



THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

The official newspaper of The Church of God International

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

Spring 2009

It's a Matter of the Heart...

Is the United States Beyond Recovery?

Many are asking what is going on with the United States and the rest of the world. A once-thriving global economy offering a worldwide potential of double-digit economic growth for some nations is now unable to project low, single-digit increases. Many are asking where we are headed. Historically, there has never been such a worldwide economic downturn simultaneously grinding to such an enormous slowdown! What does it all mean?

by Bill Watson



Bill Watson

Much of the daily economic news and potential terrorist and military threats and dangers we are surrounded by is unnerving, at best, for many of us. Just when you think you've finally

heard it all, something else comes along even more heinous and corrupt. Many of us remember the savings and loan fiasco, Enron, and more recently the failures of Bear Sterns and Washington Mutual, along with the near bankrupt disaster of the whole automotive industry, which recently received some T.A.R.P. money to offset any filings. As we go to print, the SEC is reporting details of over 140 cases of insider trading violations. And of course, we

can't forget the story of Mr. Madoff (pronounced, unbelievably, as "Made-off"), which is still unfolding. The amount of money swindled from literally thousands of people and charitable organizations by this once prominent and wealthy financial fund manager and former chief of the NASDAQ, is beyond the comprehension of most. It remains the opinion from many in the financial community that there will be *more* "without a doubt."

Never before in the history of our nation have we, the people of the United States of America, operated the country with a *trillion dollar annual deficit!* For most of us, that much money is beyond our comprehension—simply "numbing." To better understand just how much money this is, consider this: a trillion dollars is a one (1), with twelve zeros behind it (\$1,000,000,000,000). In other words, it's a thousand billion dollars. Let me explain it another way: if you laid one-dollar bills end-to-end, the

chain would stretch from earth to the moon and back again *200 times* before you ran out of dollar bills. Consider this: that's over half the distance to the sun! One *trillion seconds* would put you back in the year 31,688 B.C.—incredible!

American workers are earning, on the average, a net 30 percent *less* in real wages than they did in 1973. After taxes, the average two-paycheck family barely has the purchasing power one had 30 years ago. In addition, the U.S. government *spends more* than the entire GDP of Australia, China, and Spain combined. And if that weren't enough, the national *accrued debt* now *exceeds the total net worth of all the American people!* What that means is after adding up the debt services the U.S. has generated over decades of deficit spending by the "under-funded entitlement programs" like Social Security, Medicare, etc., and obligations of interest/yields on the national debt/loans and outstanding insurance guarantees, it all adds up

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New Feature:

Canadian Corner

by John Coish



John Coish

"What in the world is happening?" is a common question from many older, traditional Bible-believing Christians.

Many people in the U.S. have been somewhat shielded from the enormity of the changes that have occurred in Canada over the past few decades. *Look out—your world is being rocked right now!*

Despite the vast majority of average Canadians agreeing with our legal system and its biblical foundation, we were told multiculturalism was about tolerance of others' cultures, and we accepted it. This has led to Canada being considered pluralistic, with Christianity not receiving preference in the schools or in any public facility. More recently, government has enforced its political correctness on businesses receiving assistance from the government, now affecting well over half the employment in the country. That is not what was presented to Canadians, but by stealth it has become the official position.

Despite over 85 percent of Canadians disagreeing with homosexuality being a right in 1988, the courts illegally made it a part of the Canadian Constitution, and the government acquiesced. Ever since, sexual orientation has become a right. To speak out against it being acceptable behaviour has become a wrong—a wrong punishable by fines, indoctrination training (called "diversity training"), hate crime charges, and cut-off of government assistance. Our *Armor of God*

program is refused airing in Canada if the topic is homosexuality, and newspapers will not allow us to purchase advertising to talk on the subject. On the other hand, homosexuals who act with hatred against conservative Christians are never charged with hate crimes, and are given the fullest possibility of tolerance and acceptance of their actions. A "right," supposedly so that homosexuals would not be mistreated, has in turn been used to destroy the rights of Christians to practice their beliefs and definitely express them in public without intimidation. Slowly and stealthily this occurred.

We now attack politically incorrect comments by taking the most extreme case and then applying a law—I'll call it the "fairness doctrine"—and then eliminating the right for anyone who doesn't agree with liberal opinions from being allowed to express their opinion. In Canada, this occurred through hate-crime changes and Human Rights Commissions so that hundreds of Canadians wrote to me stating how shameful it was that we would not speak out and teach that homosexuality is wrong. I respond we can't—we aren't allowed, or more specifically, *permitted* to by the media. A policy that was supposedly set up to stop murders or beatings is being used to solely stop biblical fundamentalism from being expressed. It was always illegal to murder or beat up someone. Stealth and lies brought in these changes.

Despite that the vast majority of Canadians supporting parental rights and responsibilities, like the right to discipline or properly spank their child, in poll after poll, radical liberals have attacked this

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Life's Puzzle

by Frank Klett



Frank Klett

Everyone who has ever lived wanted a life filled with great peace and happiness—each day filled with joy, prosperity, and perfect weather. People everywhere have desired the same things—good health, long life, and everything good.

Ask yourself the question, Why hasn't the history of man been filled with these good things? Scripture tells us in Psalm 37:4, "Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." To have every good thing we desire, we can liken it to

having all the pieces of a puzzle. Every piece must be put in its proper place so we can see the total picture. This searching for the proper puzzle pieces is clearly explained in Isaiah 28:10: "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept: line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little."

To search for these pieces as an individual, we need to examine the concept of "we and I." The "I" attitude can be examined in Isaiah 14:12-15: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou has said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High." Consider the five "I's" in these verses. Different people in the history of man come to mind as following the "I" principle. Adolph Hitler is one prime example. His was a self-centered life of promoting his own ideas that were not righteous, but evil. Doesn't this sound like the works of the evil one, Satan? With the aid of Satan the evil one, the adversary, Hitler exhibited the "I" or "me" syndrome, always shifting the blame when things didn't go his way. He lied and pointed out the supposed faults of others to justify his demented ideas. He had no humility in his character to ever admit he was wrong. He, just like Satan, argued and stood up for his opinion and crushed and eliminated all opposition. Like Satan, his life was only miserable continually.

The other attitude is the "we" principle. This principle can also be used in an evil way, but our focus will be to look at the positive application. Paul tells us, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Ephesians 5:25). Christ loved the church and gave Himself for us. His focus was always an outgoing loving concern for others. Christ's outgoing servant leadership attitude is always the same. Hebrews 13:8 says, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever." His total perfect way is to give, not to take. James 3:16-17 contrasts the two philosophies: "For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

Looking for the correct puzzle pieces that will show us a beautiful complete puzzle, we must consider Philemon 4:8: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

To be totally happy and have all the good things God wants us to have, we must continually walk with Him. A triangle relationship with the Father, Christ and us is the only workable relationship. A solid triangle is very strong. Ecclesiastes 4:12 states, "...a three-fold cord is not quickly broken." In John 17:21 we read, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." One central piece of the puzzle, to which all the other pieces connect, is to be one with the Father and the Son. Please read Leviticus 26:1-13 and Deuteronomy 28:1-14.

We all make mistakes and miss the mark continually, but as we read in Isaiah 1:18, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Our part in this puzzle is to do everything God's way. Crooner Frank Sinatra sang, *I Did It My Way*. This exemplifies the "I" principle, and God will never bless this selfish way of life. To live life "your" way is like mixing the pieces from a second, different puzzle into the mix and wondering why all the pieces don't fit. We must do it *God's* way. We must cast out the pieces that do not fit into God's plan for man. To complete the beautiful puzzle of life God has in store for us, we must use the correct pieces. The "we" principle always produces positive results. Totally put yourself in God's hands, and He will guide you totally. □



A MILESTONE!

You may notice that this first-quarter edition of the *I.N.* has been enlarged by four pages.

The *International News* is 30 years old!

The *Church of God International* has experienced many blessings and trials through the years, and we thank our Lord and Savior that He has preserved us. May we continue to serve Him and be a part of the body of Christ!

The editor

Notice!

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



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

We look forward to seeing you *in print!*

The Editor

Everyone is welcome!

The Church of God International has many congregations, and we always welcome visitors and newcomers. Our worship services are open to the public. We hope you will join us for Sabbath services soon. For further information about a congregation near you, please call our home office at (903) 939-2929, or visit our web site at www.cgi.org.

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to about \$78 trillion in total debt liabilities, which happens to be greater than the world's GNP. (Do you remember how much just \$1 trillion is?!)

Doug Casey, in an article from the *Casey Report*, stated, "For roughly a whole generation, the U.S. government's inflation of its currency (unbridled printing of dollars) has been inviting the whole country to live beyond its means. Living beyond your means is what consumer debt is all about. After all, it is a debt-driven economic system the U.S. has adopted. Mortgage debt is where it started, and it allowed people to live in houses much bigger than they could afford. In the *Greater Depression* [his term of what is happening] now upon us, many people won't be able to pay the mortgage. In fact, they won't even be able to pay the utilities and taxes; maintenance will be deferred indefinitely. But that's just the tip of a very big iceberg."

The rest of the story is much grimmer than most realize. No government is presently backing their currencies with anything of value, like gold, silver, or platinum, whereas years ago, a U.S. dollar was essentially an IOU redeemable for gold or silver. Perhaps you have a few of those old silver or gold certificates. Today they're not considered legitimate currency, and are valuable only to collectors of artifacts.

Originally, all American currency was backed by gold or silver, but by the early 1900s, the amount of dollars printed by the treasury finally exceeded the amount of precious metals in supply. Consequently, in 1933, the government took illegal possession and ownership of all the gold and silver, and in effect reneged on its promise of redemption of whatever certificates one might have as an American citizen. Then in 1971, the U.S. Government, under President Nixon, rescinded all redemption rights of "gold for dollars" held by foreign countries. Since that time, *the U.S. dollar is redeemable for nothing!* It is a currency by "fiat," based solely on the confidence of those using it. Nevertheless, the U.S. dollar is still the world's currency standard, and is the reference for all other money values. It is honored for the purchase of goods and services and/or accepted to settle any and all debt, and is recognized to be legal tender and a convertible currency with any and all other world currencies for relative value exchange.

The point is, all nations throughout the world are printing up money as needed, without any relationship to any commodity/precious metal of any type. It has become the "reasonable" thing to do, and is considered the *means to an end* that many economists and financial sages claim will "fix the problem." Is this really the solution, or just another attempt to "paper over" a much more serious problem underscoring the symptoms we now suffer? Doug Casey mentions again, in the January 2009 issue of the *Casey Report*, "I'm of the opinion that what's happening now *isn't just another cyclical downturn* that can be papered over by printing up some more money—although that's exactly what the U.S. and other governments are doing, and in unprecedented amounts. In fact, what the *world's governments* are doing is *not only wrong*, it's exactly the *opposite* of what they should be doing." How can *anyone* determine and conclude, much less the financial experts, that the best way out of debt is to generate more debt? Whoever heard of *spending your way out of debt* or *spending your way into prosperity*? This is an oxymoron to any logical, thinking human being—yet it's exactly what government leaders and financial experts throughout the world intend to do!

Where is the "World" Headed?

During the last quarter of 2008, we saw the largest *socialistic maneuver* in history by the United States government, in combination with other west-

ern nations like the European Union and United Kingdom. The supplemental financial program recently implemented in the U.S. has essentially socialized the banking industry, as in the United Kingdom. The automotive industry is making overtures, while states are also lining up—and believe it or not, even the porn industry! It seems *everyone* is lining up with hands out, making the same argument and appealing to government for a bailout "loan." Many political leaders around the world are all too quick to concede to government intervention. The political class and leadership of the U.S. financial systems have ruined the economy, while driving millions of jobs overseas by over-regulation, taxation, and a plethora of environmental limitations, all designed to impede and limit profits and corporate investment. Even the most recent "sub-prime mortgage" debacle cannot be solely laid at the doorstep of Wall Street, though the public media would like you to believe otherwise. Unquestionably, they had their share of blame, but what underscored the culpability of this collapse was the deregulation of the financial institutions along with the "affirmative action lending quotas" from knowing Congressional politicians, in combination with years of presidential approval, who placed loan mandates on home ownership. Government-subsidized Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac became major facilitators, taking on far too many risky loans with unqualified contracts that were destined to default because individual borrowers were not capable of taking on such a magnitude of debt.

So much of the recent socialization of the West, including the U.S.A., has been a self-fulfilling economic prophecy. With enormous spending and printing of money over the last several years, one could not expect anything remotely different than what has happened. Many of us could see this coming. Unfortunately, this non-enforcement of existing "checks and balances" leads to greater government encroachment by the passing of additional economic legislation. As was said after 9/11, "The economic world will never be the same." As President Obama has repeatedly said, "Change is coming!" But what *kind* of change is the real question.

In Congress, legislation is being considered that would have the potential of changing the financial landscape forever. Nothing is sacred—retirement accounts, Social Security, Medicare, national health care, industrial regulation, taxes, etc. The guise of the nation being in a state of "economic meltdown" will provide a variety of opportunities for additional government intrusion. The bywords "share the wealth" and "sacrifice" are about to take on a much more disturbingly profound and hideous meaning to some of the world's last remaining free democracies. The increased bureaucratic powers among the nations of the world, including the U.S., appear to be positioning themselves to legislate *additional legal means* to access the personal wealth of many of its citizens. This will lead to gaining more control of those revenues in the years ahead, while prolonging access to those in need of government Social Security, Medicare, etc., by extending the years to qualify.

It's no secret that the world is looking to the United States for leadership during these troublesome times. Unfortunately, the U.S. cannot control or manage the circumstances as it once did. The financial markets are far too large and international in nature. They are interlinked like never before, making this an extraordinary time—a first in the economic history of the world. As a matter of fact, the new Treasury Secretary, Timothy Geitner, will be holding meetings in Italy in the coming weeks with the treasury directors of the G-7 nations, International Monetary Fund managers, and other central bankers from around the world.

Also illustrative of this international economic interdependence is how the U.S. looks to China,

India, Russia, and other Arab and South American nations to buy up the excessive dollars printed to finance its debt. Obviously, this is due to the need to pay for the goods and services required to operate the nation. However, our ability to pay the interest and yields for the dollars printed has become so excessive, we now must loan approximately \$2 billion a day to keep the "scheme" afloat. In many ways, it's no different than an unfathomable "Ponzi scheme" so enormous in magnitude, it's remarkable it has lasted this long. It's a testament to the strength of the American economy and the confidence the global community has in the market represented by the American people. It's very fortunate for the U.S. that for now, many of the nations we depend on so heavily to buy up our debt, need our markets to sell their goods and services. However, China, who now owns approximately \$682 billion in U.S. treasuries (4.8 percent of the U.S. GDP), is beginning to hesitate and consider looking elsewhere for more stable investments with higher yields.

The reason is obvious. What happens when unemployment rises excessively, and the American people can't afford to buy those goods and services? What will happen when the money we are "dumping" into the money pool begins to chase fewer goods because production has been reduced by the slowdown of demand, due to this unemployment? Furthermore, what happens when those nations who "park" their currency in U.S. treasuries lose confidence in the American dollar and begin to "cash out" their revenues for other, more stable currencies or investments? Bernie Madoff, the "Ponzi Scheme Master," can explain that very clearly; after all, he's living in the aftermath of his own financial destruction! Yet, regrettably, some insist on saying, "print more money and spend," while others will insist, "reduce government taxes and other regulatory impediments and cut spending."

It's a never-ending debate from both sides of the aisle. Where are the real answers? What needs to be done? How can we recover from this financial and social turmoil, as well as deal with the dangers of terrorism and Middle Eastern nuclear proliferation?

What is the Solution?

Unfortunately, everyone is looking in all the wrong places. This is not a financial problem—it's not a banking problem—nor is it a Wall Street problem. It's not even a problem with government, politics, or capitalism. These have all exacerbated conditions, but they're all just *symptoms* of a much greater, more enormous problem most of us don't realize or understand: it's a matter of the heart!

The underscoring *cause* of many of the world's problems is not laws, systems, or processes, but those individuals sitting in the "driver's seat" who *manage* the laws, systems, and processes, resulting in all the difficulties, problems, and challenges we presently confront. The real reasons behind the issues we face are *spiritual* in nature. Most, if not all, refuse to recognize this for what it is. The *cause* is the *lack of character* in those leaders running the operations, resulting in bad conditions or effects! It's simply a matter of *cause and effect*.

When intelligent graduates of the highest institutions of learning refuse to exercise the discipline of character necessary to manage the interests of those in their trust, that is a matter of the heart! The discipline necessary "not to betray" was never displayed. This clearly illustrates the inadequacies of our educational systems. The emphasis is on teaching individuals how to make a living rather than how to live. We've taken God out of our schools. Christian morality is "M.I.A.!" Most fail to remember that many of the colleges and universities in the United States originally started out as Christian schools. Over the years, as secularism began to incrementally increase, in combination with "moral

Why Does the Bible Contain So Much History and Genealogy?

by Lonnie Clayton Hendrix



Lonnie C. Hendrix

If we believe that God is Life, and the Bible is the *Book of Life*, how can we account for the fact that God has devoted so much of His book (2 Timothy 3:16) to the past? Bibli-

cal scholars have estimated that somewhere between one third to one half of the book is devoted to history, depending on the particular scholar's criteria of classification. Many of the Bible's readers down through history have complained about the numerous genealogies contained in its pages, and their intrusion on the story flow. Many people have chosen to ignore these areas of the Bible. Nevertheless, for any serious student of the Bible, there is simply no ignoring the fact that much of the book deals with the past. What accounts for this emphasis?

First, it is important to recognize that *life* is composed of past, present and future. For most of us, life is the present—it consists of what we are experiencing today. Even so, God inhabits *eternity*. The Psalmist wrote, "...even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" (Psalm 90:2). God does not look at time and life the same way we do: "For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night" (Psalm 90:4). In the book of Revelation, we read that Almighty God *is, was and is to come* (Revelation 1:4, 4:8). Moreover, in keeping with the understanding revealed elsewhere in Scripture that Christ is a perfect reflection of God the Father (Hebrews 1:3), Christ said: "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore..." (Revelation 1:18). We also read that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). Christ also revealed to John that he was the "...Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending...the first and the last..." (Revelation 1:8, 11). Hence, just as God the Father and God the Son reflect *life*, so does the Bible!

The Bible can be divided into three major types of literature: 1) *History* (which also encompasses genealogy), 2) *Moral Teachings* (which tell us how to live and worship God), and 3) *Prophecy* (those passages which relate to future events). There it is again: *Past, Present, and Future*—a perfect reflection of God and life. Moreover, it should not come as any great surprise that the Bible or any other book would reflect the persona of its author. In this connection, it is instructive that John refers to Christ as the "Word"—the personification of God's message for mankind (John 1:1, 14). He went on to write of Christ: "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:3-4). Moreover, God's and Christ's purpose was to ensure that we share in that *life* (John 3:16, 5:24).

Christ told the Jews of His day: "But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape [literally and figuratively]. And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have *life*" (John 5:36-40). In the book of Hebrews, we read: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son..." (Hebrews 1:1-2). Hence, God, Christ, and the Bible reflect *life: past, present, and future*.

It is interesting in this connection that many Christians skip over, ignore, or completely reject large portions of Scripture—mainly those they consider "old" or dealing with the past. What "scriptures" was Christ referring to above when He was talking to the Jews? The New Testament had not been written yet. What "holy scriptures" was Paul referring to in his letter to Timothy—the ones He told Timothy "...are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:15)? What is the purpose of the Old Testament? Why all of these genealogies and histories? If these things are not important, why were they included in Scripture? The short answer is that they are important, or they would not have made it into the Bible!

We have read that Christ and Paul taught that the Old Testament, the only scriptures then in existence, pointed to Jesus Christ and His work. Some would argue that this only covers the specific prophecies dealing with Christ and His work; however, anyone who wishes to understand this subject must look at the bigger picture—we must be able to "see the forest." In a larger sense, the Bible is *one story*.

Although the Bible is certainly universal in its application, have you ever noticed that the book deals almost exclusively with the *descendants* of Abraham? In fact, most other peoples and nations are only addressed insofar as they come into contact with or impact upon the Israelites! The first five books of the Bible deal with the establishment of the Old Covenant with the Israelites, based on God's promises to their ancestor, Abraham. The books of Joshua and Judges tell the story of the Israelites' conquest, settlement, and organization of Canaan, the land promised to Abraham. The books of 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, and 1 and 2 Chronicles recount

the story of the kings of the Israelites. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel were all prophets to the Israelites. Even the New Testament reflects this preoccupation with the Israelites. Christ was a physical descendant of King David of ancient Israel (Matthew 1:1, Luke 1:30-33). We read in Hebrews: "For verily he [Christ] took not on him the nature of angels; *but he took on him the seed of Abraham*" (Hebrews 2:16). Paul wrote to the Romans: "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, *to confirm the promises made unto the fathers*" (Romans 15:8). Paul wrote a great deal about the promises made to Abraham in his letter to the church in Galatia. He said: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. *and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise*" (Galatians 3:26-29). Jesus Christ makes everyone who accepts Him a spiritual Israelite, an heir of Abraham! The apostle Paul wrote to the Romans: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God" (Romans 2:28-29). In his letter to the Gentile church at Ephesus, Paul wrote: "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:11-13). Christ makes all who accept Him the spiritual descendants of Abraham.

In this connection, it is interesting to note that the term "fathers" (meaning ancestors, and most often referring to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), occurs over five hundred times in Scripture! Moreover, the Almighty is referred to as the "God of your fathers" numerous times throughout Scripture. (See Exodus 3:13, 15, 16; 4:5; Deuteronomy 1:11, 21; 4:1; 6:3; 27:3; Joshua 18:3; Judges 2:12; 1 Chronicles 5:25; 12:17; 29:20; 2 Chronicles 7:22; 11:16; 13:12, 18; Acts 3:13; 5:30; 7:32; 22:14; 24:14.) The Almighty is often referred to in Scripture as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or simply as the God of Israel (Exodus 3:6, 15, 16; 4:5; 1 Kings 14:7, 13; 2 Kings 9:6). Jesus Christ is referred to as the "Lion of Judah" and the "Root

[ancestor] of David" (Revelation 5:5). He is also referred to as both the ancestor and descendant of David toward the conclusion of this same New Testament book (Revelation 22:16). Why all of this talk about ancestors and descendants? Why does the Bible continually refer to the promises that "the LORD sware unto your fathers" (Deuteronomy 1:8, 35; 4:31)? Why all of this emphasis on the Israelites?

In understanding these things, it is important to first understand that Almighty God does not change (Psalm 102:25-27, Malachi 3:6, Hebrews 1:12). Moreover, God does not lie. We read in Hebrews: "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus..." (Hebrews 6:17-20). Hence, being always consistent and trustworthy, it would be out of character for God to abandon or change a promise made—even if it seems like ancient history to us. In talking about the Old and the New Covenants, what many people fail to understand is that the promise did not change—how we obtain it did, through Christ.

God provided a new way—through Christ—for us to inherit the promises, because our forefathers (and we) failed to obtain them on their (and our) own. (See Romans 3:23; 5:12.) In the Bible, we have the example of our forefathers' failures continually before our eyes to remind us of where they went wrong, and to warn us from pursuing the same course. If you will notice Stephen's sermon before he was martyred, as recorded in the book of Acts, Stephen recounts the story of their forefathers to the audience—how they failed to listen to God and obey Him (Acts 7). In his first letter to the church at Corinth, Paul wrote: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that *all our fathers* were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. *Now these things were our examples*, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither

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Canadian Corner, continued from page 1

right time and time again. Quietly, Canada signed a UN treaty on the Rights of the Child in 1995, undermining what Canadians want. The mainstream media would portray this UN treaty as a way to protect children from terrible mistreatment. What the treaty has since done by stealth is incredible. A father who disciplined his daughter by prohibiting her from taking a school trip because she repeatedly (dangerously so) violated Internet privileges, was ordered by the courts to allow the child to go on the trip because the discipline was not acceptable. Regardless whether the discipline was perfect or not (most who know the case think the parent was very reasonable and responsible and applaud his efforts), who gave the right to parent your child to the government??

This is what the UN treaty attempts to require:

- *Parents would no longer be able to administer reasonable spankings to their children.*
- *A murderer aged 17 years, 11 months, and 29 days at the time of his crime could no longer be sentenced to life in prison.*
- *Children would have the ability to choose their own religion, while parents would only have the authority to give their children advice about religion.*
- *The “best interest of the child” principle would give the government the ability to override every decision made by every parent if a government worker disagreed with the parent’s decision.*
- *A child’s “right to be heard” would allow him (or her) to seek governmental review of every parental decision with which the child disagreed.*
- *According to existing interpretation, it would be illegal for a nation to spend more on national defense than it does on children’s welfare.*
- *Children would acquire a legally enforceable right to leisure.*
- *Teaching children about Christianity in schools has been held to be out of compliance with the CRC (UN Convention of the Rights of the Child).*
- *Allowing parents to opt their children out of sex education has been held to be out of compliance with the CRC.*
- *Children would have the right to reproductive health information and services, including abortions, without parental knowledge or consent.*

Not surprisingly, our schools follow these principles and feel that parents have no right to know what they teach with respect to sex education or abortion.

Canada has the most liberal infanticide (abortion) policies in the world, and it is taboo to publicly speak against a woman’s supposed right to choose.

Of course, the relationship of man and woman is supposed to reflect on Christ and the church. This right to choose is akin to the church telling Christ, “I will determine if any child lives or dies—it is none of your business.” How many true disciples of Jesus should feel that way? Absolutely none, I hope, but many young Christian girls think this is proper behaviour if their parents are negligent in teaching them.

There is a silent war at work in the world. In the Muslim world, they call it *Fatah*. This is not the same as *Jihad*, which is more by force, something that 300 million Muslims worldwide say they support, and are willing human bombs. *Jihad* is representative of Hezbollah and Hamas and the old PLO. Another 500 million Muslims, though, support *Fatah*, which is quietly, step-by-step, eroding the foundation of “infidels” until they take over. This is the process they are using in the West through increase in population and by taking advantage of every naïve leader and practice they can until they take over institutions and communities and then impose or intimidate their beliefs on non-believers.

For instance, in parts of Britain and Europe, authorities are told to leave communities because they have no right to be there. They suppose they have the right to enforce *Shariah* law in these communities. Islam is always at war with non-believers in one way or the other. Likewise, we have the other pillar—liberalism, or humanism—against us. This is reflected in supposed pluralism, which closely resembles atheism, as most pluralists don’t really believe there is a God who will judge them daily for their actions. We appropriately call atheists and pluralists liberals. By stealth, by lies usually, they have imposed their belief system on fundamentalist Christians, just as Muslims do.

In Canada, the whole bureaucracy—government, courts, schools—has become corrupted by these policies. Many fundamentalist Christians in these areas will not implement some of them—yet. However, the next generation will not be as tolerant towards biblical fundamentalism because they have been taught from birth that it is the problem, not the answer. Surprisingly, Islam is presented as being peace-loving, and worshipping the same God. Both claims are utterly preposterous. Further, God commanded in the law to never associate Him with anything created, for He is the Creator. Allah is simply the pagan moon god.

America is widely recognized by most biblical fundamentalists as the only place where a Christian world view can still be expressed publicly. While most Christian Americans see this right as definitely being under attack at the moment, they ought to know they have nowhere else to flee to in the world. Some have called and emailed me to ask about moving to Canada, but we are much further down the antichrist path. It is considered a hate crime to speak against homosexuality in Canada. Human Rights Commissions demand employers teach employees to value diversity, which includes never saying anything against homosexuality or Islam; but you are never prosecuted for defaming Christ or the Bible. One of our leading politicians wants to force the Human Rights Commissions to publicly prosecute anyone who speaks against political correctness in public. The amazing thing is, these fanatical regressive liberals actually believe they are doing you (and sometimes even God) a favour in destroying the concept of man and woman by destroying the concept of sexual morality, the concept of Jesus as the Son of God, and the Bible as the Word of God. We are currently ahead of the U.S. in persecuting true Christianity, those who believe in the testimony of Jesus and the commandments of God. Each step of the progression is often taken through the creation of a sense of urgency so that “change” must occur to bring peace. Chaos is a friend to terrorists and liberals alike, which is why some liberals support destructive things against their own country to create an environment for change.

Change can be a great thing if someone is repenting and changing from following Satan and sin to following Christ and the Word of God. However, when change is encouraged to support immoral practices, then change, often described as progressive, is historically proven to be regressive to freedom in Christ and a disaster in the making.

What would a Muslim, atheist, or pluralist who believed in *Fatah* do to the U.S. if he became president? Probably he would make it financially weak, shrink the military might as quick and as fast as he could, encourage abortions in the population, prohibit biblical fundamentalism to be expressed in the public square, require politically correct indoctrination, sign UN treaties that would survive after his presidency in reducing the rights of parents, make families and churches weaker by encouraging tolerance of sin, encourage safe sex (sexual immorality), and make everyone more dependent on government. He would do this with flattery, lies as to the real intent, and promises of economic benefit to the people. He might even believe that he does God a favour in doing this. In the end, the people look not to God, government, or committees for a saviour, but to a man.

The world is getting ready to embrace the antichrist that will save them from global warming, trade wars, food shortages, religious hatred (millions more have died from atheists in the past century), financial destruction, etc.

Perhaps we, like Peter and David, would like to start slaying the enemy, but that is not what we have been given to do. Peter wasn’t told to start fighting, but to put away the sword and feed God’s sheep. In doing this, he was shown that he would suffer a terrible death, but that was what he was given to do. He was to do it despite persecution and intimidation, and was never to succumb to the enemy.

The West has followed British Prime Minister Chamberlain’s and U.S. President Roosevelt’s example of believing the lies of the enemy (Hitler then, liberalism and Islam today) and proclaiming peace when there is no peace.

Winston Churchill had a different viewpoint that was finally acknowledged just before Britain was destroyed. His philosophy was, “Never give in—never, never, never, never—in anything great or small, large or petty; never give in except to convictions of honor and good sense. Never yield to force; never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy.”

What should we do in these crazy times? This is what God commanded us to do:

Watch how you are living before Him! Are you an example to your family, friends, coworkers, and neighbours? Do you honour your boss whether he is right or not? Do you honour your parents, not correcting them in public unless it is an emergency, but holding them up in high esteem? Do you give God thanks many times a day for what you have, instead of complaining about what you don’t have? Do you give thanks for His mercy, and demonstrate it to others in patience and love? Much of this is represented in someone being good, but more is required of you!

Deuteronomy 6:6–9 [NIV]: “These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.”

Proverbs 13:24: “He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him.”

Ephesians 6:4: “Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.”

Mark 8:38. “If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father’s glory with the holy angels.”

Romans 1:16: “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.”

God commanded us to teach and yes, discipline our children if necessary for their good. Never neglect that responsibility even in the face of intimidation. Jesus also required us to never neglect or be ashamed of Him. He is the Son of God, my Saviour and Friend, and I would love to tell you more about Him. I hope and expect I will always be willing to stand up for Him when others attack Him verbally.

When I am busy doing what God gave me to do, the world around me may still cause me to shed a tear, but there is a quiet peace knowing that I am protected in my Father’s hands, regardless what man does. God will bring me home someday soon!—a home far greater than Canada—the Kingdom of God, a perfect place with sunshine and living water available daily, some things we Canadians surely miss in the winter time.

Note: Bullet points from Chelsea Shilling article in worldnetdaily.com on February 5, 2009. □

What About Your Immortal Soul?

*What happens at death? Does your soul go to heaven, hell, purgatory . . . or some OTHER place?
If you were wrong about something you believe, would you want to know?
The Bible tells us exactly what happens after death. You may be surprised!*

by Lloyd W. Cary



Lloyd W. Cary

Most people, when asked if they believe they have an immortal soul, would automatically react, “Why of course I do!” Oh, really?

If you were mistaken about something you believe, would you want to know? Would you change? Ignorance is *not* bliss. “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge,” says the Lord (Hosea 4:6). “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction” (Proverbs 1:7). Are you willing to be corrected by the Word of God? We need to *prove* what we think we know. God’s Word tells us to “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21). This implies if something is not true, we shouldn’t hold on to it. God says, “...to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word” (Isaiah 66:2). Let’s investigate what God’s Word, the Bible, says about the immortal soul.

The belief in an immortal soul that goes to heaven, hell, or purgatory at death is unquestionably the most commonly accepted superstition in world religions today. Sadly, the world is deceived in *most* aspects of spiritual truth, for we read of that “ancient serpent” called the devil, or Satan, *who leads the whole world astray* (Revelation 12:9). Could you be deceived? (See Matthew 24:4, 11, 24.)

The words
“immortal soul”
are nowhere found
in your Bible! On
the contrary, we
are told God *only*
has immortality!
(1 Timothy 6:16)

The “immortal soul” tenet is one that has been read *into* the Scriptures, not one derived *from* it. Secular history reveals the immortal soul was a near-universal belief in ancient Egypt, Babylon, and Greece. From there, nearly all Christendom has adopted this belief, even though it is not a Hebrew, apostolic, or biblical teaching.

The words “immortal soul” are nowhere found in your Bible! On the contrary, we are told God *only* has immortality (1 Timothy 6:16)! If God *only* has it, *we do not!* Thus saith the Lord!

Further, Jesus proclaimed, “And *no* man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is [now] in heaven” (John 3:13). Why, oh *why*, do people

not believe what God *says*, instead of trying to force their preconceived beliefs onto God?

Paul explains, “For this corruptible must *put on* incorruption, and this mortal must *put on* immortality” (1 Corinthians 15:53). If humans already have an immortal soul, why would we need to put on immortality *again*?

What Happens At Death?

Let’s examine a few scriptures commonly ignored by professing Christianity, telling exactly what happens to man at death, and compare them with the popular “immortal soul” concept. It is evident when comparing the immortal soul doctrine with Scripture, the two *cannot* be reconciled—they are diametric *opposites!*

- “For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again” (Ecclesiastes 3:19–20).
- “*For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks*” (Psalms 6:5)?
- “*Shall thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in destruction*” (Psalms 88:11)?
- “*The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence*” (Psalms 115:17).
- “His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; *in that very day his thoughts perish*” (Psalms 146:4).
- “For the living know that they shall die: *but the dead know not any thing*, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten” (Ecclesiastes 9:5).
- “For the grave *cannot* praise thee, death *cannot* celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit *cannot hope* for thy truth” (Isaiah 38:18).
- “The soul that sinneth, *it shall die*” (Ezekiel 18:4, 20).
- “And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear *him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell [gehenna]*” (Matthew 10:28).
- “For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be *stubble*: and the day that cometh shall *burn them up*, saith the LORD of hosts, that *it shall leave them neither root nor branch*” (Malachi 4:1).
- “If a man die, *shall he live again?* All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come” (Job 14:14).

Why do the pastors and priests of this world ignore these easy-to-understand scriptures? Because they do not fit in with their “immortal soul” lie! These plain Bible verses may be shocking to those who grew up believing in the handed-down “immortal soul” paradigm, but it is what the Bible plainly *says!* The best way not to get hung up on man’s interpretations is to read the Bible for yourself.

“Spirit, Soul, and Body” NOT the Same!

Many wonder about the scripture, “Now the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly: and your whole spirit [*pneuma*], and soul [*psuche*], and body [*soma*] be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

This is easily explained if one does not already have a preconceived idea of an “immortal soul.” The Greek word for “spirit” (*pneuma*) literally means “breath, current, or breeze.” The Greek word translated “soul” (*psuche*) means the physical life, and can be translated “drive, energy, breath, life, or vitality.” “Body” (*soma*) is the physical body, or carcass. This verse is addressing the *whole person*, including the mind, vigor of life, and physical body. There is no “immortal soul” here!

Death is often characterized as a deep, dreamless sleep. When the dead are resurrected to life, it will be as though no time at all had passed. A few scriptures pertaining to sleep and death are listed below. Look them up in your own Bible!

What is the “Spirit” in Man?

Yet, the Bible reveals there *is* a “spirit” in man. Job 32:8 says, “*But there is a spirit in man...*” Ecclesiastes 3:21 asks, “Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the

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| • Job 14:10,14 | • 1 Kings 22:40,50 |
| • Psalm 6:5 | • Acts 2:29,34; 13:36 |
| • Psalm 49:1 | • Daniel 12:2 |
| • Psalm 89:48 | • John 5:28–29 |
| • Ecclesiastes 9:10 | • John 3:13 |
| • 1 Kings 2:10; 11:43 | • John 11:11, 14 |
| • 1 Kings 14:31; 15:8 | • 2 Peter 3:4 |

earth?” A rhetorical question! The answer: *no one*, apart from revelation of God! Some confuse the spirit in man with the immortal soul hypothesis. So, if man does not have an immortal soul, what *is* this “spirit” in man?

Notice carefully! The spirit is *not* the man—it is something *in* the man. This spirit does *not* have a life of its own. The Hebrew word *ru’ach* and the Greek word *pneu’ma*, often translated “spirit,” have a number of meanings. These Hebrew and Greek words are always used with reference to breath, breeze, or active life force. It *never* means “immortal soul.”

What *is* this “spirit” in man, and what happens to it at death? How can we understand it?

By analogy, the human spirit in man can be compared to a CD or magnetic tape recording. A CD or tape can only record and *store* information—it cannot play back sound without a machine or recorder. Likewise, the human spirit cannot function without a “machine,” or body. The human spirit is the *agency*—the recording material—by which God preserves the character and memo-

Soul, continued next page

ries developed in this life. Once separated from the body at death, it contains the recorded information of man's character, thoughts, and personality, but is not functional or "alive" until it is reunited with a body at a resurrection. A resurrection occurs when God places that same character—from the stored record, or spirit—into a new body.

At death, the spirit that was *in* the man is committed to God's keeping. It—this "record," or spirit, of the man—returns to God who gave it (Ecclesiastes 12:7)—until a resurrection.

"Immortal Soul" or Resurrection—Which?

Only the resurrection from the dead—not the "immortal soul" assumption—is in harmony with all the scriptures. The resurrection is the only real hope of man, whether he believes it or even knows about it (1 Corinthians 15:19).

At Christ's second coming, He will resurrect all that are His—all, living or dead, who have His Holy Spirit—and they will be metabolically changed—truly born again—to spirit immortality (Mark 13:24–27; 1 Corinthians 15:51–54; 1 Thessalonians 4:14–18). And what of the rest of mankind—those not resurrected and changed at Christ's return? "But the *rest* of the dead lived not again *until* the thousand years [the millennium] were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the *first* resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Revelation 20:5–6). This second resurrection is described in the vision of the dry bones. "Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause *breath* to enter into you, and ye shall *live*... Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, *I will open your graves*, and cause you to come *up out* of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the LORD, *when I have opened your graves*, O My people, and brought you up *out of your graves*" (Ezekiel 37:5, 12–13). Notice, these resurrected people are *not* in heaven, hell, or purgatory—they are "*in their graves*" until a resurrection of the dead. Read the entire account in Ezekiel 37:5–14.

The resurrection gives mankind the final, ultimate victory over death, the common enemy of every human being (1 Corinthians 15:26). Man does not *have* a soul—he *is* a soul (Genesis 2:7)—a living, breathing being! The resurrection—not an "immortal soul"—is the central teaching of your Bible!

For a deeper understanding of this subject, send for our free booklet, *Immortality—God's Gift to the Saints* and our free CD, *Soul: Mortal or Immortal?* You'll be glad you did. □



Mini Bible Study: "Soul"

Not Immortal: Gen. 2:16–17; 3:19; 37:34; Job 17:13–14; Ps. 6:5; 115:17; 146:3–4; Eccl. 9:5–10; Ezk. 18:4, 20; Mal. 4:1–3; Mt. 10:28; 25:46; Lk. 13:3–5; Jn. 3:13; Ac 2:29–34; Ro. 6:23; 1 Co. 15:53; Heb. 9:27

Soul Cut Off: Ex. 12:15; Lev. 22:3; 23:30; Num. 15:31

Resurrection: 1 Co. 15; Phil. 3:10–11; 1 Thes. 4; Jn. 5:25–29

Nephesh, Mortal Life: Gen. 1:24–27; 2:7, 19; 9:4, 10, 12, 15, 16; 19:17–19; 21:23; 32:30; Lev. 17:11–14; Ex. 4:19; 21:30; Lev. 17:11–14; 21:11; Num. 6:6; 9:6, 7, 10; 19:11, 13, 16; Deut. 12:23; Isa. 53:10–12; Hag. 2:13

Individual: Gen. 2:7; Lev. 4:14; 17:12; 23:30; Num. 9:13

Being: Deut. 6:5; 11:13; 13:3

Psuche, Breath: Mt. 10:28

Lower Animals: Rev. 8:9; 16:3

As Individual: (14 times) Acts 2:41; 27:37; 1 Pe. 3:20; 3 Jn. 2; Rev. 18:14

Life of Man: (58 times) Mt. 22:25

Human Spirit: Eccl. 3:21; Acts 7:25

Immortality: (Only 5 Places) Ro. 2:7; 1 Co. 15:53–54; 1 Tim. 6:16; 2 Tim. 1:10

History, continued from page 4

let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand... *Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come*" (1 Corinthians 10:1–11). We are also reminded in the 11th chapter of Hebrews of the tremendous acts of faith performed by our forefathers and admonished, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1). Hence, God expects us to learn from the past. God has recorded this history for us to imitate good behaviors and shun mistakes.

The history contained in the New Testament has the same purpose. Why were the events of Christ's earthly life recorded? Why was the history of the early church recorded? *For our benefit!* After being reminded of some ancestral good examples of faith, the writer of Hebrews goes on to admonish: "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" (Hebrews 12:2–3). We are told time and time again in the New Testament to walk as Christ walked and to follow His example (1 John 2:6–7, 1 Peter 2:21). In the first letter of John, we read: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full" (1 John 1:1–4). Luke informs us of his purpose in writing his gospel account thus: "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed" (Luke 1:1–4). Toward the end of his own gospel account, John writes: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30–31).

God expects us to learn from the past, and that is exactly why He has included so much of it in the Bible. We are the product of our ancestors, and He expects us to learn from the lives they lived. The prophet Isaiah wrote: "Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him" (Isaiah 51:1–2). God has revealed to us through His word that there is a time and purpose for everything (Ecclesiastes 3:1–8). The author of Ecclesiastes asserted many years ago, "...there is no new thing under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9). In other words, if we fail to look into our past, we will almost certainly repeat the mistakes that were made there. Apparently, it is very human to forget or ignore the past. We read in Ecclesiastes that, "There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after" (Ecclesiastes 1:11).

Perhaps it is time for all of us who profess to be Christians and follow the Bible to take a second look at the large portions of that book we may have overlooked or ignored in times past. If something is important to God, should not we be about the business of making it important to us? □

NOTICE:

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

Why Do the United States and United Kingdom Persist in Policies Supporting Israel?

Surprisingly, the United States, in combination with Great Britain, insists on supporting Israel. Without a doubt, this increases the risks to our national security “by association.” Why would our two nations do this and jeopardize our own national security by involving ourselves in the quagmire of the Palestinian/Jihadists issues that plague the world? Is there something that goes deeper than mere politics and self-interest?

by Bill Watson



Bill Watson

Some may explain it's simply because Israel represents the only successful democracy in a “key region” of the Middle East.

Additionally, some are adamant that our national security requires we maintain this “democratic outpost,” since this territory is so hostile.

Otherwise, the reasoning is, we concede to conditions that increase the potential of emboldening terrorist groups in challenging the Western nations with outright war.

Arguably, some will also claim the religious importance to Judaism and Christianity is too significant to surrender complete control to Islamic regimes. The history of these three monotheistic religions go back many centuries, and has demonstrated a variety of complex differences showing the *legitimacy* and need of *equal representation*. Though admittedly debatable, it would appear a democratic influence is best suited to assure *some semblance of toleration* for the region. However, most will agree it's far from perfect, and presently remains a “work in progress.”

An Additional Point of Consideration



Woodrow Wilson

Recently, I read an article identifying former U.S. Presidents Wilson (1856–1924) and Truman (1884–1972) as “types” of a second King Cyrus. Historically, he was the ancient king of Persia who emancipated the Jewish people after seventy years of Babylonian captivity. This shared label of

“emancipator” was primarily associated and attributed to President Woodrow Wilson because of his support of the Balfour Declaration of 1917. This document mandated Great Britain's favored view of “...the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people.” Though there were many obstacles delaying and almost preventing the achievement of this goal, it was finally accomplished thirty-one years later, through the efforts of President Harry S. Truman. Admittedly, his support of the U.N. “Partition Resolution” of 1947 was instrumental in getting the necessary attention back on the initiatives regarding the subject of a Jewish/Israeli homeland in Palestine. Then courageously, against the better judgment of his advisors and the State and War Departments, President Truman issued a “de facto” recognition of the state of Israel within hours of Israel's declaration of independence. Consequently, on May 14, 1948, the Jewish-Israeli state became a legitimate country among the global community of nations, *fulfilling a major prophecy crucial to many future end-time prophetic conditions and events* explained in

the writings of the prophets, including Jesus Christ Himself!

President Truman had a strong conviction that God's hand was on him, directing his life in extraordinary ways. But his critics in Washington would claim he wasn't the “brightest bulb” in the Capitol, and in their opinion occasionally suffered from *irrational reasoning*. This view was primarily adopted because some thought his education was lacking, since he was the only twentieth-century president without a college education.

However, conversely there were others who deeply respected President Truman and thought he was very intelligent because he was so well read in classical literature and the Bible. Frankly, if the truth were known, he was probably “brighter” than many of his peers. But clearly, his conviction that God was directly involved in his life was something he was at peace with, and is probably why he calmly concluded he was, in fact, a “modern-day Cyrus.” He publicly announced this in 1953 before a group of Jewish dignitaries at the Jewish Theological Seminary of New York.



Harry S. Truman

More Points of Consideration

In more recent times, President Ronald Reagan was convicted by the vision he had of the United States, underscoring the *sense of destiny* he felt God was guiding—“the shining city upon the hill.” This was implicit of his desire for the United States to set the standard for the rest of the world to follow into prosperity and freedom, since he was so convinced that God was leading and blessing the United States.

This notion came from the heavy influence of his pastor, Ben Cleaver, of the Disciples of Christ, who was very well read concerning the early leadership of this denomination. He, too, was influenced by earlier church leaders such as Alexander Campbell (1788–1866), who also believed the United States had a “special mission in the world as a nation and a people.” Actually, Campbell also spoke of America as “a beacon... a light unto the nations,” and advocated to “overthrow false religions and oppressive governments.” This sense of duty, to become the leading country among the community of nations, was deeply ensconced within the “Reagan worldview.” He really wanted America to aspire and become the model nation of the world.

Perhaps he said it best when speaking to the NAE, claiming, “I've always believed that this blessed land was set apart in a special way, that some *divine plan* placed this great continent here between the two oceans to be found by *people from every corner of the earth*—people who had a special love for freedom.” This mind-set was instrumental in his conviction to challenge the Soviet Union and announce, “It is an evil empire. It's time to close it down.” President Reagan suffered from

no illusions that the philosophies and *socialistic principles* of Marxism-Leninism was the antithesis of true freedom, liberty, and capitalism. It was the consummate enemy of the “free world,” and in particular, the Democratic Republic of the United States.

Interestingly enough, in the progressive dynamics of these historical events, President Ronald Reagan, like numerous preceding presidents, felt the hand of God interacting with the circumstances confronting him. He had a “sense” that God was intervening and guiding his steps. And as mentioned, this was nothing new for those who had previously held the position of president.

There are so many former United States presidents down through history that could be quoted, sharing similar notions as they contended with circumstances particular to their administrations. But perhaps there was no other since George Washington like Abraham Lincoln. As many of us know, he was presiding during a very *defining time* in our young nation's history: the Civil War.

The nation was ravaged after this war. It seemed there wasn't a household that hadn't been directly or indirectly touched by the pain, suffering, and devastation that resulted in an estimated 620,000 deaths. However, after the war, in his second inaugural address, Lincoln attempted to make sense of this surreal event. What many of us don't realize is just what he was thinking, and how he came to rationalize the assessment of the war.

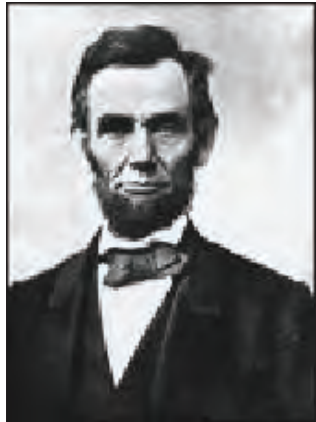
There is a very interesting missive that was discovered after his assassination, but written before the second inaugural address. It was titled, “Meditation on the Divine Will.” Understanding this writing provides some insight into what he was thinking before his second term. This writing affirms President Lincoln was willing to concede *God was actively involved* in the Civil War. When we grasp the content of this writing, only then can we begin to understand the framing of the second inaugural address. Notice some excerpts from this writing: “The Will of God prevails.... God cannot be for and against the same thing at the same time. In the present Civil War, it is quite possible that *God's purpose is something different* from the purpose of either party; and yet the human instrumentalities, working just as they do, are of the best adaptation to affect His purpose. I am almost ready to say this is probably true; that God wills this contest and wills that it shall not end.... Yet the contest began. And having begun, He could give the final victory to either side any day. Yet the contest proceeds.”

Obviously, it was written at some time while the war was still in progress. But it is interesting to consider his attempt to explore the “larger view,” desiring to see beyond the current circumstances in hope of understanding the “bigger picture” of God's purpose and “His will” behind this civil conflict. He had a sense there was something beyond what he obviously saw taking place, which he attributed to a higher power that *had a different agenda*. This was some of the reasoning that framed the content of the 701 words that became

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Lincoln's second presidential inaugural address.

President Lincoln plainly mentions God fourteen times in that address, quotes Scripture four times, and invokes prayer three times. Clearly, the outline of the speech includes an opening with expressing respect for the position of both sides, then grounding his thinking in the *Bible*. He continues with affirming that *God acts in history* and there is such a thing as "biblical providence." He then uses the same terminology as was in his "Meditation on the Divine Will" by saying, "...it is quite possible" and "...I am almost ready to say." And then he closes with a surprise appeal for the listeners to *imitate the ways of God*. Undeniably, President Lincoln had a *notion* he was involved with some sort of "manifest destiny" in progress, but not yet complete or clear to him. (Reference *Lincoln's Greatest Speech* by Ronald C. White, Jr.)



Abraham Lincoln

Where Does This Lead Us?

Clearly, if the leaders of *our* two nations, being in the "throes" of history, felt God was involved in world events, it would seem only appropriate a *perspective including God* is necessary to really understand what's behind the United States and United Kingdom's sense of obligation and commitment to protect this modern Israeli Jewish state. With that being said, let's consider some basic Biblical history.

Many scholars will admit the Bible is a story about one man's family. They recognize that central to the Biblical narrative is the twelve sons of Jacob who became known in history as the 12-tribed nation of Israel. This saga commences with a man named Abram (later changed to Abraham), whom God called, requiring him to leave his homeland of Ur and follow His lead to the so-called "Promised Land." The story proceeds by describing a variety of events and conditions that took place over generations, all designed to explain how God was steering His plan of salvation for mankind, beginning with Israel.

Clearly, the Bible illustrates and confirms throughout its pages that many of the key historical figures recorded in the story felt God's hand in their lives, illustrating there is nothing extraordinary about individuals sensing God's involvement in the circumstances and conditions they are faced with, especially for those world leaders who are caught in the "forces of history." As an aside, however, what is crucial to confirming "God's will" in any set of circumstances/conditions is the "fruit" or "results" that occur, and how that compares with the "will of God" described in both Old and New Testaments. Admittedly, there are individuals who have personally claimed in the past, and who presently claim, God's involvement in their lives, when in fact, He is not! The Bible warns us this would happen, adding to the confusion that Satan the Devil is so committed to sustaining (Matthew 7:15-23).

Yet, when considering the larger scope of world events and geopolitical positioning, God is *definitely involved*. He claims that the nations are but a drop in the bucket as far as He is concerned (Isaiah 40:15-17). He announces that He puts kings and rulers in power and removes them at His will (Daniel 4:25). The Bible describes how God is working through human beings to accomplish His will of sharing immortality, but unequivocally retains the prerogative to control the direction of those events (Isaiah 40:21-31).

When considering *how* God worked with His nation and by what means, we consistently read it

was by "promises and covenants." Specifically, what was fundamental for many of His promises to Israel was the "scepter and birthright promises" made to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3). It was a *foundational covenant promise*, which upon Abraham's death, was passed down to his children's children. This pattern is then repeated down through the generations, fulfilling prophetic statements and events, confirming God's hand in world events. (Request our *FREE* recorded audio series on the *Biblical Origins of the United States of America and the British Commonwealth*.)

As remarkable as it seems, we clearly understand Jesus Christ was the promised seed that all human beings would eventually be blessed by, and in particular, Jesus Christ would come down through the tribe of Judah, fulfilling this "scepter (Messiah) promise" given some 3500 years ago (Galatians 3:16, Hebrews 7:14). However, what most don't understand in addition to this prophetic fulfillment is the segment pertaining to the "birthright promise" of national greatness and nation-wide material wealth and affluence specifically given to the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim, sons of Joseph, which clearly reveal them to be "relatives" to the tribe of Judah—consequently affirming a *family bond* to these tribes of Israel (Genesis 48: 13-17, 49:1, 8-10, 22-26)! Surprisingly, this is an *important piece of the puzzle* when attempting to understand what underlines the "*deeper bond*" between the Jewish state of Israel, the United States, and Great Britain.

Understanding the Deeper Bond

After Abraham received his calling and subsequent promise, he passed it to his son Isaac upon death (Genesis 25:5). Isaac then bequeathed the promise to his son, Jacob (Genesis 28:1-5). In the development of Jacob's relationship with God, his name was changed to Israel (Genesis 32:28-30). Before Israel's (Jacob's) death, he blessed his grandsons, Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of his son Joseph, with the birthright blessings of material wealth and affluence (Genesis 48:19-20, 49:22-26). Upon completing this blessing, Jacob proceeded to bless the remainder of his boys, including Judah, with the kingly line, identified as the scepter promise, of which Jesus Christ would come from (Genesis 49:8-10).

The Bible is clear about the *distinction* between these *two segments* of the original promise given to Abraham back in Genesis 12. Notice what was chronicled, "... his [Reuben's] birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel [Jacob]... For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler [Jesus Christ]; but the birthright [promise of material wealth and physical blessings] was Joseph's [by *extension*, his sons, Ephraim and Manasseh]..." (1 Chronicles 5:1-2).

History proves and illustrates that Ephraim (the United Kingdom) became the greatest commonwealth of nations the world has ever known. In its apex, the Union Jack flag flew over 14 million square miles of the earth (approximately four times the land mass of China). The United States (Manasseh) currently achieving the sole position of super-power status of the world, subsequently became the great nation Israel (Jacob) said he would become. The promise of the great company (multitude) of nations and great nation manifested with these two *worldwide influencing cultures* (Genesis 48:18-20), thereby fulfilled God's original promise of becoming the "great nation" back in Genesis 12:2.



Ronald Reagan

Clearly, upon realizing these nations are, in general, the brother nations of the Jews (Genesis 49:1,8-10, 22-26), we can now begin to understand more deeply the "unseen bond" between these differing people and cultures. What's at the foundation of this relationship is the fact that these cultures are *all related*. Incredibly, the truth of the matter is, our cultures are *simply family!* The Jewish people are from the tribe of Judah, who was the brother of Joseph (Genesis 49:9, 22). Ephraim and Manasseh are Joseph's sons, making them Judah's nephews. *It's that simple!* Remarkably, as plain as this may seem to some, for most it remains a real mystery. The pieces of the puzzle are *invisible* to most people today. They don't understand this ancient historical "family bond."

In similar fashion, most of us don't understand why the hostility exists between the Jews and Arabs. Why so much anger, animosity, and hatred between these cultures, including the United States and Britain? At the risk of, but not intending to oversimplify the incredibly complex issues of our current Middle East problem, fundamentally, if you understand the family



President George Bush and Prime Minister Blair

bond and history *between Ishmael and Isaac* and the disappointment Ishmael experienced when he wasn't blessed with the "promise of the scepter" and secondly, the "birthright," perhaps then, you will begin to comprehend where this anger is coming from, and the fact that these "roots of bitterness" go back thousands of years (Genesis 16:11-12). Understandably, when we presently view this hostility in its *ancient context*, we see it's nothing more than a *family feud* between two historical *half brothers* that have yet to "settle a score" that's been lingering for generations. Unfortunately, because so much history has been lost throughout the generations of mankind, God's involvement has gone unrecognized in so many incidents, and this *includes the current connection* between the Jewish state of Israel, the United States, and Great Britain.

Also, as hard as it might be to believe, some of the most key figures mentioned in the Bible were also reduced to having just a "sense" or "notion." However, regardless of their awareness of God's involvement, that did not dismiss the fact that they were part of a far greater, more spectacular agenda. It just wasn't made clear to them at the time (1 Peter 1:10-12). Notice what the writer of Hebrews says concerning those mentioned in the Bible, "these all died in faith, *not having received the promises*, but having seen them *afar off*, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Hebrews 11:13). And so it is today, many of our current political and social leaders are reduced to a "sense" or "notion," and sadly are totally unaware of this *revealed knowledge* from the Bible.

Looking Out Into the Future

There are many more events prophetically reserved out ahead of us—events God warned would *curse the birth-righted nations* if they disobeyed Him. And now, that is exactly what is beginning to happen. Trends indicate the global geopolitical "status quo" we are used to is now changing. The world is at a *crossroad* in these uncertain times. There are many issues challenging the world community. It would **Israel**, continued on page 10

Sometimes God Calms The Storm!

Experiencing Hurricane Ike

by Vivian Hall



Vivian Hall

Psalms 107:29 says, “He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.” In Mark 4:39 we read, “And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind

ceased, and there was a great calm.”

Many times in our zeal to know, we attribute events or happenings to proof of God’s direct hand in human affairs. Truly He is in charge and aware. However, some things are simply the direct result of man and his actions or lack of actions to sustain the things entrusted to mankind. God doesn’t always just calm the storm. (I’ll explain the statement later.)

At home we watched waters rise and wind rage as I have never seen before.

Many, although warned over and over again, who thought themselves prepared and protected, found themselves directly in harm’s way. We watched on TV just 50 miles away, home after home, business after business, and landmark after landmark tossed about and destroyed by Hurricane Ike. My home suffered no damage, even though we felt the howling wind of 79–100 mph. Ike made

around 2 AM. We lost our electricity about midnight as the eye approached. Emergency shelters and hospitals went to emergency back-up. The words in Daniel 7 came alive for me, “he will wear out the saints.” Large trees were flung about and broke in half. Fences flew like paper bits into the air and landed elsewhere. Roofs caved in. Trucks and cars were swept away like toys when children throw them about. Houses were moved out of their places across streets and roadways. One scary experience after another happened for hours and hours. The telephone systems went berserk. Calls went to wrong numbers or failed after just minutes. Thankfully, we had a system in place that helped. I was able to call New York and relay information that was then relayed back to the correct number locally.

Another scripture came to mind, Matthew 24:20: “But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day.” That Friday evening we were not preparing, as our custom is, for fellowship and worship. We were awaiting possible disaster. There would be no usual church services held, as the raging storm swiftly approached. I’m not saying this was a fulfillment of anything—I’m relaying a feeling of anguish. Our prayers became more urgent about deliverance and less about normal activities.

As power was being restored, 99 faith-based groups acquired and distributed basics for those in need—things such as water, ice, and food ready to eat.

This present distress pales when compared to predictions of things to be, but they give a horrific glimpse into possible future events. One more

shocking thing is that the crime rate dropped dramatically.

One experience that was hard to watch was a lady with four young children who walked to a help center. She had no gas, and could not drive as instructions stated. The officials were turning her away when some volunteers had compassion and decided to bend rules to help her. They gave her four cases of water, food, and ice. As she and her young children struggled with the provisions, another family in a truck jumped out to assist. They gave her a new-looking stroller to carry her supplies the four blocks back to her home. She protested crying, saying she had no way to return their stroller. The family insisted, telling her she and her children’s needs were more important than a stroller. Contractors gave free work to cut trees and assist. Many people had unusual compassion on others in need.

Just 50 miles away, the Galveston area continued to look eerily like a war zone. Reported deaths were low. Trouble continued as people with power lost power again. FEMA help was sporadic and unreliable. This is not to say they didn’t help, but seemed badly unprepared for the challenge.

Day after troubling day went by with residents displaced and needing essentials to maintain some semblance of regular living. This is a city known to be the power capital of energy in the greatest free world nation, the

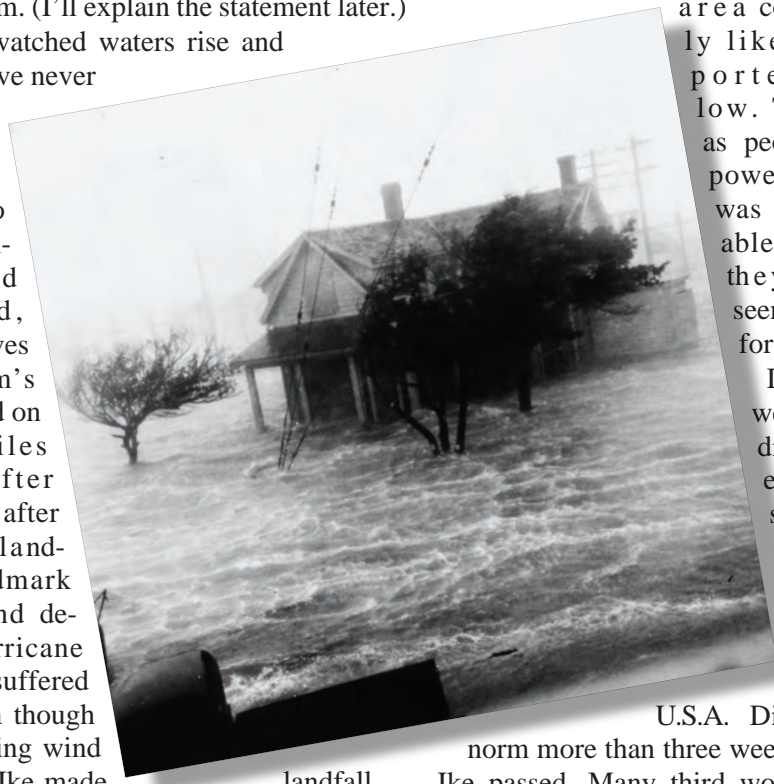
U.S.A. Disruption remains the norm more than three weeks after the destructive Ike passed. Many third world nations recover at much the same rate.

Ranking representatives responded to citizens’ outrage and demand a more workable system. Power workers toil under 16–18 hour shifts. Power is restored at what seems a snail’s pace. Insurance companies will not cover most repair costs, and government assistance does not appear forthcoming.

Search and rescue has now become recovery, as many remain missing. These events all happened as our city and nation was prepared—what would be the situation if not prepared?

To update, after two months having passed, FEMA claims have not been completed. Trailers brought in for housing remain empty, and “pods” remain to feed displaced persons. Faith-based organizations are feeding residents and offering clean clothing to citizens still without full power and water. Whether natural disaster or manmade, we struggle to return to normalcy. As weather becomes more and more erratic, I personally shudder to forecast *what next*? All these things are happening while our nation itself is in peril with not enough gas, failed banks, and loss of homes. No crisis has been this severe since the early 1900s.

We know that a change is necessary. Will it come? How? Will morals resume? If not, we race toward sudden tribulation! We know God cares. We know time and chance happen to all. But in the midst of turmoil and anguish, it behooves us to remember this truth: sometimes God calms the storm; other times He just calms me! □



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seem the combination of terrorism, financial instability, and nuclear proliferation, in conjunction with so much hostile rhetoric, is sometimes just too overwhelming for all of us to handle. Yet, these are the times we currently find ourselves in.

Presently, the United States and Great Britain are able to defend and protect their “little brother,” Judah, over in Palestine. But clearly, your Bible reveals the present Jewish Israeli state will eventually be invaded and occupied by a king of the north. Notice: “And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him [king of the north]; and the king of the north shall come against him [the king of the south] like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships [military power]... He [the king of the north] shall enter also into the *glorious land* [Israel], and many countries shall be overthrown” (Daniel 11:40–41).

Obviously, this presents the implication that the United Kingdom and United States will *not* be able to protect their brother Judah any longer. The prophecies portray “in the latter day” a Jewish nation state of Israel in the Middle East will be attacked, occupied, and conquered by this emerging “king of the north” who proceeds to successfully conquer and control much of northern Africa (Daniel 11:41–43). Ultimately, the patterns prove this king of the north will operate as a *tyrannical dictator* (the Beast) and behave as a *resurrected Holy Roman Empire* whose wound was healed, causing the rest of the world to wonder (Revelation 13:1–7).

But here’s the point: at some time in the future, the United States and Britain will be *marginalized* or in some manner *neutralized* by events that will prevent their ability to intervene on Judah’s (Israel’s) behalf. This is a time your Bible calls “Jacob’s trouble” (Jeremiah 30:7). The Israelite cultures of Britain, North America, Australia, and a handful of other nations will eventually be reduced in military power and political influence, essentially leaving the last chapter of human history to three major centers of military might and political control—Europe and its allied nation states, the Middle East, and the Far Eastern countries of the Pacific Rim, which will include China and Russia (Daniel 11:40–45).

We are living in very fluid times portending much more uncertainty. We must prepare and be aware of the spiritual hand of God’s *direct involvement* and consequent assurance that ultimately, “All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28). Assuredly, understanding the *spiritual framing* of God’s will in the affairs of mankind and the *family bonds* behind many of the geopolitical relationships among the nations, will help us to understand we are, indeed, part of a much “*BIGGER EVENT*” being worked out on this planet than any of us can imagine!

Hopefully this will add some insight and improve your understanding as to *why* the United States and the United Kingdom are so *deeply bonded* to support the *Jewish state of Israel*. You might say it’s the *missing dimension in the human perspective*, because man fails to consider God’s consistent and ongoing involvement in human affairs. Unfortunately, most of our leaders today are completely oblivious to God’s active intervention and this ancient historical connection! If only our world leaders and more people, presently, would pay closer attention to God’s “revealed knowledge.” Clearly, if that were possible, we might just be able to answer our Lord’s question in the affirmative regarding whether or not He will find faith on earth when He comes. *Let us all recognize the hand of God in the affairs of world history* and then perhaps we will have some *additional substance* for the faith required to accept Jesus Christ for the Savior and Scepter He is! □

Hopeless or Hopeful? ... A Choice

by Jean Jantzen



Jean Jantzen

The U.S. founding fathers understood the biblical principle that happiness must be pursued by personally choosing the right thoughts, right words, and right actions at the right time.

In short, *our happiness depends*

on us.

"There is no joy left in our lives, there is no meaning in our lives; we can barely put one foot in front of the other." I listened with dismay as I observed the sad and despairing young woman and her husband on the Oprah show. Their faces mirrored their sense of futility and hopelessness. It was a shocking declaration for a young couple with three small children to make. Two years ago, the couple had attended a family wedding. In the early morning hours they were riding home in a limousine with their parents and their young daughter when they were hit head on by a drunk driver. Their parents had been badly injured but had recovered, and one of the couple's four children had been killed, along with the driver.

We can only try to understand the grief, sorrow, and devastation that single act had caused the family. I read somewhere that "Losing a child is an actual physical pain, like you exhale but don't inhale again—your breath is gone." But still, I was shocked as the extended family members all agreed they could find no joy in their lives, no joy in family gatherings, no joy in each other, no joy in the children left alive. All their joy had died with the little girl that horrific night. I couldn't help but think, *what about the remaining children—had they no worth?* The family had each made a choice not to finally let it go and treasure what they did have, but to expend their energy and focus on what they did not have. Could that little girl have imagined her parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, being that despondent because of her? Would she not want them to celebrate and find joy in the time they had with her? Are not members of our family or friends a gift to cherish and hold dear, as well as memories of those gone?

As we go through this life, we know for a fact there may be hard times ahead, even tragedies in store for us and those we love. How are we going to handle the hard times? The mother's belief was that her daughter was in heaven with God, but even her religion did not give her or her family joy or peace of mind. What way will we choose?

In an article from *People* magazine, May 2007, entitled *Out of Loss, A Friendship Grows*, by Richard Jerome, it says, "On Mother's Day 2005, Beth Belle's son Nicholas died in Afghanistan. That same day Leesa Philippon lost her son Lawrence in Iraq. The day after she buried Larry, Philippon noticed Nick's marker next to his and felt a connection with this fallen Marine's mother, whoever she might be. She found her and began an e-mail correspondence. And so, from the darkest place, Belle and Philippon have formed a bond that is at once universal and singular—two women who now spend Christmas together. Once strangers, the two moms have forged a special bond. They say over time their bond has expanded beyond shared grief, brightening their lives to include everyday things like work, their other kids, and yes, shopping. "We

know our boys would want us to smile. Even though it's hard, we pick ourselves up constantly." These two women have chosen to go on with their lives, not forgetting their sons, but working their way through the loss in a positive way.

There is an example in the Bible of King David, who had a child with Bathsheba, and when the child fell very ill he said, "while the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, 'Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me that the child may live?'" Even his servants could not understand David's behavior. First he looked like he was going to die from grief, refusing any consolation from the servants—so when the child died, they were afraid to tell him.

David knew when the child was dead it was useless to fast, as it says, "Then David got up from the ground. After he had washed, put on lotions and changed his clothes, he went into the house of the LORD and worshiped. Then he went to his own house, and at his request they served him food, and he ate" (2 Samuel 12:15–24). David knew God gives and God takes away, and David chose to live joyfully and with an acceptance of God's will. After the child died, he comforted his wife, made love to her, and she became pregnant with another son. Life goes on, and David chose to find joy in that life.

Also, Job, after he had been informed his ten children were all dead, "... tore his robe in grief. Then he shaved his head and fell to the ground to worship. He said, 'I came naked from my mother's womb, and I will be naked when I leave. The LORD gave me what I had, and the LORD has taken it away. Praise the name of the LORD'" (Job 1:20, 21)! After Job learned multiple lessons through his trials, we find God blessing Job even more than in the beginning.

I know a woman whose divorced brother is only 49, with two young children, and is terminally ill. She has had the opportunity to be with him and take care of him, to share his pain and anguish during this distressing time. How will she choose to handle it? She can look at it as a heartbreaking tragedy, which it is, and drown herself in her sorrow, or she can count it a blessing that she is able to spend these last and precious days with her brother as he travels the last few miles of his life's journey. Of course there will be tears and sadness, but there should be joy as well. His journey is complete. "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience" (James 1:2, 3). She can choose to make this a special time and an extraordinary memory, and because of her courage, strength, and love for God, I know she will.

A dear woman friend is turning 87 this year. Her health is deteriorating. A few weeks ago, she suffered an aneurysm behind her knee. The blood vessel swelled up to the size of an orange. She had to keep her leg elevated, and the doctor told her because of her bad heart, it would be unwise to operate—not only that, but she would be unable to walk for a year if they did the surgery. She told me, "I want to live while I am alive; I don't want to die before I'm dead. I am going to enjoy the time I have left being as active as I can." Her son has booked them a cruise to Alaska this fall, and she's got a deluxe suite. She has been an inspiration to me for many years with her spunky personality and ability to find joy in the simple everyday pleasures and to display strength and courage in hardship. She has chosen joy and peace. God will be her rock.

My daughter at 27 years old had thyroid cancer and had to have her thyroid removed two years ago. I am proud that she chose to view this experience as

a positive one—and that she is a better, stronger, more compassionate person than she was before.

The following is a wonderful illustration of how we should view the dark and dreadful days of our lives. Carl Steele, known all over the world for his chalk drawings, draws on an empty canvas. A small log cabin begins to take form. Gradually, a beautiful lake appears in the background. Suddenly, Carl Steele takes a piece of black chalk and puts a big black line through the picture, from the top all the way down to the bottom. If that wasn't enough damage, he put a couple more black lines through the picture.

After destroying his beautiful picture, he stops and faces the audience. Most people are horrified. They can't believe he ruined such a beautiful picture. After pausing for about five seconds, Carl Steele says, "Has this ever happened to you? Is this picture symbolic of your life? Was your life as beautiful as this picture? Your family, job, and spiritual life were all developing beautifully. All of these elusive pieces to a happy life were finally coming together. Suddenly, tragedy strikes. A dark blemish is ripped across your life. Maybe this blemish was something unavoidable like a devastating car accident. Maybe you were a victim of a violent crime. The beautiful picture of our life now has an ugly black blemish on it. It is totally ruined; there is no way of repairing it. We try to erase the blemish, but it's too large. Our attempts to erase the mark only spreads the blemish even further."

Carl Steele starts drawing again. The black marks have become the trunks to some pine trees. Upon completion, the trees look like they actually belong with the drawing. Carl Steele turns to the audience again and says, "This is what can happen to your destroyed life when you turn it over to God. He can take a mess and turn it into something beautiful, something more beautiful than what it was before. As we saw from this demonstration, we can never go back to the way things were before. Things have changed forever. However, if we give God full control, the change will be for the better." (Michael Bronson, 2000 BibleHelp.org)

There is no offense in feeling distraught or sorrowful about a tragedy, but what choice will you make about the future? Why not do everything with all your might, for in the grave there is nothing. If we are God's children, our attitudes can all be summed up in Romans 8:38, 39: "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." □

2009

HOLY DAY CALENDAR

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

*Observed at sundown.

Heart, continued from page 3

relativism,” morality took on a new meaning, and “pop-culture” redefined right and wrong. This resulted in a whole new way known as “Do unto others before they do unto you.”

Your Bible says, “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Proverbs 14:12; 16:25). Furthermore, we are told, “*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings*” (Jeremiah 17:9–10). In the next verse, we are told that he who gets riches dishonestly will ultimately *become the fool*. Many of those in this recent Wall Street, banking, and industrial debacle substantiate this truism.

Many of us have become victims of the mismanagement and lack of leadership from those who could not control the lust of their eyes and flesh, or keep a grip on the pride and vanity of their lives (1 John 2:16–17). This has translated into the loss of literally *trillions* of dollars. Small fortunes have *evaporated*. But it goes much deeper than that. What’s coming into focus is nothing more than the reaping of what’s been sown over generations of mismanagement by the political leaders of the United States and the rest of the world.

The prophet Isaiah has a very contemporary message for us in the West, and especially for those of us in North America, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand. Isaiah was directly commissioned to warn ancient Israel and Judah of their impending national demise and ultimate destruction and captivity in his lifetime (c. 750–700 B.C.). However, God also intended His message to be understood by a nation of people in the “last days” (Isaiah 2:1–2), carrying the name “House of Jacob” (Verse 5), including Judah (verse 1). When understood in the context of “prophetic duality,” the warnings described in chapters 1–4 of Isaiah become *currently relative*, and consequently, very sobering.

Notice what Isaiah describes. “Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward...From the sole of the foot [the people] even unto the head [government, financial, business, and social leaders] there is no soundness in it; ...Your country is desolate [bankrupt, literally and morally]; your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers [foreigners] devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers [foreigners own much of our assets]. ...Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah” (Isaiah 1:4–10). Read the rest of this chapter. Through this prophet, God describes how the politicians are rebellious, love bribes, and take advantage of the poor (Verse 23). It’s a stunning commentary describing our present American/British culture today.

Isaiah addresses the *context* of his comments as being in the “last days” (Isaiah 2:2). He then advances to the Kingdom of God and describes the

millennial conditions on earth when Christ will reign (Verses 1–5); then returns to redress and include the “day of the LORD of hosts” (Verses 11–12). He shows that the lofty and proud will be brought down and humbled (Verses 13–22).

He continues the warning that God will take away from Judah food and water—that He will take away the mighty men of wisdom, integrity, and valor—allowing children and babes, people of lesser knowledge and prudence, to rule over them (Isaiah 3:1–4). He warns the people they will be oppressed, that children will not respect their elders, committing actions against the God of Israel. They will commit homosexual sins openly, while allowing children to be their oppressors and women to rule over them. God intends to judge this modern-day “house of Jacob” accordingly (Verses 5–14). He continues to show we haven’t take care of the less fortunate like we should have, and have allowed our women and young girls to become strippers, prostitutes, and “ladies” of ill repute, all resulting in loss of blessings from God (Verses 15–25). Admittedly, we are surrounded by these conditions now!

God appeals for reason and asks, “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD” (Isaiah 1:18). Again the prophet asks on behalf of God, “O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD” (Isaiah 2:5). But these people refuse the appraisal and the appeal from God to repent and obey Him (Isaiah 1:19–20).

The old adage of “hindsight is 20/20” comes to mind. It’s clear where our mistakes were made. The *real* mistake, from today’s perspective, is simply the fact that we have *marginalized God’s Word*; and secondly, we’ve failed to exhibit the Judeo/Christian example and leadership God expected from His *birth-righted culture*. Unfortunately, our present leaders don’t remember the words of John Adams, second President of the United States and former Vice President to George Washington, who said: “We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. Avarice, ambition, revenge, or gallantry, would break the strongest cords of our Constitution as a whale goes through a net. *Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people*. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.” The lack of *Christian character* is the direct result of a people destroyed due to the lack of knowledge available from their God, all because they refused to willingly listen and obey (Hosea 4:6–10).

Our problems as a nation are *not unsolvable!* The challenge is, do the people of the Jewish state of Israel, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America have the resolve, fortitude, and humility to *repent*, and *implement in faith*, the social, cultural, and economic laws of God (which include the Jubilee year of debt release), and accept Jesus Christ as Messiah, Savior, and King of Kings? That is the question! And that is the *only solution!* □

Myrtle Beach Feast Information for 2009

The Feast of Tabernacles 2009 in South Myrtle Beach, South Carolina will be held at the Springmaid Beach Resort. This 27-acre resort is located at the quiet south end of Myrtle Beach’s Grand Strand with a quarter mile of spectacular beach extending through the State Park and features Myrtle Beach’s only privately owned 1060-foot fishing pier. In addition, Springmaid offers indoor and outdoor pools, two lazy rivers, a game room, fitness center, miniature golf, and Marlin’s Restaurant.

Springmaid Resort provides spacious oceanfront rooms and suites, which include microwave, coffee maker, and full size refrigerator. If larger accommodations are needed, such as a condominium or beach house, you will find a list of optional accommodations below, which are within a 5–15 minute drive of the Feast site.

The *Infuse* young adult and teen programs will be located at Myrtle Beach this year. Young people are invited to join us for sermons and discussions directed to you, the young adult. Interact with those who share your faith, enjoy uplifting music, and participate in activities of service.

Various activities are planned for all at Myrtle Beach this year, so prepare to enjoy eight days of fellowship, uplifting sermons, inspiring music, and spiritual revitalization at God’s Feast of Tabernacles 2009 in Myrtle Beach, SC.

Group Rates for Springmaid Resort: Important: Use group reservation code or state you are with the *Church of God International* when making reservations to insure group rate.

- Standard Room— \$69.00
 - One Bedroom Suite— \$79.00
 - Hospitality Suite— \$79.00
 - Two Room Efficiency— \$105.00
 - Three Room Efficiency— \$150.00
- (Laundry facilities and elevators are available.)

Springmaid Beach Resort and Conference Center
3200 South Ocean Blvd., Myrtle Beach, South Carolina 29577
Direct 843-315-7100 | Fax 843-315-7237 | Toll Free 866-764-8501

Email: info@springmaidbeach.com
Website: www.springmaidbeach.com

For those interested in a 1, 2, or 3 bedroom condominium:

Crown Reef Resort (Next door to Springmaid)
2913 South Ocean Boulevard, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina 29577
1-877-435-9125; www.crownreef.com

Myrtle Beach Resort

5905 Highway 17, South Myrtle Beach, SC 29575
Call toll free: 1-888-627-3767; www.myrtle-beach-resort.com/resort.htm
This resort is located in the Garden City area about 6–10 minutes from the Feast site.

For those interested in a beach house or condo:

Seaside Rentals
12 South Ocean Boulevard, Surfside Beach, SC 29575
Toll-free: (866) 252-9930; Local: (843) 839-0099
www.seasiderentalsonline.com

Garden City Realty, Inc.

608 Atlantic Avenue, Garden City Beach, SC 29576-8104
Phone: (877) 767-7737; www.gardencityrealty.com

Dunes Beach Vacations

128 Atlantic Avenue, Garden City Beach, SC 29576
Local: (843) 651-2116; Toll-Free: (888) 889-0312
www.dunes.com

All the above offer accommodations that are within a 5–15 minute drive to the Feast site. For more information, call Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce, 800-356-3016, or Mike Nolen, 843-761-5211.



Canadian Feast Accommodations

Niagara Falls, Ontario Feast Site for 2009

Spend the Feast in the *Honeymoon Capital of the World* in Niagara Falls, Ontario. A "honeymoon" is an interesting term, since the Feast of Tabernacles is representative of a marriage and honeymoon period for the Church with the return of Jesus the Christ.

Niagara is known for its incredible natural beauty and activities like hiking, and also for its abundance of dining, shopping and entertainment facilities. However, the Feast is about spending time with the Family of God, worshipping and appreciating God's blessings together. As such, any location that displays the blessings of God is blessed indeed.

Area Attractions

While Niagara Falls itself is the most known attraction, it is far from the only thing in town. Other attractions are:

- *Marineland—just 3 miles away on Stanley Ave.*
- *Casino Niagara—only 1-1/2 miles away, right at the Falls*
- *Skylon Tower & Imax Theatre—just 1-1/2 miles away*
- *"Canada One" Factory Outlets—just blocks away on Lundy's Lane*
- *Butterfly Conservatory—a scenic 10-minute drive on the Niagara Parkway*
- *Floral Clock—a scenic 10-minute drive on the Niagara Parkway*
- *Shaw Festival Theater—a scenic 25-minute drive to Niagara-on-the-Lake*
- *Oh Canada Eh! Dinner Show—only a few blocks away on Lundy's Lane*
- *Maid of the Mist—at the Falls—only 1-1/2 kilometers away*
- *People Mover Main Terminal—park at the People Mover depot and ride all day—approximately 4 miles away*
- *White Glove Tours & Reception—group tour planning*
- *Niagara Falls Parks—enjoy nature by viewing the beautiful fall colours in the area*

One of the most incredibly romantic dinners in the world is found at the top of the city in the Skylon Revolving Restaurant while you watch sunset fall on the city and light up the Falls.

Accommodations

The host facility, Best Western Cairn Croft Resort, is an attractive and comfortable meeting facility with a fantastic atrium for fellowshiping. They also have an affordable family restaurant on site.

The guest rooms feature two queen size beds, table and chairs, a mini-fridge, and access to the atrium. The rooms are affordable and very clean—you can take a tour of the facility at www.cairncroft.com

Church Services

Church services are held right on the grounds, and visitors to this Canadian Feast site will feel at home. Murray Palmatier is committed to serving as Feast Coordinator, working to ensure all your needs are met. A variety of speakers will be available to provide you greater insight into God's holydays and plan of salvation, and to help you put sound biblical principles to greater use in your life.

We will continue the focus on making a positive influence in the lives of our teens and young adults, and there will be Sabbath School classes daily for the children in the room that doubles as our Hospitality Room for informal meetings and luncheons. During the week there will be at least a couple of church luncheons provided.

Updates on speakers and activities will be provided from time to time at cgicanada.org.

Location

Located at 6400 Lundy's Lane, Niagara Falls, ON, Canada, the Cairn Croft is easily accessible from the QEW Highway, and is just a short drive from the Buffalo International Airport. Americans should bring a passport to enter Canada.

Rates (Guaranteed rates are good until August 31, 2009, so book early.)

Guest Rooms (check in October 2 and leaving October 10)

2 Queen Size Beds, Can\$74/night plus taxes (maximum 5 per room)

(3 adults/room add \$10/night; 4 adults/room, add \$20/night—Children 16 and under are free.)

To book rooms, call the Cairn Croft at 800-263-2551 and **state clearly that you are with the "Church of God International October Conference Block."**

Niagara Falls has many other motels and hotels for every price range should you wish to stay elsewhere, but we strongly encourage you to spend time together here at the Best Western Cairn Croft to enhance the fellowship for everyone.

Submitted by John Coish □

Victoria, British Columbia

We have decided to keep the Feast of Tabernacles again at the Victoria Ramada Waterway Conference Centre.

Victoria is a beautiful location with incredible gardens, shopping, mountains, ocean, and harbour. It is a fantastic location for all ages and budgets.

Area Attractions

Just a five-minute drive to downtown are the famous Inner Harbour and major attractions! The Ramada is located near the scenic Gorge Waterway, which runs into the Inner Harbour. Also nearby are several scenic walking/biking trails, kayak rental facilities, and challenging golf courses. In addition, we are close to great shopping at Mayfair Mall, Tillicum Mall, and Hillside Center.

While the Ramada is in the city of Victoria, you can still enjoy nature by viewing the beautiful fall colours at numerous parks in the area, including ones that overlook spectacular water sunsets of the major shipping lanes to Vancouver. Some area attractions are Butchart Gardens, museums, Undersea Gardens, whale watching tours, Empress Tea Time, great hiking, shopping, etc.

Accommodations

The Ramada has contemporary guest rooms featuring one queen size bed with a sofa, two queens, or one king. In addition, there are several suites set aside for family accommodations that are incredibly affordable and very clean. Most rooms in our booking will have a mini-fridge included. Full housekeeping service is provided twice a week, with daily towel and garbage service. We strongly suggest you take a tour of the facility at www.victoriaramada.com.

Church Services

Church services are held right on the grounds, and chairs are padded. Visitors to this Canadian feast site will feel at home. The Feast Coordinator, Eric Jantzen, is working to ensure all your needs are met. A variety of speakers will be available to provide you greater insight into God's holydays, God's plan of salvation, and to help you put sound biblical principles to greater use in your life. Updates on speakers and activities will be posted along the way at cgicanada.org.

We will continue the focus on making a positive influence in the lives of our teens and young adults, and there will be Sabbath School classes daily for the children in the room that doubles as our hospitality room for informal meetings and luncheons. During the week there will be at least a couple of church luncheons provided.

Location

Located at 123 Gorge Road, Victoria, the Ramada is easily accessible from Highway 1 and Douglas Street, and is also just a short drive from the Victoria International Airport. Americans should bring a passport to enter Canada.

Rates (Guaranteed rates are good until August 31, 2009, so book early.)

Guest Rooms (check in October 2 and leaving October 10)

2 Queen Size Beds, Can\$64/night plus taxes

1 Queen and Sofa, Can\$64/night plus taxes

1 King Size Bed, Can\$64/night plus taxes

(Children 16 and under are free.)

To book rooms, call the Ramada at 1-888-468-3514 and **state clearly that you are with the "Church of God International October Conference Block."** **You can book a particular room at time of booking if you are a repeat Victoria attendee.**

NOTE: Family Units with kitchens sleep six and are \$80/night. Family units can *only* be booked through Eric Jantzen at 250-714-1117.

Victoria has many other motels and hotels for every price range should you wish to stay elsewhere, but we strongly encourage you to spend time together here at the Ramada to enhance the fellowship for everyone. □

These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons.

Leviticus 23:4

Church News

Infuse—Take Two

by Mike James



Mike James

Now that Infuse has been an established program within the Church of God International (CGI) for the last five years, it's a good time to let you all know where the program stands and where it is going.

Early Days

Infuse began as a program to stimulate interest in worship and community service at the Feast and in local congregations among those in their late teens and early 20s. That was the initial premise. It didn't take long for us to realize that a greater number of young adults could be served if the age parameters were expanded to include those between 18 and 35. This change also provided a way for the older single adults to mentor the younger. It was a win-win arrangement.

Having changed the age recommendations for Infuse participants, it was then imperative to reevaluate the types of activities to sponsor and staff. To help with these decisions, we asked for suggestions—and listened. The Festival schedule soon filled with possibilities, each designed to meet as many individual needs as possible, and those represented through a larger group. Our young adults were involved and excited. It was refreshing to see how Infuse caught on, creating a well-received devotion to the goals of the program.

With all that was going on, it was perhaps inevitable that our excitement led some to wonder if the Infuse program was operating as a separate program apart from, but through, the CGI. That was never the case. As it was then and continues to be today, Infuse exists as a complement to the church's mission, serving as many as possible through cooperation, fellowship, education, and worship.

Where We Are Going

We are breaking Infuse down into three distinct groups, but out of necessity there will be some overlapping of these groups. Group Number One will be *Infuse Teens*. This will include teens between the ages of 13 and 19. Group Number Two will be *Infuse Young Adults*, for those between the ages of 18 and 26. It will be left up to the 18 and 19-year-olds to determine which group they want to be with. They can be in both if they choose. Finally, we will also have a group called *Infuse Leaders*, which will include those from about 27 into the early 30s.

Let me address what we have planned for each of these groups. The first group (teens) will have their own classes at the Feast for their age group. They will also have their own event at the Feast strictly for teens. The Infuse Young Adults will have the regular Infuse session we have been supporting at the Feast for five years now. The Infuse Leaders group will be involved with teaching the teens and some of the Infuse Young Adult sessions. The Infuse Leaders will also take the lead for our music program at the Feast, the Infuse service, and the planning and leading of all the Infuse events (community service project, Infuse dinner, T-shirt sales, beach party, retreats, etc.). The main Infuse service will continue to be open to the entire church. Teens, seniors, parents, and children are all welcome. The remaining Infuse events will continue to be open for anyone to attend. This would include the community service project, the Infuse dinner, etc.

If you look at our Festival activity schedule, you'll see that we've placed a weighted emphasis on sponsored activities. We've chosen that alternative as a means for providing a balanced venue for the youth to get together for fun, worship, and fellowship. There's always a lot to do, with a good variety of programs to attend. The degree to which someone participates is a matter of personal choice.

Results

One of the unforeseen and wonderful effects of the Infuse program has been the leadership skills many of our participants are gaining. I have seen noticeable growth in some of the young people. Let me give you one example. Andra Sandy has been a member of our Infuse group since its inception. During the third year of the program, she took on the task of taking the lead for our community service project at the Feast. During the second year of her leadership, she ran into some problems with the organization we were working with. To make a long story short, Andra had to arrange for us to work with a different organization, and it all worked out well. During last year's Feast, when problems arose again, Andra came up with another remedy that worked out very nicely. With each of these experiences, Andra has gained confidence and leadership skills that will help the CGI in the future. Without the Infuse program, Andra would not have had these opportunities to shine as a leader. Along with her, others have gained valuable experience in giving presentations or leading the music for our Infuse sessions and our teen classes. All of these opportunities for service have been made available to the young adults through the Infuse program. In years to come, I believe many of these young adults will have more active leadership roles in our fellowship groups and churches, due in part to their experiences with Infuse.

Future

Infuse is laying the foundation for future leadership in the CGI. Young people are learning skills they can bring to a local church and Festival gatherings. Here is what happened in Detroit. After a couple of years of the Infuse program, a group of Infuse members in the Detroit church, led by Steve Sandy, decided to form an Infuse chapter in their local church. The group meets on a regular basis for social activities and for service to their community. One of the projects they participate in during the year is community gardening. The group farms a plot of land in the inner city of Detroit, and the food they produce is given to those in the community who desperately need it. If you talk to those participating in this program, they will tell you the idea for what they are now doing came through Infuse. Infuse encourages the young adults to become active and take initiative in their community and church by providing them hands-on experience at the Feast and during the year. I can also see some of the young men in our Infuse group becoming participants in the Ministerial Apprentice Program (MAP) in the future. There is a lot of great potential in some of the people we have been working with.

What You Can Do to Help

I encourage all of you to email me ideas or suggestions on how we can make the Infuse program even better. I also ask all the elders and church leaders to find ways to involve the youth in your church in church activities. Most importantly, I welcome and encourage any of you who have issues, complaints, concerns, or criticisms of the Infuse program to please contact me directly. To do

otherwise opens the door to idle speculation and rumors, and that's never constructive. We are all teammates in the church—and TEAM means *Together-Each-Achieves-More*. So please be direct with me and let me know how we are doing.

Each month I send out a note to our Infuse leaders and Infuse participants. As a courtesy to the elders and hosts, I'll be delighted to email you the note. This way you'll have a current idea of our plans and thinking. If anyone reading this article knows of or would recommend others who would benefit from the monthly Infuse notes (teens, young adults, parents, seniors, etc.), please send their email address to mhjames6043@yahoo.com or call 240-304-6798.

Addendum:

1) <http://www.cgi.org/infuseteen/forum/>

This is the new *Teen Website* for CGI. Drew DeJarnette and Duane Nicol are working on getting this website up and running. Please let all the teens (ages 13–19) in your groups know about this new site and tell them to check it out.

2) *Memphis Retreat*—We are planning an Infuse retreat (Friday through Sunday) in Memphis this year. I need to know which month, June or July, works best for those of you planning to attend. We will also have a meeting at this retreat for our Infuse Leaders Program, and planning for our program at the Feast. Please send me a note and let me know if you prefer June or July.

3) We have tentative plans to have a full Infuse program at the Feast sites in *both Florida and South Carolina* this year. We also plan on having teen classes at each Feast site this year.

If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, please send me an email. Thanks for all your support. □

Did you know 100 years ago...

- The average wage in the U.S. was 22 cents per hour.
- The average worker made between \$200–\$400 per year.
- Accountants made \$2000, dentists \$2500, veterinarians \$7500 per year.
- Maximum speed limit in most cities was 10 mph.
- 90 percent of all U.S. doctors had no college education.
- More than 95 percent of all births took place at home.
- Sugar cost four cents per pound and eggs 14 cents per dozen.
- Crossword puzzles, canned beer, and iced tea had not yet been invented.
- Only 6 percent of all Americans had graduated from high school.
- Only 8 percent of the homes had a telephone.
- Only 14 percent of homes in the U.S. had a bath tub.

Murray Palmatier Ordained into God's Ministry!



From left to right: Bill Watson, Charles Groce, Lissa Palmatier, John Coish, Murray Palmatier, and son Landon

On December 20, 2008, the CGI Kitchener congregation celebrated the ordination of Murray Palmatier, a man we have known and loved for at least eight years. He is an extremely capable leader with great morals, organizational skills, relationship skills, and love for the brethren.

During the MAP program, Murray has participated in many personal training sessions for funerals, marriage counseling, baptism counseling, and general counseling. He has had the opportunity to sit in with me in conducting a number of personal counseling sessions, too.

Murray has had the opportunity to conduct baptisms, anointings, Feast coordination, church building, and relationship problem counseling over the last few years. In each situation, he comes across to everyone in the church as a man with a heart of service and a heart of responsibility to build the Church of God. In every task he has performed extremely well, or has learned the lessons to do well in the future.

His wife Lissa has not been as involved in the training sessions, but has learned well to quench gossip and slander and to serve as needed. She is a pillar of strength to Murray in many ways and is helping to raise two wonderful children.

Many members and many ministers and deacons have been confidently encouraging his ordination. The *Church of God International* will be served extremely well by his ordination. **Congratulations, Murray!** □

Submitted by John Coish

Nanaimo, British Columbia

Hazardous driving conditions prevented brethren from attending services for most of December and January in Nanaimo, British Columbia. As a result, Rob Hasanen and Jeff Patton did some live web broadcasting, which was encouraging for housebound members.

Brethren are also looking forward to the installation of Internet connections in our church building. We are excited to be constructing a new website, and also starting a small choir. Everyone is busily preparing for the spring holydays, and we're looking forward to an upcoming wedding later this spring.

Stuart and Colleen Foster's new home is being constructed after the other one burned down during the Feast.

Services are regularly held at St. Andrew's United Church, 311 Fitzwilliam St, Nanaimo, at 11:30 AM, usually followed by a potluck meal.

A special Bible Study is scheduled when Vance Stinson and John Coish visit the area on April 9–11 during the Days of Unleavened Bread. Topics will be relevant to the feast days, but also will answer what in the world is happening today, at home and in Israel. More information will be mailed out in late March, and also available at cgicanada.org under the "Services" tab.

It is also our hope that our local leaders will be recognized as elders during the spring holydays. They are actively serving the needs of the church as they are able, and we are grateful for that. □

Local contacts are: Eric and Angela Jantzen, (250) 714-1117
Jeff and Carolanne Patton, (250) 716-1141



Nanaimo



Ike Jantzen
Setting up music

Greetings From the Toronto Congregation

Greetings from CGI Toronto! Our Sabbath services commence at 1:30 PM at Trinity Presbyterian Church, located at 2737 Bayview Avenue. CGI Toronto currently averages between 80–100 persons attending services on a regular basis.

In order to help the Sabbath experience be enjoyed to its fullest, Toronto conducts several programs for both youth and adults. Programs are scheduled on a weekly to quarterly basis. Among these programs available to members or anyone else, are the Youth Sabbath Classes, Choir Meeting, Prayer Meeting, Women's Fellowship Group, Praise and Worship Service, Youth Day, and Food Drives. Toronto strives to provide something for everybody. There is also the Magazine Committee. God has blessed the congregation with the various talents and skills to produce a local church *Prevail* magazine publication.

Fellowship is something that is much loved in Toronto. It is not uncommon for fellowship to continue in the facility right up until sunset, and then continue in the parking lot after the church building is vacated.

Toronto is looking forward to several approaching events. Among them is the Annual Dinner Buffet scheduled for March. A few weeks later, members will go out and enjoy Bowling Night. The Bible Study Weekend is scheduled for Friday, March 27 through Sunday, March 29, a weekend being prepared for with much excitement. We will perform a Gospel Concert during this event, on Saturday evening. If you're in Toronto any weekend, we would love to have you join us for Sabbath services. (See photo next page!) □

Winnipeg, Manitoba

The Winnipeg, Manitoba congregation is very happy to announce two baptisms in January. Jamie and David Dunlop-Yvinec were submerged into the waters on January 24, 2009.

It is so wonderful to have a new couple join our church, and a great way to start off the new year. It's been about 15 or so years now that our small group has been drawn together by our common faith and love for the truth to form the beginning of this fellowship group.

We originally met in a local hotel each Sabbath, but with the help of the *Church of God International* in Ontario, we have come to own the church building we now use. While our minister, Alex Kennedy, was away visiting the Calgary congregation, we started working on renovations to make it truly our own. Boy, was he in for a surprise when he returned! We are still actively working on the paint and wallpaper, while still meeting at noon every Saturday. Our congregation always loves to stay after services for coffee and varied food that members bring to share.

Submitted by Andrea Leader □

CGI Kitchener

Our church started in June of 1992 with 17 people in attendance. Today we range from 30–60, depending on who is assisting with other groups and the number of occasional guests. We regularly meet at Doon Pioneer Park Community Center, 150 Pioneer Drive, at 11 AM each Sabbath. This facility sits on a ravine and provides a beautiful treeline view.

We have been blessed with an ongoing Sabbath School program for children, a fantastic pianist, and a number of singers and teachers. Whether setting up the room, running activities, or the like, everyone lends a hand to help out the local family or the church at large.

Over the years, we have visited nursing homes and children's homes to spread a little hope, grace, and love. This year we also hope to run a booth at the Word of the Street Festival to teach the public that reasoned people observing scientific events believe in creation, Jesus, and the Bible. Of course, people are often fascinated with prophecy, so one presentation will deal with that subject, too. This should be a wonderful opportunity to share our beliefs with hundreds, if not thousands, of others.

July 1–5 will be our Summer Camp out on the shores of Lake Erie at the Triple C Bible Camp. These will be days of fellowship and family activities, where we grow and learn from one another in a fun, natural environment.

The spring holydays will have the New Covenant Service at sunset in Kitchener with John Coish, the First Day of Unleavened Bread in Dorchester with Bill Watson, and the Last Day of Unleavened Bread in Toronto with Duane Nicol. It is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the Feast with the larger church family.

Visitors are always welcome, and refreshments and fellowship usually occur for over an hour after church, often moving to local homes for the rest of the day. For local Sabbath services or Bible Studies, please check us out at cgicanada.org.

Submitted by John Coish □



Kitchener
Congregation



Ottawa Congregation

The Ottawa, Ontario congregation of the *Church of God International* meets on a weekly basis in the national capital of Canada. Eighteen regular attendees travel from as far a distance as two hours to meet with brethren on the Sabbath. While some members live in the Ottawa area, others live in the Ontario towns of Kingston, Cornwall, the rural hamlet of Hammond, and the city of Montreal, Quebec. Due to these great distances, not everyone is able to gather each week. We are blessed to have visiting speakers on a monthly basis. This makes for an extra special gathering on those Sabbaths.

Such a Sabbath service took place on December 13, 2008, when our congregation welcomed John Coish, the senior pastor of the churches in Canada. Mr. Coish spoke to 12 Ottawa brethren gathered on this snowy Sabbath about the example of the prophet Daniel and his three young friends, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, more commonly known by their Chaldean names, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. In his message, Mr. Coish pointed out that these servants of God served under various worldly systems during the 70 years of captivity, but always held true to their faith and displayed their devotion outwardly whenever they could. Not only did God bless and protect them throughout their service, but many of the empirical leaders came to know, acknowledge, and honor the God of Israel through their strict adherence to their faith. He admonished us that we can do no less in times that try followers of God and believers in the Holy Bible. We are surrounded by educational and political systems that continually remove God and implement anti-Biblical beliefs that will only increasingly challenge our abilities to serve God and preach the gospel of the kingdom, as we are called to do. Men like Daniel and his three young friends serve as part of the great cloud of witnesses that should inspire our faithful service to God.

After this inspirational message, our group fellowshiped and partook of snacks and drinks provided by members. We look forward to the coming year when we will be treated to visits by speakers from the Toronto and Kitchener areas. Should you ever be in the Ottawa area, we would love to have you visit our group. Speaking schedules are kept up-to-date on the Canadian website, www.cgicanada.org. May God continually bless you as you seek His Will.

Submitted by Murray Palmatier □

Engagement Announcement

Gerry and Shela Persoon are happy to announce the engagement of their daughter, Heather, to Joshua Patton, son of Jeff and Carolanne Patton.

The wedding will take place May 24, 2009 in Vancouver, BC.

CONGRATULATIONS HEATHER AND JOSHUA!



CGI
Toronto
Congregation



Newfoundland Brethren

This is the group in Newfoundland. From left to right: Anna Hynes, who lives in St. John's; Jean and Clarence Williams, who live in Britannia Random Island; Stewart Kennedy, who lives in Foxtrap Conception Bay South; and Edward and Annie Mercer, who live in Harbour Grace. We meet at Edward Mercer's for Sabbath services at 1:30 PM each Sabbath, including the holydays and Feast.

Visitors often reflect on Newfoundlanders as some of the warmest, friendliest people in the world. We are eager to demonstrate that warmth to any guests who come our way.

Next Special Event: Murray Palmatier will be at the Best Western Hotel on March 28, 2009 for Sabbath services. He will be there from 12 noon until 5 PM. Contact Edward Mercer at 1 709-596-2651 or Clarence Williams at 1 709-547-2466. □



Acme, Alberta Congregation

News from Alberta: In 2001, my wife and I sold our home in Calgary and moved 100 miles northeast to a small village where I built a new house. We traveled back to Calgary each Sabbath and on holydays to meet with a small group there.

In traveling, I kept noticing a little sign on the roadside just south of Acme, Alberta, *Church of God 7th Day, 3-1/2 Miles West*. The 3-1/2 miles is on gravel road, but is halfway between Calgary and where we live now. We found out they had services at 10 AM each Sabbath, and decided to drop in. We were greeted with warm welcomes and great enthusiasm.

This church had no pastor except for the odd visit from the Calgary church. They met in their own church building, sang hymns, read Scripture, and opened with prayer, then moved to the fellowship centre for a Bible Study. After a short while, I was asked if I wanted to conduct the Bible Study. I accepted, and have been doing it ever since, except when we're at the Feast. I also conduct the New Covenant Service each year, something they always went to Calgary for in the past.

Now we also host a CGI service on the third Sabbath of each month in the afternoon, and the holyday services as well. We have a great little group with a desire to learn God's will and grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and God the Father.

Submitted by Frank Bean □



In Loving Memory

Kenneth E. Register... at rest with God

What words can be used to summarize 88 years—the achievements of a long, full life—and do it justice? You can't! Following is a compilation of thoughts and facts that, in their limited way, express the life of a man I came to know; in fact, every person who ever met this man gained something.

Kenneth Everett Register was born September 7, 1920, in Chicago, Illinois, the son of Everett L. Register and Grace M. Crawley-Register. While attending high school at Lanphier High in Springfield, Illinois, Ken was very proud of the fact that he worked with his father developing and patenting the material used in the manufacture of reflecting road signs, an improvement that is used in the United States and Canada to this day, and indeed all over the world. Ken and his father sold that business after his graduation, and moved to Pittsburgh, Kansas, once again opening a sign business. The business thrived until the war in Europe required the materials needed in their business.

Ken enlisted in the army in April, 1942, as a technician, 5th Grade, with the Ordinance Branch of Service. During basic training, he was placed with the 9th Armored Division. Ken transferred to the 4th Armored Division and headed for Boston, Massachusetts, to go to England and enter the war. After landing in England, Ken contracted pneumonia and nearly died. He was laid up in an army hospital for three months—a month and a half seriously ill and battling for life, and a month and a half in recovery at the base hospital. While Ken was recovering from pneumonia, the 4th Armored Division was dispatched to Omaha Beach, where they were decimated. Ken's life was spared. He entered the war at Normandy, and was assigned as a replacement to General Patton's 3rd Army as a member of the 6th Armored Division. Ken was a member of the forces who liberated Bastone, France. While serving in the 6th Armored Division, his unit was temporarily transferred to the 7th Army to assist in driving back invading Nazi forces at the "Battle of the Bulge."

As WWII was nearing its end, they drove forward through Germany to the Buchenwald concentration camp. Ken was among the very first soldiers to enter Buchenwald. The atrocities that he witnessed while liberating Buchenwald were too difficult to discuss openly, even after 60 years.

Ken was part of the 3rd Army Division that met the Russians just south of Berlin and forced the surrender of Germany. While awaiting transfer to the South Pacific campaign, Ken was assigned to a field artillery unit and placed in a guard detachment where he stood guard at Dachau concentration camp over Nazi war criminals awaiting trial at Nuremberg. At the end of the war, occupation forces replaced Ken's division and Ken was able to come home.

After his return in November, 1945, Ken and his family moved to Piedmont, Missouri, where he and his father restarted their sign business, this time adding the purchase of a traffic-signal manufacturing company.

Seeing the devastation of war and man's inhumanity to man, Ken had developed a cynicism about life, as well as an agnostic view—not so much that there was no God, but rather, if there was one, He wasn't a God who cared about humanity.

Enter a perky little 15-year-old "spitfire" of a girl named Betty Mae West. In a paper Ken wrote about his life, he remarked, "Met Betty West and she invited me to church—married her August, 1946." That invitation changed the course of Ken's life. Betty tells the story of Ken's encounter with his

father when Betty went home with Ken for that first time. Ken was 10 years older, but had seen the impact war had on women his age, and he wanted a virtuous wife, a virgin bride. So, when his dad asked, "Are you sure you know what you are doing?" Ken's reply was short and to the point: "Yes I do, so back off." Apparently he did, because he and Betty celebrated 62 years of marriage last August.

Betty had an innocence and purity that Ken was searching for. Her exuberance and joy for life was just what the doctor ordered. Betty West was the daughter of a unique man, a Sabbath-keeping Pentecostal preacher in Piedmont by the name of Amos Harrison West. He had built the little one-room church he preached in with his own hands with lumber he had felled and cut at his own lumber mill. Ken and Amos butted heads frequently. Nevertheless, Ken was more impressed with Betty than with her dad. But he realized he couldn't have the one without the ability to tolerate the other.

Amos Harrison West played a major role in the process of conversion for Ken over the following couple of years by leaving little pamphlets from the Radio Church of God (the forerunner to the Worldwide Church of God), headed by Mr. Armstrong, lying around on tables throughout the house. The particular pamphlet that had the largest impact on Ken was the one on the true Sabbath. Taking his Bible in hand, Ken went off alone to research the "so-called" facts that Amos had been proclaiming. After a thorough search of the Scriptures, Ken had to accept the fact that all those churches of the world were in fact wrong. He began believing in the Sabbath and hope once again.

After his conversion, he developed a deep desire to serve God. Ken was baptized at Big Sandy, Texas, while observing the spring holidays in 1953. Betty was baptized the following year, 1954, in Texas as well. They returned to Piedmont and sold their traffic signal business to a company in St. Louis, and Ken applied to Ambassador College in Pasadena, California. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theology in 1960. Ken served in the WCG as an accountant and "IT" manager in Pasadena.

Ken and Betty's faith was tested in 1965 with the death of their 13-year-old son, Steven Register. Stevie died of a burst appendix on January 5, 1965. In a conversation I had with Ken just three years ago, I asked what he had learned from that experience and why he stayed faithful after that event; he simply said, "I thought about leaving, but came to realize that it wasn't God's fault. We learn from our mistakes. Besides, I wanted to continue to serve God with other people."

He was ordained a deacon in Glendale, California, in 1966. Betty was ordained the following year. They were transferred to the Canadian office in 1973, where Ken worked as a mail-processing manager. He resigned from the Canadian office in 1976 and returned to California. At 44, Ken was faced with the reality of starting over again. He was forced to take several minimum-wage jobs at first, but over time built up his career again in accounting. Ken retired from his work as an accountant in 1982 and volunteered to serve in the *Church of God International* in Springfield, Missouri. Ken was coordinating the Feast of Tabernacles in Branson when Mr. Garner Ted Armstrong and Mr. Ron Dart ordained him an elder in 1984. He coordinated that Feast site for five years. He became pastor over the congregations in Springfield and Willow Springs, Missouri, and was elected a member of the Ministerial Council in 1996, serving faithfully for 12 years. He received the Upper Room Award on December 15, 2007 from that council for his tireless efforts in the oversight of the Church of God.

He established the Feast site in Wagoner, Oklahoma, where he was coordinator for five years. During the summer of 1999, Ken and Betty traveled across western Canada on a baptizing tour, and in the spring of 2000 coordinated the Passover and spring Feast celebration for the brethren in Vancouver, BC. During their travels, they found a beautiful spot called Harrison Hot Springs in British Columbia. Ken made the arrangements and

coordinated the Feast of Tabernacles there for the next five years. Many people do not know that Ken and Betty paid out of their own pocket for all of the expenses at Harrison Hot Springs for all the activities at that Feast site for those five years. Yet all the offering envelopes collected during the first and last high days of the Feast each year were forwarded to the office headquarters of the CGI in Canada.

There were three passions in Ken's life: Faith, Family, and Country. I witnessed them all. I watched as Betty, the beautiful bride of his youth, stayed at his side comforting and caring for him. Betty's commitment to him was as stable, as durable, and as tender in sickness as it was in health. Their love for each other moved me to a deeper understanding of my vows to my own wife. Their recognition of each other's values and their commitments to help safeguard those values is a lesson I hope to live myself and teach to others.

Ken baptized me in the spring of 1996, and I came to know and love him first as a pastor and in the end as a father and a friend. Over the past two years, I was called on to be their driver, to help serve in the local church, and perform any odd jobs they might have. I watched as his relationship with Betty went from opening doors for her to her opening doors for him; from him being the steady arm on icy ground to her stabilizing him. Yet through it all, each time their hands were free from work, they were joined in love. It seems strange to young people to see "old" people holding hands. But I find it a true testament to the enduring love that I know they had for each other. I assisted as he would attend to the needs of others, even in his weakened state, and never complain about his personal pain and discomfort. Being weakened by a series of strokes over the past two years never stopped him from arriving on time for church services every Sabbath. It never stopped him from getting up and walking to the front of the hall, where we meet for services, and giving the announcements. It never deterred him from doing good. His "hands on" approach to my development as a Christian and servant to God is a debt I will gladly owe for the rest of my life.

Throughout his ministry, Ken baptized over 100 people into the faith of Jesus Christ. Why? Because after a lifetime of seeing the hell and deceptions men have to offer, he wanted to share the hope and promise he found in the faith of Jesus Christ.



Ken Register

Ken Register died on January 5, 2009 (the 44th anniversary of his son Stevie's death) at Manor Care Health Services in Springfield from pneumonia-related complications while recovering from a recent series of strokes over the last month of his life.

His parents, Everett and Gracie Register; his older sister, Vinita Heissinger; and his son, Stevie Register, preceded him in death. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Betty Mae Register; his younger sister, Roselyn Eigenmann; his son, Dave (Linda) Register; his daughter, Nancy (David) Beckerdite; six grandsons, Jon and Steve Register, Daniel (Madeline) DeJarnette, Drew (Joanna) DeJarnette; and Alex and Nathan DeJarnette; one granddaughter, Francesca Nixon; four great-grandchildren, Isaiah, Bailey, Laynee, and Elijah DeJarnette.

The Church of God has lost a "one of a kind"—a dedicated, lifelong servant. We've lost a man who led through patient example instead of melodramatic expression—a man of few words, yet many achievements—someone who made it his duty to look after the welfare of others, but never interfere.

His grandsons Drew and Daniel DeJarnette spoke at his funeral, highlighted by the attendance of family, friends, and several ministers from CGI, as well as the

Continued on next page

In loving memory...

Ken Register, continued from page 17

ministry of more than four Church of God fellowship organizations. Ken impacted the lives of so many people, and built bridges in each of their lives. To close this article, I enclose the poem Drew and I wrote. It was printed on the back of the handout at Ken's funeral. Ken Register never faltered in his labors for his church or his family, living the words of Joshua who proclaimed, "As for me and my house, we shall serve God." And he was faithful in his service to his country. Ken's children, grandchildren, and now great-grandchildren attend faithfully as members of the Church of God. May we continue his devotion and commitment in our faithfulness to God and His house. As we look over a lifetime of faithful service and devotion, we look forward to the day when we shall see him again, in the resurrection. Rest in peace, Kenneth Register!

More Than Just A Man

*More than just a husband,
More than just a dad.
One of the greatest pastors,
This church has ever had.
Your words gave us insight,
Your prayers brought us peace.
A loving servant to all,
In both thought and deed.
Guide, mentor, counselor, and friend,
Showing kindness and mercy while living God's plan.
Much more in life to the friends that you had;
To me, you were more than just a man!*

*Submitted by Drew DeJarnette
and David Beckerdite* □

We May Ask Amiss, But He Answers Aright

I asked for health that I might do greater things; I was given infirmity that I might do better things. I asked God for strength that I might achieve; I was made weak that I might learn to obey. I asked for riches that I might be happy; I was given poverty that I might be wise. I asked for power and the praise of men; I was given weakness to sense my need of God. I asked for all things that I might enjoy life; I was given life that I might enjoy all things. I got nothing I asked for, but everything I hoped for. In spite of myself, my prayers were answered—I am among all people most richly blest. Yes, God always gives us what's best for us. □

Anonymous



Joe W. Kirk, Jr.

Joe W. Kirk, Jr. died December 3, 2008, at his home in Minden, Louisiana. He was born December 18, 1945, to Joe Willie Kirk, Sr. and Classie Manning Kirk, who both preceded him in death. He is survived by two sisters, Grace Kirk Richardson and Alice Kirk Blackburn, three nephews, one niece, two uncles, three aunts, and many cousins and friends.

Funeral services were held at 11:00 AM, Wednesday, December 10, at the Mt. Zion C.M.E. Church, with Mr. Vance Stinson and Mr. Ron Elkins officiating.

Joe was a member of the Shreveport congregation of the Church of God International for the past 23 years. Prior to attending the CGI for the first time, Joe spent many years studying his Bible, along with literature that he received from both the Worldwide Church of God of Pasadena, CA, and the Church of God International of Tyler, TX.

Joe's first meeting with the church was in 1985 as a result of an invitation to hear Mr. Garner Ted Armstrong speak in Bossier City, LA. Soon after that meeting, a local congregation was formed, with Joe as one of its first members. Of those founding members, he was the only one still in regular attendance. Joe was baptized July 25, 1987 in a backyard swimming pool by Mr. Ian Hufton.

Joe often arrived early at church to help set up chairs, lay out the literature display, or to pass out hymnals—and he was always one of the last to leave. His humble spirit and biblical knowledge, as well as his dedication to God and the church, will always be remembered by those who knew him.

Submitted by John Woodard □

Harry Marlor

Harry Marlor, a faithful and much loved member of the Church of God International in Australia, died suddenly of a heart attack at Ballina on Friday 17 October during the Feast of Tabernacles. He was laid to rest at Mt. Gravatt Cemetery, Brisbane, on 24 October following a funeral service and committal.

His loving wife Annie was joined by his family, friends, and many of his brethren to celebrate his life of faithfulness and service to those who knew him, a life that was summed up in the following eulogy given by his grandson, Shane Parkes:

"Harry was born on 17 July 1925 in Denton, Manchester.

As a baby, his family moved to Rudheath, Cheshire, where he attended Rudheath Primary and Technical School. He then began work at Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI) as a trainee.

During the war, Harry joined the Scotts Guard where he met Annie, who was in the Women's Army. They married after a nine-month courtship, then 13 months after their wedding, David was born. Upon his release from the army, he rejoined ICI in Cheshire. In 1948, David passed away at 3-1/2 years following a vehicle accident.

The following year a daughter was born, and Harry chose the name "Jean."

In 1951, Harry and Annie migrated to Australia for a better life. Harry continued working with ICI, rising quickly to superintendent of his shift.

Harry was associated with the "Aboriginal Advancement League" in Adelaide, and it was through this network that he and Annie were encouraged to care for Irene.

Post retirement, Harry and Annie returned to England several times, as well as traveling to Sri Lanka, New Zealand, and extensively around Australia, including to Copley with Irene to spend time with her family and community. Irene's children, Kylie, Gavin, and Bradley, would spend weekends with Harry and Annie.

Twenty-one years ago, Harry and Annie moved to Brisbane to be closer to their grandchildren, Sharon and Shane. Shortly after, Cassie, their first granddaughter, was born. Harry and Annie cared for her in her toddler years while Sharon completed her first university degree. Soon after this, Darien and Joshua were born. Sharon went on to complete three degrees, stating that she owes them to Grandpa and Grandma—she couldn't have achieved it without them.

Shane's daughter, Britteney, and Kylie's children, Isaiah and Themba, bring Harry's tally of great grandchildren to six. He was passionate about and fiercely protective of his family.

Harry could turn his hand to most things, and following his retirement, kept busy with family and repairing things for them. Harry was an avid reader and enjoyed music. He was a deep thinker and studied the Scriptures with friends of like mind. He personally believed in the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Harry and Annie were married for 64 years."

We, his brethren, along with his family, will miss his kind nature, his sense of humour, and scintillating conversations we shared with Harry.

Harry was with his wife, Annie, and his brethren, rejoicing at God's Feast and looking forward to Christ's return when he died. He believed and looked forward to: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Corinthians 15:52).

We can all take great comfort in this promise! □

"Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

(1 Corinthians 15:52)

In loving memory...



Shirley A. Beers

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant"

Shirley A. Beers, a long-time member of the *Church of God International* in Cranberry, PA, died on February 6, 2009, at her home in Dayton, PA. She was 67 years old, having been born May 10, 1941 in Latrobe, PA to the late George and Stella Lupyán. She was a driver with Mid County Transit Authority, Kittanning. She is survived by her husband, Norman W. Beers, whom she married September 23, 1960; sons, Robert "Bob" Beers (Shirley), of Indian Springs, Nevada; and Daniel Beers (Laura), of Dayton; daughters, Judie Dullam (Brad), of Janesville, Wisconsin, and Brenda Bailey (Stan), of Parker; brothers, John Lupyán of New Alexandria, and Ronald Lupyán of Tunnelton; sister, Georgine Smoker of Latrobe; and ten grandchildren. In addition to her parents, an infant son, Mark Beers, preceded her in death.

Funeral services were held Monday, February 9, in Dayton, with her pastor, Wayne Hendrix, and Ed Szalankiewicz, of the *Church of God International*, and Pastor Don Henson of the *United Church of God*. Shirley loved to quilt, and some of her work was displayed at the funeral. One throw was inscribed with "I Have Fought the Good Fight," and that certainly described her grit and courage, not only with having gone through several surgeries in the last few months, but in her staunch loyalty to her congregation and her devotion to Jesus Christ.

Shirley and Norm have been faithful members of God's church for many years, and in September of this year would have celebrated 49 years of marriage. Shirley was a warm, loving, and kind person who will be very much missed. She was in every way a Christian wife, mother, grandmother, and sister.

Shirley will be forever missed, but we also rejoice in the blessed assurance that in the twinkling of an eye Shirley will be changed and be with us in the Kingdom of God forever!

Submitted by Wayne Hendrix

Julie Jenne'

Julie Christine Jenne', 61, of North Charleston, South Carolina, died Saturday, November 1, 2008 at her residence. Julie was born February 25, 1947 in the Philippines, daughter of the late Edovijes Orbita. Julie was the widow of John Jenne'. Her daughter, Jasmin O'Regan, son-in-law, Conor O'Regan, and granddaughter, Rihana E. O'Regan, survive Julie.

Julie and her husband John were both baptized at the Feast of Tabernacles on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, in 1995. They were a very welcome addition to our church family with the dedication and support they showed each and every week. When, quite suddenly, Julie lost her beloved husband John to a heart attack ten years ago, she placed her faith in God and carried on with hope and courage. When Julie was diagnosed with bone marrow cancer several years ago, she once again placed her faith in God. She had a lot of really tough days throughout her treatment, but she had the love and support not only of her daughter Jasmin, along with her husband Conor, but also of her church family. During the time of her cancer diagnosis and treatment, Julie was able to find a tremendous amount of joy in the birth of her granddaughter, Rihana. Words fail to describe the love and pride Julie felt for her daughter, son-in-law, and her precious granddaughter.

Julie was a very independent woman, which no doubt helped in her battle with cancer. This independence also led her back to the job she loved, one that had her on her feet all day. Julie was a cosmetologist at the Navy Exchange Barber Shop. No one would have questioned Julie retiring with her health as it was, but she wanted to get back to work. She missed her co-workers and her clients, and they missed her. Julie continued to improve, and for the last few years medications seemed to be keeping the cancer in check, but just a couple of months ago, Julie found out that the medications were not working. She would need more chemotherapy. Julie declined that course of treatment and peacefully decided to put all her faith in God and His will.

Julie had a lot of friends in God's church, and she loved to visit with them as much as she could. She always looked forward to the Feast of Tabernacles where so many were gathered together. This was always a joyous time for her. Julie remained dedicated to God, His church, and her family throughout all of her trials. She inspired many with her strength and commitment. Julie will be missed by everyone who knew her.

Graveside services were held Monday, November 10, 2008 at 1:30 PM at Beaufort National Cemetery, where she was laid to rest alongside her husband. Together they sleep, awaiting God's Kingdom.



Paul Douglas Teeters

Paul Douglas Teeters, beloved husband of Ella Mae, was born December 6, 1927 in eastern Kentucky. Paul was the oldest of about 14 children and quit school early to work and help support the family. At least one of his younger brothers said that Paul was a very strict disciplinarian when left in charge.

Paul spent time in the U.S. Navy, where he did welding on submarines. Later in life, this activity involving welding on asbestos-insulated pipes caused severe lung problems, which along with diabetes complications, contributed to Paul's death on June 29, 2008, at age 80. Paul's funeral, on July 3, was conducted by Tom Kauffung, Charles Groce, and Paul's brother, Victor, who is minister of the Newtonsville, OH Nazarene Church, where the funeral service was conducted.

Paul was baptized in the Atlantic Ocean at Hilton Head Island, SC, during the Feast of Tabernacles in 1993, and began attending with the Middletown, Ohio congregation of the *Church of God International* shortly thereafter. Paul began giving sermonettes in 1998, and continued doing so until he was unable due to his illness. Paul was a faithful and active member of God's church even after his illness severely drained his strength.

Those who attended the Feast in Land Between the Lakes, KY may remember Paul setting up his video camera to record the services. Paul was very zealous about video recording the services at the Feast, as well as at the local church at Middletown, Ohio.

His dedication to his Creator God and his Savior Jesus Christ was evident to all who knew him.

Submitted by Tom Kauffung

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PO Box 2525

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The editor

THE COMFORTER

What to do in this time of stress?
To God my burdens I must confess.

Lord, I need you, I feel all alone and scared.
Please restore my faith which has become impaired.

My soul full of troubles, I consider the grave.
I need to be salvaged from this roaring wave.

In this imminent valley of the shadow of death,
Please guide and protect me till my final breath.

My fear now immense, I beseech You, God,
Please comfort me with Thy staff and Thy rod.

Please turn my sorrow into sweet bliss.
Please guide me through this daunting mist.

Please send me manna from above.
Please comfort me, Lord, with all Your love.

In You I rest my every care,
I come to You, Lord, in fervent prayer.

If I stay faithful, if I remain true,
My Lord and my Savior will carry me through.

God will deliver me from this strain,
God will eradicate all my pain.

His yoke is easy, His burden light.
He will take away my distressing fright.

The Good Shepherd won't desert His faithful sheep.
He will hearken to my fervent weep.

In God I trust, I have no fear.
I now feel His Holy Spirit near.

Blessed are we, the poor in spirit,
For the kingdom of heaven we will inherit.

Blessed are we who thirst and hunger at this time,
For soon we shall be filled from the sacred Vine.

Blessed are we who weep now in deep gloom,
For we shall laugh in due time, no more pain, no more
doom.

Lord, I am leaning on Your everlasting arms of care.
It is you, God, who has released me from this yawning
snare.

You have lifted my head from above the nest.
You have delivered me, Lord, and given me rest.

You have assuaged all of my pain and fears,
You have wiped away all of my many tears.

Thank you, dear Lord, for delivering me.
Thank you, dear God, for setting me free.

-Zion Hezekiah



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