will there be great prosperity in the World Tomorrow—the soon-coming MILLENNIUM?

Few People Know!

GOD HAS A "WAY" OF LIFE which, IF FOLLOWED, would MAKE living HAPPY AND JOYOUS for all! If people TODAY would follow this WAY they would KNOW how to meet all the family problems that confront them daily. They would

learn to meet these problems as GOD would be happy—happy with the results which would come from the right solution to every problem.

God has promised to create just such a world of happiness and joy and prosperity. But it can't occur until we learn to let God rule in all actions all twenty-four hours of the day!

CHRIST BROUGHT THE MESSAGE ABOUT THIS WAY. THE WAY OF KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS AND PRECEPTS REVEALED IN YOUR BIBLE! He said, "I have come that they (you and I) may have life more abundantly" (John 10:10). He preached that people could have full and abundant lives if they let God's precepts rule in all their activities.

But how did the world accept His message? Were they interested?

Paul reports, "And about that time there arose a great commotion about the Way" (Acts 19:23). He also reports that various PEOPLE "... SPOKE EVIL OF THE WAY ..." (Acts 19:9).

THIS has been THE ATTITUDE OF THE WORLD TO THIS DAY! It has not VOLUNTARILY accepted Christ's message, which, if followed, would have produced a UTOPIA on this earth! Look at the world crisis that now confronts us.

But SOON God, through Christ, as supreme King, will intervene AND PEOPLE WILL BE MADE TO KEEP THE WAY OF GOD. An example—if people do not come to worship Him, rain will be withheld (Zechariah 14:17). The WAY of God—THE WAY REVEALED IN YOUR BIBLE—will then guide them continually. They will PAY God His TITHES. God says when this is done He will "... open for you the windows of heaven, And pour out for you such BLESSING, That there will not be room enough to receive it" (Malachi 3:10).

Also, for keeping His days they are assured they will "ride upon the high places of the earth" (Isaiah 58:14, KJV). THEY WILL LIVE IN LUXURY! The Bible is full of such promises for OBEDIENCE. Read Leviticus 26:1-13 and Deuteronomy 28:1-14, which reveal some of the blessings God has promised for obedience. When all obey God, the world will be full of things that are now considered great luxuries! THEY WILL SEE THE DIFFERENCE IN happiness which THESE TWO DIFFERENT WAYS bring them. And they WILL BE CALLED TO REPENT of their way of life and allow themselves to BE RE-EDUCATED TO GOD'S WAY of life. That's why He is to be made King. He will have complete personal charge of guiding people to repentance and re-educating them in God's way.

Many who profess Christianity think that the problems on the earth are just because the it is physical, which is part

of why many incorrectly teach that ‘heaven is the reward of the saved.’ Most fail to realize that it is the rejection of God and His way of life that has caused the problems that the world faces. Utopia will be coming, and coming to the earth!

Now we are ready for the actual lesson.

LESSON 6

The CORONATION of Jesus Christ

Now let us understand WHEN, WHERE and by WHOM Jesus Christ will be crowned.

1. When the people wanted to make Jesus their King nearly 2,000 years ago, Jesus gave them a parable to explain WHEN the Kingdom of God would rule the world. We studied this parable in Lesson 2, part 2. According to this PARABLE, found in Luke 19:12-27, where did Jesus go to obtain the office of King and to receive the Kingdom? Did He go to the people to have them crown Him as King?
2. Who has the only authority to put Jesus Christ into office? Romans 13:1; John 14:28. Therefore could human beings have any authority unless it were permitted by the Almighty? Does any human have the authority unless it were permitted by the Almighty? Does any human have the authority to grant Jesus the right to become King of kings? Doesn't this help show that JESUS HAD TO ASCEND TO THE ALMIGHTY HEAVENLY FATHER, as shown in the parable of Luke 19, in order TO RECEIVE the authority to RULE the nations? Does God have all authority? Could anyone have greater than God Almighty? With whom is God the Father willing to share ALL OF HIS VAST AUTHORITY? Matthew 28:18.

In granting Jesus authority, does God thereby demonstrate that He Himself rules supreme above the nations, even though He permits men to sit in offices of limited political authority over states and nations? Cf. Daniel 4:34-35.

3. Did men try to crown Jesus as King in a MOCK CEREMONY? John 19:2-3. During His earthly ministry, was Jesus ever crowned by God as King over the nations? After Jesus ascended to heaven and had been there for approximately sixty years, He revealed Himself in the Book of Revelation to the Apostle John. In Revelation 1:12-18, is Jesus described as then having a crown on His head? So was Jesus crowned immediately upon His arrival into Heaven?

COMMENT: In Hebrews 2:9 we find the statement that Jesus is “crowned with glory and honor.” This verse does not refer to the actual coronation ceremony or to the actual crown with which Jesus will be acclaimed as King. This verse is figurative in that sense. It compares the present spiritual glory and honor of Jesus to a crown. But according to the actual picture of JESUS Christ, there was NO CROWN upon His head when the Book of Revelation was revealed. AT the PRESENT time the office of Jesus is that of HIGH PRIEST (Hebrews 3:1), not that of King of kings ruling over the nations.

4. When Jesus returns, will He still be without a crown? Revelation 14:14. By comparing this verse with those in Revelation 1, don't we have information that JESUS IS CROWNED IN HEAVEN BEFORE HE RETURNS?
5. Jesus mentioned in His parable, recorded in Luke 19, that He would go to heaven to receive the Kingdom. Where, in Scripture, do we find that Jesus is GIVEN THE KINGDOM and hence crowned? Daniel 7:13-14. Here the CORONATION of Jesus is described.

COMMENT: The Ancient of Days described in Daniel is the Heavenly Father. The title “Father” was not used because the heavenly Father had not yet physically begotten Jesus. Notice also that One like Son appeared before the Ancient of Days to receive the Kingdom. The Logos or Word (John 1:1) was like the Son of man. He was not yet born as a Son, but since He would become a Son of man through Mary, He was, in Daniel's day, like the Son of man—the Jesus who would be born of the Virgin Mary.

6. WHEN will Jesus be crowned as King of kings? Read the seventh chapter of Daniel, especially verses 9-14, and compare them with Revelation 11:14-18. You will find the answer in these verses.
7. Does the One like the Son of man—Jesus—receive the Kingdom when a Judgment begins? Notice again in Daniel 7 the phrases “judgment was set” (verse 10), and “Then to Him was given dominion” (verse 14). According to Revelation, does Jesus receive the kingdoms of this world at the time of a Judgment? Revelation 11:15, 18.
8. Does the CORONATION ceremony occur IMMEDIATELY BEFORE the time when the RIGHTEOUS DEAD shall be RESURRECTED and judged? Revelation 11:15, 18. Is this the time of the sounding of the seventh trumpet? Revelation 11:15. According to Paul, do the righteous dead rise AT the sounding of the SEVENTH or last TRUMPET? 1 Corinthians 15:52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

So we can see that the CORONATION of Jesus occurs

immediately BEFORE HE RETURNS the second time to rule the nations! In fact, Jesus returns to FULFILL His office as King of kings. Once given that office, He must carry it out!

9. How many golden crowns will Jesus have? Revelation 14:14. JESUS WILL HAVE ONE GREAT GOLDEN CROWN. THAT CROWN WILL DESIGNATE HIM AS SUPREME KING OVER ALL NATIONS.

COMMENT: Note Revelation 19:12. The proper translation of this verse is: “AND on His head are MANY diadems.” A diadem is a small crown or head-band signifying royal office.

The SMALLER CROWNS or diadems SYMBOLIZE THE LESSER ROYAL OFFICES THAT JESUS WILL HOLD.

10. Why will Jesus be called King of kings? Who are these other kings? Daniel 7:18, 27. Whom will Jesus associate with Himself on His throne? Revelation 3:21. Will those who rule with Christ have to qualify for their offices, as Jesus qualified for His high office? Revelation 2:26. Do we have to overcome ourselves—to exercise self-control, temperance? 1 Corinthians 9:25-27.
11. Are WE ALSO TO RECEIVE CROWNS? 1 Corinthians 9:25. Are the crowns of the saints perishable or corruptible?—or are they everlasting crowns? If they are everlasting, wouldn't we have to be immortal in order to possess them for all eternity?
12. What does God expect of us here and now? Titus 2:11-14.
13. Are WE WARNED NOT TO LET ANYONE DISQUALIFY US from receiving crowns of rulership? Revelation 3:11. Are crowns of life—betokening our everlasting kingly offices under Christ—to be given to us? Revelation 2:10 and James 1:12.
14. WHEN do WE RECEIVE our reward—our crowns and offices of rulership? 2 Timothy 4:8. Is this AT the SECOND COMING of Jesus Christ? 1 Peter 5:4.
15. Whereas Jesus went to heaven to be crowned there by the Father, do we find that Jesus returns to the EARTH to bring our reward to us and to crown us? Compare Revelation 11:18 with Isaiah 40:10 and 62:11. Isn't it plain that JESUS comes to us to GIVE US our reward?
16. Since Jesus will bring our reward with Him when He comes, and since He will place us in authority under Himself, would there be any reason for us to go to the Father in heaven to be crowned? Has Jesus been given authority over us, to REWARD us? Matthew 28:18 and cf. Luke 19:15. Jesus COMMANDS us—His servants—to

appear before Him for our rewards.

How will THINGS BE AFTER CHRIST, as world ruler, WILL HAVE CALLED ALL TO REPENTANCE, and the people have turned to God's ways? Let us now take a look at the Utopia which will occur. God describes it. It is immediately ahead of us!

UTOPIA!

Father's Spirit Will Direct

1. As has been previously shown, when Christ returns He will come in the clouds of heaven and His angels will gather His elect from all parts of the earth. They will meet Him in the air and all will soon thereafter descend upon the Mount of Olives. What will happen to the Mount when Christ's feet touch it? Zechariah 14:4.
2. Will the deep ravine thus formed become the channel of A MIGHTY RIVER which WILL ARISE IN JERUSALEM? Will half of this mighty stream flow eastward in the channel formed by the split, and will the other half FLOW WESTWARD in the west channel? Verse 8. Won't the river flowing EASTWARD empty into what is known as the Dead Sea? And that flowing westward empty into the Mediterranean Sea (also called the Great Sea in verse 10; cf. Numbers 34:6-7)? Look at the map of Palestine in the back of your Bible—refresh your memory on this coming world-centre.
3. Isn't the eastern channel in which “living waters”—fresh waters—flow into the Dead Sea the same river as that described in Ezekiel 47:1-9? Note especially verses 8 and 9. Notice that the river described in Ezekiel CAUSES EVERYTHING WHICH IT COMES IN CONTACT TO LIVE AND BE HEALED! This appears to be the same river!
4. Does Ezekiel 47:8 show that when the fresh or “healing” water from this LIFE-GIVING STREAM begins to flow into the Dead Sea, the Dead Sea will also become a body of water having LIFE in it? Will it be “healed”? Verse 8. Will it contain living fish? Verse 9. Will it give life to the barren places through which it flows? Verse 12.

But when this new river—the river of “living waters”—begins to empty into the Dead Sea not far from the mouth of the Jordan River, then the waters of the Dead Sea will rise until they OVERFLOW SOUTHWARD THROUGH THE DESERT. The overflow will probably carry into the Gulf of Aqaba. It will then be in this area that NEW LIFE WILL SPRING UP ALONG the BANKS when the water will become fresh. Also, all places into which it flows in Palestine, will receive new life!

5. What is the SIGNIFICANCE of this river which will flow from Jerusalem? Hasn't this river a DUAL MEANING?

CHRIST will sit upon David's throne at Jerusalem, the world's CAPITAL—the same place from which the river of life arises (Ezekiel 47:1). Won't His RULE WHICH SHALL also "GO FORTH FROM JERUSALEM" (Isaiah 2:3), HAVE A "HEALING" EFFECT LIKE THE ACTUAL RIVER? It will heal the strife-torn nations of the world (Malachi 4:2).

Will not the Spirit of God direct Christ so that He may guide the nations in the millennium into His own way of life, THE WAY of LIFE which will produce for them the Utopia they have always desired? Isn't the Spirit compared to "living water"? John 4:10; 7:38. Then won't the world tomorrow—the millennial world—"have life, and that . . . more abundantly"? (John 10:10).

Here then we see that when Christ returns He will give all nations a PHYSICAL REPRESENTATION OF THE EFFECT OF THE SPIRIT (WATER) OR MIND OF CHRIST. Like the water of the actual river, His godly mental (Spiritual) DECISIONS WILL FLOW OUT FROM JERUSALEM, and LIKE the ACTUAL RIVER, these will HEAL and give life, for they will PREVENT wars and STRIFE which would wound human bodies and also cause death. Also won't His decisions PRODUCE HAPPIER, healthier and more abundant LIVES? John 10:10; cf. Amos 9:13.

Palestine: Garden of Eden

1. What will be the conditions in Palestine where Israel, GOD'S MODEL NATION, will dwell? Will living by the WAY, as administered by Christ as King, produce a UTOPIA there? Will Israel dwell safely? Ezekiel 28:25-26.
2. Will God see that the LAWS OF NATURE FUNCTION FOR THE BENEFIT OF THIS NATION? Isaiah 44:3. Will not this be a TREMENDOUS BLESSING?
3. Will the devastated CITIES BE REBUILT? Jeremiah 33:6-7. Will happiness be there? Verse 11.
4. Notice that Jeremiah 33:12-13 says there will be CITIES in the world order soon to be established. Does this indicate that cities, as such, are wrong? If they were wrong, would Christ build them?

Today, we have great SMUDGE-BLACKENED CITIES which are often crowded, dangerous, and/or gloomy. In the cities of TOMORROW these conditions will NOT EXIST. They will be of a size which will be small enough to promote family life. A PROPER BALANCE BETWEEN INDUSTRY AND those things which promote JOYOUS LIVING will be maintained.

Does Zechariah 8:4-5 also help verify this?

5. Tremendous destruction will be caused by the seventh bowl of wrath—the great earthquake and great hail (Revelation 16:18, 21), which we have seen Christ will inflict upon the earth to bring the world to its senses. Much RECONSTRUCTION will have to be done. This work will have to be FINANCED. Probably by the tithes and offerings of those who are now trying to obey Christ.
6. Will the EARTH be RE-POPULATED after the terrific destruction of human life which lies just ahead of us now? Ezekiel 36:8-11. What about the HOUSING SITUATION? How will shelter be provided for the people? Isaiah 41:19; 60:13; 65:21. In certain areas, lumber is scarce due to man's destructiveness.

The forests of Lebanon are situated in the northern part of Palestine. The scriptures frequently refer to the beauty and splendour of the "Cedars of Lebanon," almost none which still exist. Will the number of trees in the forest increase markedly in the millennium? Isaiah 29:17. Will God allow the FORESTS to be destroyed for lack of PROPER SUPERVISION? With a GREAT AMOUNT of LUMBER then, will it not make it easier for us all to have BEAUTIFUL HOMES?

7. Much of North Africa and the Middle East are barren regions because the ancient Romans and others deforested much of those regions. Prophecies indicate change. They also show that the area of Palestine/Zion will see a most dramatic change. It is the land centre of the earth and is destined to be its capital. It will BE the SEAT OF CHRIST'S WORLD GOVERNMENT. What has always been considered the MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACE that has ever existed in this world?—the Garden of Eden? Will God transform Palestine into a place RESEMBLING EDEN? Isaiah 51:3. Will great joy be there?

COMMENT: Zion is a hill in the environs of the city of Jerusalem. It is the mount on which the old city of David was built. Geographically speaking, Zion is often used in the Bible to stand for Jerusalem or for the land of Palestine, and spiritually-speaking, sometimes the Church of God.

World to Share Prosperity

1. Will the REST OF THE EARTH SHARE IN THE GREAT PROSPERITY which will bless PALESTINE? How do we know?

We have seen that CHRIST will establish His capital in Jerusalem. It will be in Palestine among the Israelites.

From His capital city, Jerusalem, He will RULE ALL NATIONS of the world. CHRIST WILL RULE OVER A COMMONWEALTH OF NATIONS. Then won't all nations have the same ruler—Christ? Isaiah 2:2-4.

2. Will not the WHOLE WORLD THEN WALK IN GOD'S WAYS? Micah 4:2. If so, doesn't this mean that they will ALL be ruled by the SAME LAWS—GOD'S LAWS? If the Gentiles WILL OBEY Christ in the millennium will they be HIS subjects? WILL THEY BELONG TO HIM? Romans 6:16-18.
3. The Bible says, "IF YOU ARE CHRIST'S, THEN YOU ABRAHAM'S SEED, (you are Israelites!) and heirs according to the promise " (Galatians 3:29). What was the promise made to Abraham's seed, the nation of Israel, for OBEDIENCE? Weren't they to BE BLESSED MATERIALLY? Leviticus 26:1-13, Deuteronomy 28:1-14. Isn't it plain that IN THE MILLENNIUM THE OTHER NATIONS OF THE EARTH WILL SHARE IN THE PROMISES MADE TO ISRAEL if they will OBEY Christ?

COMMENT: God has made Israel and its descendants a promise that He will set them "high above all nations of the earth," if they will obey Christ (cf. Deuteronomy 28:1). Therefore those of ISRAEL who are obedient will OCCUPY the LAND OF PALESTINE and RECEIVE a RELATIVELY GREATER SHARE OF BLESSINGS than other nations. BUT, aside from this, ALL NATIONS can SHARE in the promises IF they will OBEY Christ! This world will become a UTOPIA for the obedient!

Ancient Israel was never able to claim all the promises of Deuteronomy 28:1-14 and Leviticus 26:1-13 over long periods of time, for the people were not constant in their obedience to God. In the millennium, with Christ ruling rigidly ("with a rod of iron"), their descendants will be obedient and therefore they will receive all of these blessings.

4. How will highways be built? Isaiah 40:3-5. Will the SUPERHIGHWAYS be LEVEL, and will they GO in a DIRECT line from one point to another, thus being straight so HIGH SPEEDS can be safely achieved on them? Does this indicate much traveling will be done?
5. Notice verse 4 in Isaiah 40. Does it indicate a general LANDSCAPING of the EARTH'S SURFACE will be done? Wouldn't this indicate the use of much heavy machinery and the opportunity TO EMPLOY A GREAT NUMBER of people? Employment today is a great problem. It will then be solved to the satisfaction of all!
6. There is GOING TO BE A VERY UNUSUAL HIGHWAY IN PALESTINE. Its FAME will be WORLD-WIDE! Will it lead to Zion? Isaiah 35:8, 10.

COMMENT: Zion is sometimes used as a general name for the city of Jerusalem. This will be AN ACTUAL ROAD. But, WILL THIS ACTUAL HIGHWAY BE KNOWN AMONG THE NATIONS AS representative OF ANOTHER WAY—GOD'S WAY of life? What is this way called? Isaiah 35:8. Will the unclean—those who cling to sin—pass over it? Isaiah 35:8. Will lions or other ravenous beasts attack those who pass over it? Isaiah 35:9. Who will use it? Same verse.

Liberty

1. Will there be one true language in the millennium? Zephaniah 3:9. What do the words "with one accord" signify? Could all the people of the earth be of one opinion about a subject if they could not even understand what was said because it was told them in a foreign language? Note also the words "PURE LANGUAGE."

COMMENT: At the tower of Babel God separated the various nations by giving them various languages (Genesis 11:9). Why? Because they were rebellious against His Way of Life. People wanted to live by depraved lusts. Different languages of the different nations are a barrier against the spread of human depravity to allow humans to survive longer than they would have if they gained too much knowledge too fast. If He had not done this, they would soon have destroyed themselves. But by adding foreign languages, God also caused them to disperse (Genesis 11:6).

In the millennium there will be no danger of self-destruction. God will then restore to all peoples ONE LANGUAGE. It will be valuable in the exchange of proper ideas, and will aid in establishing of peace and harmony. Does this not show we will be liberated from the language barrier?

2. We have seen there will be work to be done in the millennium. But how hard will this work be COMPARED TO THE LABOR WE ARE FORCED TO DO NOW when we are disobedient to God's way and are not receiving the blessings God gives for obedience? Isaiah 11:10, KJV. Note the word "rest."

COMMENT: Much is said in the Bible about how nature, influenced by God, will co-operative to make life easy for mankind in the millennium when they are under God's rule. Compare the EASY LIFE of GOD'S WAY with the HARD LIFE of man's way when he rules himself. God calls man's way the BABYLONIAN system. Read of the RIGOR AND TOIL AND BONDAGE of living by this system in Revelation 18:2, 10, 13, 14, 23, 24.

GOD'S WAY OF LIFE is the WAY OF LIBERTY—the EASY WAY, but MAN IS NOT REALLY CONVINCED THAT IT IS. God is

now, through man's own Babylonish system, LETTING MAN CONVINCE HIMSELF! LOOK AT THIS WORLD'S FOREBODING FUTURE!

3. Will there be old men and women and children as well as PEOPLE of other AGES, IN THE MILLENNIUM? Zechariah 8:4-5; 10:9. Won't there be cities? Amos 9:14; Isaiah 44:26.
4. Will people have peace? Micah 4:4.

How does 1 Kings 4:25 mention the expression "under His FIG TREE"? Did every man mentioned there actually sit "under his fig tree" all the days of Solomon or is this essentially a symbol of PEACE? THIS SHOWS THE NECESSITY OF LETTING THE BIBLE INTERPRET ITSELF! All will rest under the shade of their own trees and grape arbors and none will rob them of it by wars or other means.

5. Some complain today about PRIVATE OWNERSHIP. Communists, Socialists, and many others are against it. Notice the word "his" in Micah 4:4. Does God think it is improper? Will people have their own property in the millennium? Will people be liberated from systems which deprive them of the righteous rewards of their own toil?
6. Today, the doctors of this world have great difficulties in trying to prevent lameness. Blindness, deafness, and dumbness are among their most baffling cases. BUT what will CHRIST do with such cases? Will it be hard for Him to CURE them? Isaiah 35:5-6. If it were, would God make such broad sweeping statements? ISN'T ALL THIS A PART OF "THE GOOD NEWS OF THE WORLD TOMORROW"?

Bounteous Crops

1. Rain is one of God's choicest blessings (Ezekiel 34:26). Will God see that rain is given for the seed? Isaiah 30:23. Will there even be springs and streams of water on every high hill? Verse 25. Won't these mountain streams make beautiful resort areas?
2. As a result of the ABUNDANCE OF RAIN what will happen? Isaiah 35:7. What else will happen? Isaiah 35:1.
3. Today, the greater portion of the EARTH is unproductive—only a small area of the land surface is actually TILLABLE. There are many deserts and wildernesses. After studying Isaiah 35:7 and Isaiah 32:15, can you say that this will be true during the coming UTOPIA?

4. The AGRICULTURAL WEALTH of a nation is one of the greatest assets it can have. But the farmers and others that are in agriculture have had to gamble with the weather and rainfall throughout the centuries. Wouldn't it be the most JOYFUL NEWS to them if they were assured that all their work would be a success? FOOD AND WATER are the outstanding necessities of all people. All will certainly be interested in this good news!
5. What will happen to the family fruit ORCHARDS AND GARDENS? Amos 9:14. In the United States and Kenya have droughts affected agricultural production? In Palestine will all have great success with their vineyards? Jeremiah 31:5. What will the people drink? Amos 9:14.
6. Will PEOPLE SING PRAISES TO THE LORD FOR the ABUNDANCE of the crop He will bestow upon them? Jeremiah 31:12.
7. Today, some are concerned about the price of meat. Meat is helpful for a well-balanced diet. Does God say that there will be large pastures and livestock in the millennium? Isaiah 30:23-24. Will many have goat's milk for food? Cf. Proverbs 27:27.
8. Will there be a great abundance of FISH to eat for those who live in Palestine—and for the rest of the world? Ezekiel 47:9-10.
9. WHAT IS THE BASIC REASON BEHIND THE FACT THAT THERE WILL BE SO MUCH AGRICULTURE PROSPERITY IN THE MILLENNIUM? When Adam DISOBEYED God, He said: "Cursed is THE GROUND for your sake; ... thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you" (Genesis 3:17-18). To this day the curse has existed in degree. Human 'solutions' such as herbicides and genetically-modified organisms (GMOs) cause harm to the environment and can also negatively affect human health. God has a better way.

What will happen in the millennium when men and women obey THE WAY of God? Will GOD REMOVE this CURSE? Consider what is taught in Isaiah 55:13.

10. Often, after men and women have succeeded in gaining their just reward for sweat and toil, others ROB them of it. This will NOT be true in the soon-coming future, will it? Isaiah 62:8-9.
11. Will there actually be a SUPER-ABUNDANCE OF FOODS? Amos 9:13.
12. With all the super-abundance of foods and the good things in life, there is the question of how they will be

used. We have seen that there will be many vineyards and much WINE (Amos 9:14). What will Christ's attitude be in regard to liquor? Will He teach MODERATION or will He teach total abstinence? We can obtain an idea of the attitude He will take by noticing the attitude He took when He was here before. What was it? John 2:1-11 and Matthew 11:19. What was the Apostle Paul's? 1 Timothy 5:23; Ephesians 5:18.

13. Will a famine come along even though there have been years and years of prosperity in the millennium? Does God say "NO FAMINE" for those that obey? Ezekiel 36:29-30. What will happen to any nation that disobeys? Zechariah 14:17-19.
14. Will farm animals range over LUSH PASTURES? Isaiah 30:23-24. Won't this make the MEAT healthier than the way many countries (like the USA) raise it? Various studies have confirmed that pasture-fed beef has certain health benefits that GMO-corn fed beef does not have.

COMMENT: Some assume that Isaiah 11:9 means that humans will not kill and eat animals during the millennium. By comparing it with verse 8, it is plainly shown that serpents or WILD ANIMALS WILL NOT DESTROY each other OR HURT little children. It is not referring to the human diet. Otherwise, there would be no reason to tell of the abundance of fish that fishermen will catch (Ezekiel 47:9-10).

NEW Natures!!

1. Will GOD ACTUALLY MIRACULOUSLY CHANGE THE NATURES OF THE CREATURES OF THE EARTH IN THE MILLENNIUM? What does He say He will do with the natures of ANIMALS? Will they be afraid? Isaiah 11:6-8. And with the natures of the FOWLS and CREEPING THINGS? Hosea 2:18. And with the natures of the POISONOUS CREATURES? Isaiah 11:8. And with the natures of the FEROCIOUS ANIMALS? Isaiah 11:6-7. Will they be PEACEFUL? Ezekiel 34:25.

AND, above all, WHAT DOES GOD SAY HE WILL DO WITH THE NATURE OF HUMANS in the millennium? Ezekiel 36:26-27.

2. The heart of a human symbolises what we call human nature. What does God say of the human heart as it is today? Jeremiah 17:9. Aren't humans often quick to shed blood? Romans 3:9-18. Note especially verse 15.

COMMENT: AS GOD IS GOING TO CHANGE THE INBORN DESIRE OF THE LION FROM THE WISH TO DESTROY FOR FOOD TO THE DESIRE TO EAT STRAW, and is going

to pacify the natures of all other creatures, WHAT MARVELLOUS AND MIRACULOUS THINGS ARE IN STORE WHEN GOD CHANGES HUMAN NATURE IN THE DAYS JUST AHEAD! This change occurs in the MIND. It is BROUGHT ABOUT BY REPENTANCE!

3. When God changes humanity's attitude so that humans will desire FROM THEIR INNERMOST BEING to follow the right way—God's way—THEN HUMANS WILL INDEED HAVE REAL JOY AND HAPPINESS. GOD IS GOING TO MIRACULOUSLY PLACE HIS VERY OWN LOVING NATURE WITHIN HUMANS when the people of the millennial world repent of following their old ways. PEOPLE WILL LOVE THEIR FELLOW MAN and WOMAN and DO EVERYTHING within their power TO MAKE THE OTHER PERSON HAPPY.

That is what WILL MAKE the Millennial world AND ACTUAL UTOPIA!! REMEMBER THIS. It is one of the most important points in your Bible! There will be more on this—much much more—when you come to the Lessons on the Old and New Covenants! These will vitally apply to you—personally! They will explain to you how you can have an inward "Utopia" start now!

GENERAL SUMMARY, PLUS!

GOD WILL SOON FORCE THE PEOPLE OF THIS WORLD TO CEASE FROM FOLLOWING THEIR WAY OF LIVING. They will be compelled to step aside AND WATCH HIS WAY—the way this age calls heresy or cultic—IN ACTION ON THIS EARTH! The two mighty streams of water, which will flow east and west from Jerusalem and give abundant life to all things they reach, will call the attention of all nations to the influence of the rule of Christ as He administers not man's, but God's precepts, for a full and abundant life.

What will happen? What else could possibly happen than that the Utopia mankind has always longed for will begin to materialize. And HUMANANITY WILL AT LONG LAST BEGIN TO WAKE UP! Humans will BEGIN TO SEE through the veil of the prejudices which have prevented them from FOLLOWING the methods—the LAWS OF GOD, if you please—which would BRING ABOUT THE REALIZATION OF TRUE DESIRES.

Has God known from the beginning that humans would finally BECOME CONVINCED HIS WAYS WERE WRONG when they have the results of the two ways—Satan's way and God's way—laid side by side for comparison? Hear what God says—HE PLANNED IT THIS WAY!—"The Lord of hosts (shall) make unto ALL people a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine in the lees well refined (in the millennium). AND HE WILL DESTROY IN THIS MOUNTAIN THE FACE OF THE COVERING

CAST OVER ALL PEOPLE, AND THE VEIL THAT IS SPEAD OVER ALL NATIONS" (Isaiah 25:6-7, KJV). A veil that Satan the Devil, who will be bound for one thousand years (Revelation 20:1-3), has helped cast over humanity (2 Corinthians 4:3-4).

Do you grasp the significance of this? God said long ago that a time would come WHEN HE WILL CAUSE THE PEOPLE OF THIS EARTH TO LIVE UNBELIEVABLY WELL AND THAT IN DOING THIS THEY WOULD WAKE UP TO A GREAT TRUTH!—THE TRUTH THAT GOD'S WAYS ARE BEST. This time is about here. This is the "GOOD NEWS" of the world tomorrow!

What will they begin to do, when this truth starts to dawn on them? GREAT NUMBERS WILL FERVENTLY REPENT OF FOLLOWING THEIR OLD INEFFECIENT WAYS OF TRYING TO HAVE TRUE HAPPINESS, AND GOD WILL BEGIN TO MIRACULOUSLY CHANGE THE NATURES OF THESE REPENTANT ONES. THEY WILL FERVENTLY SEEK TO BE RE-EDUCATED TO GOD'S WAY AS REVEALED BY THE COMMANDMENTS AND PRECEPTS IN YOUR BIBLE! The old ways of this world will be outmoded! THEY WILL HAVE FOUND A BETTER WAY and they will be firmly convinced that THE MORE THEY CAN LEARN OF GOD'S BETTER WAY, THE HAPPIER THEIR EXISTENCE WILL BE! And in the mean time they will marvel at the rich rewards they receive for their relatively easy labors.

Will they seek in vain for teachers? No! This is the time when God says Christ will come with "ten thousands of saints" for the very purpose of teaching them (Jude 14, 15). Of this time God says:

Your teachers will not be moved into a corner anymore, But your eyes shall see your teachers. Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," Whenever you turn to the right hand Or whenever you turn to the left." (Isaiah 30:20-21).

RE-EDUCATION away from THIS WORLDS ERRORS WILL BE CONDUCTED ON A VAST SCALE! The results:

For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD (God's knowledge) As the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:9).

GOD PROMISES THIS!

And what about corrections when people err? They will be swift and certain, but will become milder and milder as people learn more of the ways which really make them happy. The many—not few—will go up to Jerusalem by the actual road named "The Way of Holiness" (Isaiah 35:8, KJV), which Christ will have built as a PHYSICAL REMINDER of God's way. They will say, "He will teach us His ways" (Micah 4:2). They will also, in prayer, seek God by His Spiritual "Way

of Holiness."

As with all the physical creatures, humanity's own nature will begin to change. The changes in the natures of these creatures will be a CONSTANT REMINDER to humans of the change that is taking place within humans. Humanity, like lions, will become peaceful. There will be not be the type strife about which way to follow. Humanity will KNOW! For a time, HUMANITY'S INNER MOST DESIRE WILL BE TO BECOME EVER CLOSER AND CLOSER TO GOD BOTH MENTALLY AND BODILY—CLOSER TO THE ONE WHO CAN MAKE ALL PROPER DESIRES FOR UTOPIAS COME TRUE!

They will at last learn that God is the best FRIEND they have ever had!

Then GOD WILL REALLY SET HIS HAND TO SAVE THE WORLD. The harvest of human souls will become ripe for gathering into the Kingdom of God. Human experience in living both the evil and good way of life to the full will convince the mortal human beings still alive at Jesus' return that God's way is best for us. The vast majority will undoubtedly choose the good way of life—God's WAY—and will begin to OBEY God, fitting themselves to be transformed into immortal beings in the Kingdom of God.

God will not be hurried, nor does He falter, in carrying out His PLAN to make us His sons. No wonder that this present age is only "A day of salvation" (Revelation 20:12).

What of those not resurrected before the millennium?

5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. (

Revelation 20:5)

What will those who are resurrected later see? A judgment and an opportunity:

7 Now when the thousand years have expired, ... 11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. (Revelation 20:7,11-13).

Those not called in this age, those who never really had an opportunity for salvation, will realize their guilt in the judgment. Doesn't the Bible teach that "Mercy triumphs over judgment?" (James 2:13).

Those willing will be called then into a covenant with

God. Those who refuse by rebelling will not become part of spiritual Israel (cf. Romans 2:29). During this time of judgment, God will plead with people, who by then should realize that they have sinned and need salvation through Jesus Christ--the only name under heaven whereby men can be saved (Acts 4:10-12).

God will be able to contrast His ways with the ways of humankind. When those resurrected see how humans started out with a very good and beautiful Earth, then messed up and nearly completely destroyed it (Revelation 11:18) in their 6,000 years, they will realize that it was not wise for humankind to distance itself from the true God. He will apparently point out Satan's role in deceiving humankind (Revelation 12:9) as well as show how insignificant Satan really is (Isaiah 14:12-16). He will apparently point out the dangers of individual sin and lust (James 1:14-15) and point out how well humanity did during the millennium.

God will point out that He had to intervene to stop the destruction of all flesh (Matthew 24:22). Jesus will have implemented His kingdom for 1,000 years (Revelation 20:4-5). God may also point out how well humans did during this millennium (Isaiah 35:1-10; 41:20; 51:3). And He will apparently explain that to all that since each individual is unique and can give love in a unique way, that He has a special purpose of each individually (John 14:2-3) to complete God's plan (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:12-27), an eternity so great that is now beyond their comprehension (1 Corinthians 2:9). Nearly all who ever lived will accept God's offer of salvation—and part of the reason why will be because they will how well humanity did following God's ways during the utopia known as the millennium.

For more information on some of these last items, please check out the articles Universal Offer of Salvation (<http://www.cogwriter.com/apocatastasis.htm>), The Last Great Day: Shemini 'Azeret (<http://www.cogwriter.com/last-great-day.htm>), and Does God Have a 6,000 Plan? (http://www.cogwriter.com/six_thousand_year_plan_6000.htm).

EARTH IS OUR INHERITANCE



Pastor Evans Ochieng and his wife Rosemary

By Evans Ochieng Kisiengo

Greetings to all brethren. The word of God is what we really have to be studying to make sure that we are close to, and become closer to, God. Those of us who believe the Bible should all know that the Kingdom of God is at hand.

We are reminded that we are not children of darkness, thus the Day of the Lord should not unknowingly overtake us.

1 But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. 2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 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. 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. 5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. (1 Thessalonians 5:1-6)

Concerning the end time prophecies, God's church is not in darkness that the coming of Messiah should worry us and come upon us as a thief. Prophecy is the light (cf. 2 Peter 1:19) to show us where we are in God's plan and what will happen at the coming of Messiah.

Psalms 119:105 teaches "your word is a lamp to my feet. And a light to my path."

Since the world is in a deceptive sleep, Jesus will return at a time when it is not prepared. Sudden destruction upon them.

From the time of Simon Magus until these days, people are being deceived, especially by the Protestant churches

and Catholic ones, that they will inherit heaven as a reward of the saints. This teaching is not biblical, but comes from Satan.

Satan was the first to attempt to inherit the heaven as a reward.

Satan had a related thought which led to the great falling away of Satan and his supporters. Satan fell. Notice what the Bible teaches:

12 "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! 13 For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.' (Isaiah 14:12-14)

The same basic thought was put in Eve's mind by Satan that if she ate the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, she would be like the Most High. And this brought a falling away of Adam and Eve.

Likewise to this day, Satan has planted something bad in the minds of the false churches that they will inherit heaven as a reward. Their doctrines and 'unification' will end in great destruction. That is the reason why there is a loud voice from the Lord that we should come out of her:

4 And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. 5 For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. (Revelation 18:4-5)

The world has rejected the rule of Jesus Christ on earth and, disappointingly, that is one reason why people are happy when they are being told that they will inherit heaven.

Because of sin, many have uttered words of falsehood:

12 For our transgressions are multiplied before You, And our sins testify against us; For our transgressions are with us, And as for our iniquities, we know them: 13 In transgressing and lying against the Lord, And departing from our God, Speaking oppression and revolt, Conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood. (Isaiah 59:12-13)

Most of organizations that claim to be Christian believe and teach that when their faithful members die, they will go to heaven. Their time of going is what differs between some of the groups. Some teach that they are going the same

day they die, some after three days, while some teach that when Jesus will return is when they will be taken up into heaven to live in heaven.

Those who were once members of Seventh Day Adventist Church realize that they strongly teach that when one dies, they go to heaven and that they shall inherit heaven. If you would ever find a chance to ask them why they believe so, they would normally rush to the following scriptures:

1 Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. (John 14:1-4)

When the Bible speaks about the house, it does not always mean the houses like the ones we live in, but it also talks about the spiritual body with which we shall be clothed at the return of our LORD and SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST:

1 For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, 3 if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. 4 For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. 5 Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. (2 Corinthians 5:1-5)

The Bible shows that there is a type of 'house,' New Jerusalem that will come down from heaven:

2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. 4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." (Revelation 21:2-4)

New Jerusalem is coming down from heaven! Not that Christians go up to heaven to this New Jerusalem.

Believe the Bible

The Bible interprets itself, and doctrinal proofs come from

the Bible. The Apostle Paul wrote:

16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

John 14:1-3 is the very strong verse that some organizations hold strongly to support that they shall inherit Heaven and not earth.

But what does your Bible say? Let's take a look at some words from Jesus:

5 Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth. (Matthew 5:5)

Now I don't know if those who believe they go to heaven have ever seriously considered this verse. Remember brethren, God inspired the apostle Peter to write:

19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: (2 Peter 1:19, KJV)

We highly need to be willing to face the truth and prove only the truth from the Bible that Christ will return to this planet Earth as King of Kings and thus we shall inherit the earth, not heaven.

We see all the wars around the world, deadly diseases like HIV/AIDS and now Ebola. We must be ready for the Kingdom of God is at hand (Mark 1:14).

In Kenya, AIDS is killing hundreds of people almost every month. Children are suffering as they remaining total orphans who often cannot get a place to stay. The numbers of orphans are increasing day by day throughout the country. There has also been drought in parts of the nation. We hope that soon, the King of Peace will come to restore things and bring comfort to all mankind.

If we study our bible keenly, we shall understand that the Bible explains itself and thus we have no reason to neither add nor subtract from the writings of the Lord as the Bible commands us. Remember the bible tell us that God will send Jesus to earth again:

20 and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, 21 whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:20-21)

A time of restoration begins when Jesus returns.

Notice that God cursed the ground after Adam ate the forbidden tree:

17 Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. 18 Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. 19 In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return." (Genesis 3:17-19)

That curse will be gone (cf. Isaiah 55:13). Jesus is coming back to restore all things. And to restore the kingdom of God on earth:

8 And you, O tower of the flock, The stronghold of the daughter of Zion, To you shall it come, Even the former dominion shall come, The kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem. (Micah 4:8)

In Revelation, the Bible tell us something very important to take into consideration about the planet earth and its governments:

15 And the seventh angel sounded and there were great voices in heaven saying the Kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ and he shall reign forever and ever. (Revelation 11:15)

I wonder what most people who claim to be affiliated with Bible study really believe! It is not a matter of reading one verse and holding onto it very strong without considering if the Bible explains itself very clear. We need to look at the whole Bible:

10 For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little. (Isaiah 28:10)

Christ will soon take over the deceived world and its poor and corrupt governing. Notice:

16 And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. (Revelation 19:16)

Isaiah prophesized something very important hundreds of years before Christ was born which was inspired by God:

6 For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of

His government and peace There will be no end (Isaiah 9:6-7).

Has someone ever questioned why Christ was prophesied as prince of peace? This is very important to know now considering the ungodly things we see happening around the world. God knew there would be conflicts, famines-lack of food, and “pestilences”-disease epidemics, over the earth during the end time (Matthew 24:4-8) and He also knew there was to be someone to restore peace out of that conflict.

With Christ ruling the world there shall be peace and this is a reason why His name was prophesied to be ‘prince of peace.’ He alone would restore peace to this deceived world. There are numerous verses that support the Kingdom of God returning to planet earth and not heaven as many have thought.

But guess what brethren? We may have to lose many friends if we will follow the truth and teach that we shall inherit the earth. Many may say we are deceiving them if we ask them to perhaps rethink over this, and instead hate us for standing for the truth.

But should we worry if we are accused of teaching the truth? I know many will say we should not be afraid and that is the answer. We should remain closer to God and follow his teachings and keep his commandments. Sadly, many believe in a god that is not truly God:

10 For pass beyond the coasts of Cyprus and see, Send to Kedar and consider diligently, And see if there has been such a thing. 11 Has a nation changed its gods, Which are not gods? But My people have changed their Glory For what does not profit. 12 Be astonished, O heavens, at this, And be horribly afraid; Be very desolate,” says the Lord. (Jeremiah 2:10-12)

God also says that if you love me, keep my commandments (John 14:15).

Can someone consider, while working, doing what is contrary to his/her master? How will your master treat you? With love? Hate? Or will he/she just let you be there and serve even though you don’t do what he/she wants?

Everyone needs to think about this, but the correct answer is “No master will be happy with you if you go contrary to his will.”

Christians Are to Have Dominion

God will not be happy with those who direct people to heaven (2 Peter 2:1-3), while His word teaches that we were made to inherit the earth.

16 The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord’s; but the earth He has given to the children of men. (Psalm 115:16)

Brethren this is very clear. Those who claim to have a plan to inherit heaven as a reward should know that humans were given the earth to inherit as a reward. Man was made from dust. And was given dominion over the earth:

26 Then God said, let Us make man in our image, according to our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. (Genesis 1:26)

Humankind was challenged by Satan, sadly heeded him (Genesis 3:4-6; 1 Timothy 2:14), and lost the kingship, life, and some of the likeness of God.

When Christ returns, we shall gain all that humankind lost and more. And we shall be like Him:

1 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. (1 John 3:1-2)

Brethren, this is wonderful. we shall rule with him, we shall have an immortal body like Him, and we shall have eternal life like Him and dominion over the earth.

RESTORATION WILL BE FULLY DONE. We shall have one government with one King. Those who do God’s will until the end shall be kings and priests:

10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth. (Revelation 5:10)

28 “But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials. 29 And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, 30 that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” (Luke 22:28-30)

Those who will try and persevere in this ‘war zone world’ and keep God’s commandments shall be given positions in Christ’s kingdom that is yet to come.

26 And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations — 27 ‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron; (Revelation 2:26-27)

We should now start preparing for tomorrow as we need to

comply with and abide forever in God's teachings. Not only knowing and believing, but also putting it into practice.

We need to also help others know that our inheritance is the earth and not heaven brethren. Remember our crown shall be according to our works, we can never expect something big if we invested something small. There is a parable in Luke 19:11-27 talking about the returning of the Messiah on earth and those being rewarded based upon the fruits their works accomplished.

Christ's name shall be Prince of Peace. When He returns with His Kingdom, Satan will be bound and there shall be peace under His Kingdom.

Brethren, do you personally believe that the world is deceived as we in the true Church have heard over and over for many years? It is sincerely very important for you and I as Christians to prove this to ourselves while we study God's word.

If we have to truly believe the Bible, then we must agree that truly this is a deceived world and we need not to flow with current.

But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. (2 Corinthians 4:3-4 KJV)

Brethren if we cannot see and know that this world is deceived, then our minds must be blinded by the god of this world. We need to make a U turn and face God's way of living. We need to help restore true Christianity.

How should we do this? Is it only for one person to do? How can we restore true Christianity as the true church of God? All of us must know that it will be a combination of us all to try and bring things to work together but we can only do that if God is truly in charge of our lives. Remember the Bible says that no one comes to Jesus but only if His Father draws him.

Many have taken Christ's word for granted and try to make big meetings trying to collect people to God. Well that is not bad to do, but we must know that it is God who called us into truth and it is He who also calls others to the truth. He can use anyone to ensure that the calling reaches to whoever He wants to bring to his true Church and there it is up to us to study and teach the truth as someone may be willing to hear it.

We need to study and understand so that we can help any who might ask us:

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: (1 Peter 3:15, KJV)

The task of restoration is more complex than most may think. Much will need to be done. Remember Paul's instructions to Christians in Corinth:

1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. (1 Corinthians 11:1, KJV)

For all of us who say we want to be like Christ, we must stand for, and as appropriately, teach the truth. We must know the truth. We must always walk in truth even as Christ did:

6 He who says he abides in me ought himself also to walk even as he walked. (1 John 2:6)

This is a very important verse. Many say they believe in God, but they teach that we shall inherit heaven, so that person is not walking as Christ did because he is not teaching the truth! Most who claim Christianity also do not have the same practices that Jesus endorsed.

Now the leaders of various organizations must know that they have special a task to also take care and not to mislead the sheep as it is with most organizations. But most will not tell the whole truth like the Apostle Paul did:

27 For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. 28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. (Acts 20:27-28)

So to all my brethren please take heed and let's all try to walk as Christ walked—which also includes prayer. It is not possible to walk as Jesus did if we don't pray.

We should teach and make many know that we shall inherit the earth and not heaven.

And have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth. (Revelation 5:10).

And let us not forget:

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 (Matthew 24:14).

Please take heed as we should all know that Continuing Church of God is trying to prove all things from the Bible, and thus represents the woman of Revelation 12:13-17—

the end time Church.

We Need to Continue and Heed God's Word

If you have repented, been converted, and been baptized, you need to continue in that path:

14 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, 15 while it is said:

“Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.” (Hebrews 3:14-15)

The Book of Hebrews talks about being steadfast. If we check into our concordance, we see that steadfast means to place firmly, to stiffen, or to grow hard. We must always grow harder in our determination to place ourselves firmly with God.

Brethren we should all know that we can only do this by putting in place the Ten Commandments of God. We should understand, that way we shall inherit the Earth and be kings and priests in the soon coming Kingdom.

24 Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us. (1 John 3:24)

We are reminded continuously to keep His commandments and to love our neighbours as we love ourselves.

We need to stand for the truth and teaching the truth when asked.

24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, (Hebrews 10:24)

We need to be the right examples.

15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again. (2 Corinthians 5:15)

We need to truly live as Christians in the age.

Brethren, our problem is we don't see ourselves as God sees us. Even then, we really can't unless He shows us.

Let us pray brethren that God may open our eyes to ourselves, our helpless and hopeless condition must be understood so proper repentance can continue.

We cannot just say we believe and try to force others to also believe because we believe. We must prove our beliefs from the Bible. Thus we know that we can prove that Christ

will return with His kingdom to planet earth and not heaven. It is to only those who God will call to know of this and more about the Kingdom of God.

19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe — and tremble! 20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? (James 2:19-20)

So it is not a only matter of believing, but also acting on the truth.

Knowing this, let us take a look at one of David's prayers:

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; 24 And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting. (Psalms 139:23-24)

Do you really want God to know your heart and try you?

Well, since we are to become part of God's family (Ephesians 3:14-16), we need to listen to God's truth.

Part of the reward of righteousness is to become the children of God and brothers and sisters to Jesus Christ.

And how can you become sons and daughters of God? By living as Christ did and by not touching the unclean:

17 Therefore “Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you.” 18 ‘I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty.” (2 Corinthians 6:17-18)

Strive to do the will of GOD. Consider baptism if you have not been properly baptized:

5 Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. (John 3:5)

38 Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.” (Acts 2:38-39)

Listen to God's word. Believe God's word. Be able to answer with God's word.

Thank you brethren. Let us all prepare to meet our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. If so, the day will come when we can reign with Him on the Earth.

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



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Daily Bible News Prophecy www.cogwriter.com

CCOG.AFRICA This is a website targeted towards Africa. It has information in English, Kiswahili, Dholuo, and other languages.

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

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

CCOG.NZ This website is targeted towards those in New Zealand.

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

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



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