



The Midnight Cry

June 2010, Volume 2, Number 5

A Magazine of Urgent Understanding

A Spiritual

Awakening

Mat 25:1-6

Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For the foolish, when they took their lamps, took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. Now while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. But at midnight there is a cry,

**Behold, the bridegroom!
Come ye forth to meet him.**





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From the Editor ...



The most important goal of those who are called to be firstfruits is to try, through the Spirit of God, to “grow up into Christ in all things” and thereby qualify for the first resurrection! That thought was upper-most in the mind of the loyal servant of Jesus Christ, the apostle Paul, as he stated the following:



If by any means I might attain to the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect,

but I am pressing on, if I may lay hold of that for which I also was taken hold of by Christ Jesus. My brothers, I do not count myself to have taken possession, but one thing I do, forgetting the things behind and reaching forward to the things before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:11-14, MKJV).

But as we press toward the mark, it is a fact that the great majority of our sleeping brethren do not understand the simple truth revealed by the name of the third of God's annual Holy Days, the “Feast of Firstfruits” or the Feast of Weeks of the Firstfruits...Harvest (Ex. 34:22)! Doesn't the title “Feast of Firstfruits” certainly imply that the early spring grain harvest represents the first resurrection—and that this great event will occur on that day sometime in the future?

God is consistent in His ways—He changes not (Heb. 13:8). Jesus Christ became the true Passover on the exact day that the Passover lambs had been offered in sacrifice for nearly 15 centuries (Lev. 23:5 and Num. 28:16). Our Savior also fulfilled the “wave offering” on the exact day it was commanded to be observed (Lev. 23:9-14). We who are called to be firstfruits fulfill the meaning of the seven Days of Unleavened Bread (Lev. 23:6-8). Once we have been brought to repentance, and have been forgiven of our past sins at our baptism, through the Passover sacrifice of the true Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, then we must struggle for the remainder of our physical lives to keep sin (leavening) out of our lives. This is clearly portrayed by our keeping the commanded Days of Unleavened Bread.

Pentecost comes on the fiftieth day, at the end of counting seven Sabbaths (Strong's #7676: Lev. 23: 15-22) from the “wave offering” day. This is why the “Feast of Weeks (Strong's #7620: Ex. 34:22) of the Firstfruits” is another name for this festival. It is also where the name “Pentecost” is derived—in the Greek language it is the fiftieth day.

The Law of God was given to ancient Israel on this wonderful Holy Day almost 3500 years ago. The Holy Spirit was given to the 120 faithful brethren waiting in the city of Jerusalem in 31 AD on the same day. Thus the Day of Pentecost also symbolizes the Holy

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Many Are Called, But Few Are Chosen

by John Durrad

“For he that comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him (Heb. 11:6).

This quote from the book of Hebrews tells us that there is a reward for those that come to God and seek him. We know that God does bless us in this physical life, but the real reward is much greater than that. The real reward for spirit-begotten members of God’s Church is sonship in the Kingdom of God.

But wait, how can we “come to God?” No one can join the true Church of God, no matter how rich, powerful or important we think we are – only God can add converts to His Church. We know very clearly that John 6:44 says it is the Father Himself that calls us. So we can only come to God after He first calls us.

When we examine our calling we realise just how special and precious it is. It is precious because, above all, it shows God’s love for His creation; it shows us that God wants to share His life with us. And yet, the natural mind of man is so lacking in Godly love, so suspicious of someone wanting to give, that very few respond to that unique

calling. “For many are called, but few are chosen” (Matt 22:14).

We know the “many” here is relative because God is not calling the whole world at this time. But look how special this calling today is, because only a few of those called are actually chosen to be the first-fruits or very elect.

In a member letter of March 19, 1981, Herbert W. Armstrong wrote this:

We know God calls, but how does He choose? First of all, God wants us to understand the “give” principle.

“Few understand just what is the Church. There are so many churches in the world. People just take churches for

granted. But more than 1,953 years ago, [more now in 2010], Jesus Christ said, “I will build my Church.” Few know WHY He built it – for what PURPOSE. The purpose, primarily, was dual:

1. to proclaim to the world the gospel message God sent to mankind by Jesus as God’s messenger of the coming Kingdom of God (Mal 3:1);

This principle of love, or outgoing concern, is the foundation of our calling. It is the basis by which God chooses who will be in the Kingdom.

2. to call and prepare a chosen people to be born as immortal Spirit Persons in the GOD FAMILY to RULE with and under Christ, all nations of the earth...Those people now being called and prepared will constitute the Spiritual TEMPLE to which Christ shall come the second time in POWER and GREAT GLORY!

Let us look more closely at the aforementioned scripture. We need to know what it means not only to be called, but also to be chosen. We know God calls, but how does He choose? First of all, God wants us to understand the “give” principle.

“Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou

shalt love thy neighbour as thyself (Matt 22:36-39).

We are told that we should first love God, then we should love others. This principle of love, or outgoing concern, is the foundation of our calling. It is the basis by which God chooses who will be

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in the Kingdom.

So why is it so difficult for mankind to love God and love his fellow man? The short answer is because of human nature. Mankind cannot love like God does – it is against his nature! Yet most people don't have much trouble loving themselves, and that's alright. We should hate our sins, but love ourselves enough to want to get rid of sin. But what if you hate yourself? Is it possible to love others if you hate yourself?

Mankind is his own worst enemy. More people murder themselves each year than murder others. There are more suicides than homicides! One reason people hate themselves is because they have not yet taken the step to remove sin from their lives. They have not repented of breaking God's laws, and a part of repentance is to forgive ourselves.

But God's command to love ourselves is not an act we can perform alone. God must be in the picture. Notice how it works:

“Be - loved, let us love one another: for love is of

God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God...And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him...There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love... We love him, because he first

loved us (1 John 4:7, 16, 18-19).

Before man can express true love toward God, toward others, and toward himself – God must first express His love toward us. God does that by calling us to be part of His family. This works in four stages:

1. GOD FIRST LOVES US. This is done individually, by calling us to His truth.
2. WE LOVE GOD IN RETURN. This is shown by our acts of repentance and baptism.
3. WE CAN THEN LOVE OURSELVES. We can do this because after baptism our source of self-hate (our sins) has been removed.
4. WE CAN LOVE OTHERS. Finally, we are free to work toward loving others as ourselves.

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Any attempt to love yourself without these prior steps becomes self-love by works, or a form of vanity.

Many of our brethren today are living dangerously by allowing their love toward men to overcome their love toward God.

This chasing after vainglory and intellectual vanity is not what God is looking for as He chooses His pillars for the Spiritual Temple.

But anyway, we see that it is God who first calls us. Then He goes on to choose us for our positions in His Temple. This calling is not for everyone today. Today is the time for the firstfruits. Because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, God is able now to call sons to glory; but still

only a relative few are now being called. This is still Satan's society, and God will call none to failure. God has a plan, and this is not the only time (day) of salvation.

So, many are called, but few are chosen. That is, many, in relation to the few chosen, are called. That means a very few at this time, will be chosen. To fully understand this verse we must introduce another component.

“These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful (Rev 17:14).

Not only are we specially called by God, but those that will be with Jesus Christ when He returns will also have been chosen and remained faithful.

One of the hallmarks of the Church of God's Faithful is holding fast, and being faithful to what we have been taught! Revelation 17:14 is a key scripture. It describes who the firstfruits are: called, chosen and faithful.

What does it mean to be called?

“For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him... (2 Chron. 16:9).

The word “perfect” expressed here means complete, friendly, made ready. God looks on those who CAN be called--those whose hearts or minds are CAPABLE of being made

complete or perfect. We are called to fellowship with Jesus Christ and His people – remember, the Church is the Body of Jesus Christ. We are called to repentance and baptism. We are then linked to God by His Holy Spirit.

But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God (1 Cor. 2:9-11).

We are called to change! At the moment, we are nothing like God. At the moment, we are being moulded. We have to take on the very character of God. We are called to be Gods! Christ is the First of First-fruits, but many brethren will follow. Our calling is to be like Jesus Christ and God!

During the Philadelphia era, Mr. Armstrong was used in a powerful way to build the Church to over a 100,000 membership. Some of these have died in the faith, others have just died, and the remainder have been split into 300 plus groups which languish under the general guise of church of god. If you have been called by God and belong to one of these groups, can

you be sure that you are being prepared and chosen to be a pillar in the Temple of God? Your calling

carries a grave responsibility.

Now to be chosen, you must shoulder that responsibility. What does it mean to be chosen?

...the marriage of the Lamb is

come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints (Rev 19:7-8).

At the marriage of Jesus Christ to the Church, clean garments represent the righteousness of the individual.

And when the King came in to see the

guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment (Matt. 22:11).

This man was not righteous; he should not have been there. He may have been called, but he had not been chosen! Verse 5 says that some “made light” of their calling. They were very careless in what they had been given, not giving due regard to their great calling by

the Father.

“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation...” (Heb 2:3). This guest lacked the righteousness of God. He was cast out with weeping and gnashing of teeth because many are called and few are chosen.

Can we see how important it is that God chooses us and does not reject us? Eternal death awaits those members of the Church who are not chosen. If you have been called, you must go on to be God’s very elect. The word “chosen” in Matt. 22:14 is the same word used in Matt. 24 to describe the very elect.

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises

of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light (1 Pet. 2:9).

Although we are a special people, God makes sure we are brought down to earth. God’s Spirit makes us special, not our

own endeavours. God has called the weak and the base of the world (1 Cor. 1:26-29), so let all our glory be channelled towards God:

...that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord (1 Cor. 1:31).

We have been chosen at this time to do a work for God. Paul was a chosen vessel in his time for a spe-

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Verse 5 [Matt 22] says that some “made light” of their calling. They were very careless in what they had been given, not giving due regard to their great calling by the Father.

cial reason. Mr. Armstrong was also chosen for a special purpose. And today, along with the firstfruits, Mr. Robert Ardis has been chosen to lead God's work in this very end-time.

But then, if God has called us, how does He judge whether we can be chosen?

“Ye have not chosen me, but I have

chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain... (John 15:16).

Notice that God chooses us by our fruits. After we are called, we have to grow. God calls those whom He knows are able to attain eternal life. But then, we individually must grow in grace and knowledge--we must bear fruit in our lives. Many are called, and now a few are being chosen because the fruit of righteous character is growing in their lives.

We are now at the point where, having been called, and through much hardship are being chosen, we have to remain faithful--called, chosen, and faithful. The key to be finally chosen from among the called is to remain faithful.

God sees faith as a precious thing. It is extremely rare for humans! Christ asks the question, "When the son of man comes, will He find faith on the earth?" That question will not go unanswered. God will require that each one of us has remained faithful. Some have not. Some have followed after the doctrines of demons, with old error

masqueraded as new truth. This will not wash with God. We, as firstfruits, must be certain of what we believe. If we are, we have every chance of success if we continue in the faith once delivered.

“Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and

heirs of the Kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? (James 2:5).

Notice these words of Mr. Ardis:

“At the death of Herbert Armstrong the Worldwide Church of God was a MAGNIFICENT TEMPLE, but Satan was allowed to attack and practically destroy it. The building blocks or lively stones, called through the ministry of the end-time Elijah, are scattered far and wide. When Christ returned SUDDENLY to His Temple, all that remained was the FIRM FOUNDATION, the comparatively few building blocks of all those who qualified throughout the ages, who died in the faith, and a few faithful PHILADELPHIAN PILLARS. Christ be-

gan to measure these PILLAR members of the Spiritual Temple. These PILLAR members are the remnant of the Philadelphia Candlestick.

God tells us in Zephaniah 3:12: "I will leave in the midst of you an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." They shall TRUST in the NAME of the LORD! In other words, they will be God's FAITHFUL people: or the CHURCH OF GOD'S FAITHFUL! CALLED OF GOD! CHOSEN AS PILLARS! FAITHFUL TO THE END!" (Set Apart By Truth, p. 23).

We must make our calling and election (our choosing) sure (2 Pet. 1:10). We now must remain faithful to what God revealed through His end-time apostle, and now through the Church of God's Faithful.

We asked the question earlier, or rather Christ did in the book of Luke: "...Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find

faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8). God is looking for faith, so it is a good question, a vital question! And the answer is, "yes" – He will find faith—in the firstfruits. Faith in God will be a rare commodity. The only place it will be found on the entire earth will be in those who are the firstfruits. Those who accepted and delighted in their CALLING, went on to be CHOSEN, and then remained FAITHFUL, to

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by J R Cabangbang

The living head of the Church, Jesus Christ, is very serious about the plight of the lost sheep of the house of Israel. To gather them is the ultimate purpose of His coming as a "thief in the night." He came at the onset of the Day of the Lord, ending 6000 years allotted to man's rule in this Babylonian system of Satan. Christ came this time not to visibly appear, but to "discern and select" the steadfast pillars needed in the reconstruction of the spiritual Temple.

Once all the pillars are thoroughly tested and installed, Christ will step to the next phase of bringing the "lively stones" into the building. This extensive process of rebuilding brings a grim reminder of a recent defection from the CGF, God's true Church. Being not fully grounded and not submitting to God's government, as administered by the Church, proved to be the deviating factor from truth!

God has to occasionally prune the

vine as part of the cleansing process until we come together in "unity and one accord." Shamefully, some have succumbed again to Satan's deception

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through their intellectual vanity and pride, causing the entanglement of many. These beloved brethren are lulled and indoctrinated with a "counterfeit doctrine" that is now engulfing them.

God has given us a dire warning to be ever vigilant "lest a man steal our crown."

The Church of God's Faithful is crying vigorously the "midnight cry"

that Christ has come to His Temple and the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand! None of the 300 plus split and splinter groups of the former Worldwide Church of

One day soon, in God's appointed time, the awakening of the ten virgins of Matthew 25 will be fulfilled.

God have this commission for the midnight cry and the measuring of God's holy Temple. One day soon,

in God's appointed time, the awakening of the ten virgins of Matthew 25 will be fulfilled.

In retrospect

God's end-time Elijah, Herbert W. Armstrong, successfully fulfilled his commission of preaching the gospel as a witness to the whole world (Matt. 24:14). He was the one crying out in the spiritual wilderness of the 20th century Church, prior to Christ's second coming to rule earth. As John the Baptist prepared for the physical coming of Christ, in like manner, Mr. Armstrong spiritually equated the same work. He is the mechanism through which the "true gospel" of the Kingdom of God was restored.

We simply cannot turn a blind eye to this undeniable fact! All com-

ponents of the spiritual Temple were called during his 50 plus year ministry in the Philadelphia era of God's Church.

After Mr. Armstrong's death in 1986, Satan violently attacked and subsequently toppled the Worldwide Church

of God to ruins. The prophesied "man of sin" came on stage and took control of the WCG when Mr. Armstrong passed away. Slowly but surely, many changes in the Church's doctrine escalated as he endeavoured to stamp out God's truth.

Satan has zealously tried to destroy God's Church, since it was founded by Jesus Christ on Pentecost 31 A.D., down through the ages, to the present time! The adversary employs the same old "modus operandi" of deception through an insidious plot from within by false ministers in sheep's clothing. Jeremiah's prophecy in chapter 50, verse 6 states:

My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray...they have forgotten their resting place. (Jeremiah 50:6)

“ My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting place.

These shepherds taught at the feet of Mr. Armstrong, and have now become hireling ministers who have driven God's flock into spiritual chaos and confusion. They have taken their responsibilities to feed God's people in disdain. Jeremiah 23:1-4 frightfully warns these vain shepherds:

“ Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the Lord. Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel against the pastors that feed my sheep; Ye have

scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your do-

ings, saith the Lord. And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and I will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord.

Unfortunately, most former members of the once magnificent WCG have not yet come to the realization that the "great falling away" has taken place. The apostasy is written in the pages of history but God's people today are blind, not able to read the signs. Why? What could be the reason?

To draw a conclusive and tangible answer to this all important question, we must understand that Satan is the master of deceit and "the father of it" (John 8:44). Scales of deception are embedded on God's people's eyes, thereby they are incapable of taking a step forward toward spiritual growth. Burying one's head in the sand and not contemplating im-

portant spiritual issues have thrust God's people into a spiritual blackout. What an abject tragedy!

portant spiritual issues have thrust God's people into a spiritual blackout. What an abject tragedy!

New truths

Christ ardently prayed to His Father: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). The CGF is the one and ONLY true Church of God! It is impossible to locate the true Church without utilizing God's Spirit as a magnifying glass. Truth and "new revealed truths" are proof that the CGF is, indeed, the Church of Jesus Christ.

We are a very tiny church, scoffed at, despised, and ridiculed by those who oppose and deny us as "genuine." Satan hates this Church, but "the gates of hell will not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). Christ called His Church the "little flock." We are but a handful of faithful Philadelphians making a stand for God.

The Church of God's Faithful has been around since its conception in 1997. God has chosen and passed the baton to Mr. Robert G. Ardis to continue the end-time Philadelphia work of God. The sixth candlestick continues to burn brightly in the

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17)... "new revealed truths" are proof that the CGF is, indeed, the Church of Jesus Christ.

CGF, which administers God's government, with Christ being the head. We have been given a vast amount of understanding of God's master plan for mankind, more than any of the confused offshoots of the WCG

have.

These competing "churches of

god,” or the “synagogue of Satan” as biblically named, comprise the vast majority of God’s people who are still in deep spiritual slumber. They are unaware that Satan viciously attacked the Worldwide Church of God. They remain ambiguous on this unprecedented event which made them apathetic in their calling. Believe it or not, it is a fact!

Seventy-plus new truths have been revealed exclusively to the CGF by the living God. These truths can be easily proven when we allow the Bible to interpret itself, void of human reasoning. Christ reveals them only to His faithful and true servants who are doing His end-time work, as He directs and guides them. Step by step, truth by truth, point by point, is Christ’s way of revealing these understandings. When we prove and accept these truths, we are dramatically freed from the enslavement of deception.

We have produced an array of literature, available upon request, to explain and help you prove these 70 plus new truths. Our monthly electronic magazine, *The Midnight Cry*, can be downloaded from our website: www.setapartbytruth.org. Our site is a depository of new truths that are not available elsewhere. If you, dear reader, are sincerely looking for God’s one true Church, please be assured that you have just found it! We challenge you to prove, from your Bible, that what the CGF presents is nothing but truth!

An invitation

“And at midnight there was a cry made, **Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.** (Matt. 25:6).

The Bridegroom is here! The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand! Our future husband, Jesus Christ, is in the final stages of preparation for our wedding with Him. This most precious invitation of all times was handed out to those bidden for the wedding. Unfortunately, various excuses have been made by many of those invited. Christ



Himself made this tremendous invitation, but it has been rejected by many; thereby He angrily commands His servant, as accounted in Luke 14:23-24:

“**And the lord said unto the servant, Go out unto the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.**

How awful to be replaced in this unparalleled opportunity to have a

part in the marriage of the Lamb! Time is fast approaching when some of God’s people will be aghast upon realizing they were replaced by those from “the streets and lanes of the city” or from “the highways and hedges.”

The Church of God’s Faithful warmly extends Christ’s invitation to the ten virgins of Matthew 25 to wake up now and meet the Bridegroom! The Bible characterizes them as five wise and five foolish--known as the Synagogue of Satan--who are in the “inner court” of God’s holy Temple. In Revelation 3:8-9, God says to His faithful Church:

“I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and has not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold,

I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

The *Midnight Cry* is ringing out Christ’s wedding invitation to His lost sheep. If you are one of them, you will soon wake up, whether you like it or not! Christ will accomplish your awakening in due season, and **THAT TIME IS NOW!** Without doubt, you will understand that you have been in a deep spiritual sleep! We have presented you, dear brethren, God’s truth in all sincerity. Are you ready to meet the Bridegroom? Will you be wise?



The First Resurrection and the Feast of Firstfruits

By Robert Ardis

Sometimes it is very difficult to believe a plain Bible statement. This is because we have preconceived ideas in our minds that cloud the meaning of the scripture! For example, Rev. 14:3-4 declares that there will be only 144,000 firstfruits at the first resurrection! Do you believe that?

“ And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

“ These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

How many brethren of the splits and splinters of the former World-wide Church of God believe the statements made in those two verses? How many ministers of those churches teach those two verses? I don't know of any who believe or teach the plainly stated fact that there will be only 144,000 firstfruits at

Rev. 14:3-4 declares that there will be only 144,000 firstfruits at the first resurrection! Do you believe that?

the first resurrection!

Let us also ask this related question: Why do the “churches of god” teach that the first resurrection occurs on the Feast of Trumpets instead of on the Feast of Firstfruits?

Only 144,000 Firstfruits...Really?

At this point I will present a section of our book, *Set Apart by Truth*, which answers these questions.

“ These two verses PLAINLY state that there will be 144,000 Firstfruits!

It does NOT say they are a few of the Firstfruits, nor does it say they are some of the Firstfruits. These verses tell us the 144,000 are ALL of the Firstfruits! The statement is made so openly, however, the Church of God in the past has NOT believed this. Prior to 1986, none of us, including Mr. Armstrong, could imagine what was to take place in the Church of God within the next 24 years!

Before 1986, this PLAIN statement in the Bible seemed so improbable. “How could this be?” we thought. Only 144,000 Firstfruits from all of the BILLIONS of people who have ever lived! And im-

mediately prior to Mr. Armstrong's death, the Gospel was going into ALL nations! Millions were reading the *Plain Truth* magazine and viewing *The World Tomorrow* telecast. Nevertheless, when we consider the evidence we have from the Bible, 144,000 makes a lot of sense. The Bible always makes sense once we get our own pre-conceived ideas out of the way.

The Word of God reveals that from Adam through Noah, spanning a time period of 1650 years, only Abel, Enoch, and Noah were considered righteous men. From Noah to the time Israel entered the Promised Land, another 900 years elapsed. Those who walked with God during those 900 years of history can be counted on our fingers and toes.

Throughout the period of the judges, the kings, and the prophets of the Old Testament, how many are counted as righteous individuals possessing the Spirit of God? Seven thousand had not “bowed their knees to Baal” during this time (Rom. 11:4), but did they possess God's Spirit? This question will be addressed later.

Only a very few had the Spirit of God during Christ's 33½ years in the flesh. Those included were Mary and Joseph, Elizabeth and Zacharias, Anna, Simeon, John the Baptist, and very FEW others of whom we

are aware. Thousands followed Jesus and claimed to believe in Him, but where were they on the Day of Pentecost as the New Testament Church began? Even His 12 apostles were not given God's Spirit until PENTECOST of 31AD. Acts 2:41 tells us that after Peter's stirring sermon on Pentecost, 3000 people "...gladly received his word and were baptized." In the last phrase of Acts 2:47, the Bible states: "...And the Lord added to the church

daily such as should be saved." Verse 14 of chapter 5 shows continued growth: "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." After Stephen's death, persecution set in and the Church became scattered, and spread abroad. "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4).

Paul was inspired to write II Tim. 4:3-4 as a warning of what was to come: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." This has a familiar ring to it, doesn't it? Verse 10 shows how the ministry can fall away with the tragic results it brings upon the flock: "For Demas has forsaken me, having loved this

present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. ONLY Luke is with me..." The time was approaching 65 or 66 AD. There was much persecution being thrust upon God's people. Satan and his demons were bringing persecution

How many of the THOUSANDS that were baptized on that Day of Pentecost in 31AD and immediately afterward, remained FAITHFUL to the end?

from the world OUTSIDE, and infiltrating the Church, INSIDE, with false ministers (see II Pet. 2:1-2; Jude: 3-4).

II Tim 4:16 declares: "At my first answer no man stood

with me, but ALL men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge." Many did NOT "endure to the end," as Paul sadly states in II Tim. 1:15: "This you know, that ALL they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes."

These scriptures describe the history of the early Church of God. How many of the THOUSANDS that were baptized on that Day of Pentecost in 31 AD and immediately afterward, remained FAITHFUL to the end? Thankfully, some did, but many did not!

How many have remained FAITHFUL PHILADELPHIANS since the death of Mr. Armstrong?

How many remained FAITHFUL in the EPHESIAN era? How many in the SMYRNA, PERGAMOS, THYATIRA, and SARDIS eras? Sardis is depicted as being dead! How many have remained FAITHFUL PHILADELPHIANS since

the death of Mr. Armstrong? Think about that! When all of this is taken into consideration, 144,000 is a reasonable sounding number of Firstfruits! And it is a PLAIN statement in the Bible. (*Set Apart by Truth*, 2008, pp. 117-119.)

When Does the Resurrection of the 144,000 Occur?

Understanding the truth of the 144,000 firstfruits should then bring this question to a person's mind: Does the resurrection of the firstfruits occur on the Feast of Trumpets, as we have long believed—or does it happen on the Feast of Firstfruits as the name implies?

In Leviticus 23:10-14, the instructions were given to Israel for the wave offering. Jesus Christ fulfilled this ceremony perfectly! He became the Firstborn from the dead and the First of the Firstfruits--the wave offering--on the exact day the wave offering had been offered for nearly 15 centuries.

Now in verses 15-16, we come to fifty days after the wave offering, bringing the 144,000 firstfruits into the picture. And I quote again from *Set Apart by Truth*...

“Fifty days from the "...morrow after the Sabbath" brings us to the third Holy Day of the Sacred Calendar, the Feast of Firstfruits—PENTECOST. Let's read God's instructions to the nation of Israel concerning this

third Holy Day of the year. Leviticus 23:15-16:

“And you shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the SHEAF of the WAVE OFFERING: seven Sabbaths shall be complete. Even to the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall you number FIFTY DAYS...”

This is plainly stated! Counting from the weekly Sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread, seven more weekly Sabbaths are counted, and then the next day—day fifty—is Pentecost. “Pentecost” is Greek for “fiftieth”.

Verse 17 continues the instructions:

“You shall bring out of your habitations TWO WAVE LOAVES of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they ARE THE FIRSTFRUITS UNTO THE LORD.”

Christ is the FIRSTFRUIT as pictured by the Wave Sheaf. The comparative few throughout history that have been called by God to qualify for the First Resurrection will be the Firstfruits of “the small early harvest” as pictured by the WAVE LOAVES! James 1:18 reads: **“Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth, that we should be a kind of Firstfruits of his creatures.”**

Now, verse 20 of Leviticus 23: **“And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the Firstfruits for a wave offering before the Lord...”** On the Day of Pentecost, fifty days after the WAVE SHEAF was offered, the WAVE LOAVES are offered to God. God’s Word states that

the wave loaves are the Firstfruits.

God’s Plan is practical and works step-by-step, as we see in I Corinthians 15:23: **“But every man in his own order: Christ the Firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.”** His COMING is at the First Resurrection when **“...all eyes shall see Him”** (Rev. 1:7).

Pentecost is the Feast of Firstfruits! The Firstfruits will be raised from the dead, or if still

Christ is the FIRSTFRUIT as pictured by the Wave Sheaf. The comparative few throughout history that have been called by God to qualify for the First Resurrection will be the Firstfruits of “the small early harvest” as pictured by the WAVE LOAVES!

living will be changed from flesh to Spirit in an instant at the First Resurrection. Christ fulfilled the true meaning of the Passover and the Wave Sheaf. He fulfilled these two important steps in God’s Plan on the exact days as they had been ceremonially kept for nearly 15 centuries. God accepted Him as the WAVE SHEAF FIRSTFRUIT on the WAVE SHEAF DAY! In the near future, we will be symbolically waved before

God by our High Priest, Jesus Christ, on the Day of Firstfruits—Pentecost.

Doesn’t it seem consistent with the Plan of God that the First Resurrection would occur on Pentecost, the Day of Firstfruits—instead of the Feast of Trumpets?

I Corinthians 10:11 informs us that the things that happened to ancient Israel are examples and types that we need to always consider. Romans 15:4 states it this way: **“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”** Consider the gracious HOPE we have as Spiritual Israel, as compared with ancient Israel, as Moses presented them to God.

We must “Overcome Misconceptions” and pre-conceived ideas and thankfully drink in New Truth as it is revealed to us...Remember God is consistent! Our Lord fulfilled the Passover and the Wave Sheaf on those exact days. We are the FIRSTFRUITS! He will present us to the Father on the Day of Firstfruits,

Pentecost! Please request our booklet, *The Feast of Trumpets or the Day of Pentecost...Which?* (Set Apart by Truth, 2008, pp. 115-116.)

One Other Question!

If the first resurrection is on Pentecost, the Feast of Firstfruits, what does the Feast of Trumpets picture? The Feast of Trumpets represents the one-year period of the Day of the Wrath of the Lamb

(Rev. 6:17), composed of the opening of the seventh seal, the sounding of the seven trumpet angels, their plagues, and the seven last plagues.

The seventh seal will be opened in the future at the beginning of the seventh month, which is the Feast of Trumpets. If the first trumpet angel sounds on the Feast of Trumpets, when does the LAST TRUMPET sound? Here I will insert a quote from our booklet, *The Feast of Trumpets or the Day of Pentecost...Which?*, that presents a pattern of when each trumpet might be blown, with their resulting plagues. Remember, the visible return of Jesus Christ and the first resurrection happen as the LAST TRUMPET sounds (I Cor. 15:50).

Now proceed with Revelation 8:7:

“The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

In verse 8, the second Angel sounds his trumpet with more plagues falling upon the sea. Verses 10 and 11 describe the third Angel’s plague as he begins to sound. Then in verse 12 the fourth Angel sounds with the resultant scourge. Are these Angels sounding their Trumpets all at one time or is there an interval of time between each of their blasts? Just as it was when God used Moses and Aaron to bring the plagues upon Egypt, these Trumpet plagues will happen in a similar fashion. The Two witnesses as servants of God Almighty will be used to call down six of the Trumpet plagues, one at a time, as God instructs them. And it is highly probable that the Trumpet plagues are

called down on each of the ensuing Annual Holy Days.

Observe how this pattern of Trumpet blasts and Holy Days correspond:

1. The First Angel sounds on the Feast of Trumpets.
2. The Second Angel sounds on the Day of Atonement.
3. The Third Angel sounds on The First Day of the Feast of Tabernacles.
4. The Fourth Angel sounds on the Last Great Day.

These Four Holy Days occur in the Seventh Month of the Sacred Calendar: on the 1st, 10th, 15th, and 22nd days. The First Four Angels each appear to sound their Trumpets on the Holy Days within this three-week period of time, and then there is a delay to prepare for the severity of the next three Trumpet Plagues (see verse 13).

In Revelation 9:1 the Fifth Angel sounds. Here frighteningly symbolized is the Beast Power hurling all out war against the Eastern Forces. This appears to be atomic, bacteriological, and chemical warfare. It is called the First Woe. Verses 5 and 10 indicate *five months* are involved in the sufferings caused by this plague.

The Fifth Holy Day of the year is the First Day of Unleavened Bread. There is space for *five months* between the First Day of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of Trumpets! From Trumpets to Trumpets is one full year—the one year of the Wrath of the Lamb.

Verse 6 states: “...**and in those days shall men seek death...**” So this indicates that the Fifth Angel sounds on the First Day of Unleavened Bread and this plague lasts for *five*

months. However the combined forces of the Eastern nations retaliate quickly as the Sixth Angel sounds on the Last Day of Unleavened Bread—the Sixth Holy Day. This is the Second Woe. This will be the most massive army ever assembled, 200 million men. By them one third of the remaining populace of the earth are killed during the *six and one half* months before the end of the day of the Wrath of the Lamb. The conflict between these two POWERS will cause many of the areas of the earth to appear as Sodom and Gomorrah. Stubborn, rebellious man does not learn easily. “*And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands...*” verse 20.

Before the Last Trumpet Sounds

God is consistent! His Holy Days are signs unto us! And we can see His consistency as the Angels sound their Trumpets on each of the Holy Days beginning with the Feast of Trumpets.

The First Trumpet begins to blow on the Feast of Trumpets. As we follow the consistent pattern God is revealing to us, it becomes obvious that the seventh and last trumpet sounds on the seventh consecutive Holy Day—PENTECOST! (*The Feast of Trumpets or the Day of Pentecost...Which? 2002, pp. 18-20.*)

There is so much more to relate about this wonderful holy day, the Feast of Firstfruits, that we do not have space for in this article. But it is ALL available for your reading and proving in our booklets, which you may download, or send us a request for your own copy. ❖

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From the Editor

Spirit being given to those whom God Himself calls, that they might be able to keep the Law—even the Spirit of the Law. But, let me repeat, the title “Feast of First-fruits” brings to mind the first resurrection!

The Feast of Trumpets is the fourth annual holy day and occurs on the first day of the seventh month! Six thousand years of time allotted to man came to an end on Oct. 1, 1997, and the Day of the Lord, the seventh day, began, as represented by the first day of the seven month. But this seventh day does not last just a 1000 years—it continues forever! It is God’s time once again!

The Feast of Trumpets also vividly pictures the seven trumpet angels blowing the seven trumpets of the seventh seal (Rev. 8-9 and 11:15). The trumpets begin to blow as the mighty Christ begins to forcefully intervene in the affairs of this world. This is described as the “the Wrath of the Lamb” or “the Day of the Wrath of God!” This is a one year period beginning on the Feast of Trumpets. Seven powerful angels sound the seven trumpets, beginning on the Feast of Trumpets—but when does the SEVENTH TRUMPET—the LAST TRUMPET sound? That is the important question!

The Day of Atonement, the fifth annual holy day, portrays the binding of the old dragon who has deceived the entire world. He is bound for 1000 years in the bottomless pit. Next to come is the millennium—the marvelous time of peace and prosperity pictured by the sixth holy day and the wonderful seven-day Feast of Taber-

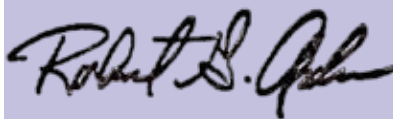
nacles. The eighth day of the Feast is the seventh of the holy days of God, symbolizing the Last Great Day and the second resurrection.

The seven annual holy days of God present the plan of salvation of God Almighty. As we observe and actually LIVE these annual Sabbaths we learn more about God and this fantastic plan for the creation of other BILLIONS of God-beings just like the Father and Christ, the Firstfruit (I Cor. 15:20 and 23)!

In this issue, the great blessing of our calling is emphasized. We have been spiritually awakened and our task now is to yield to Christ so that all those snared in the “churches of god” can also have “A Spiritual Awakening,” as the article by that title explains. Another timely article in this issue is titled “Many are Called, But Few are Chosen,” which is appropriate for this month’s theme of the Day of Pentecost. And the article, “The First-fruits and the First Resurrection,” explores the astounding truth of the Day of Pentecost—the Feast of Firstfruits—that should inspire our minds to more diligently seek our ultimate goal, the first resurrection and the Kingdom of God!

Bon appétit...spiritually,

Your brother in Christ,



Continued from page 6

Many Are Called, But Few Are Chosen

the end.

One of the greatest compliments God has for the Philadelphians in Rev 3:11 is that they haven’t allowed a man to take their crown.

This, of course, doesn’t apply to all those that were Philadelphian, as some, even at this late stage of man’s history, have succumbed to yet more delusions from the minds of men.

Yet a few have held fast and remained true to their calling. This wonderful calling is to become like God. Christ said, “**Become you therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.**” That would be impossible without God’s Spirit, without the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and without God’s Law, and, of course, without the Father calling us in the first place.

Many are CALLED in this age, more than at any other time in history. Yet few are CHOSEN. Very few respond to God’s love by obeying Him and keeping the Commandments. And even fewer remain FAITHFUL. Those that endure to the end, the same shall be saved. The end is the end of our physical life, when we die or when we are changed.

We know we have been CALLED because we responded, and are now the very elect, the firstfruits of God’s plan. We know we have been CHOSEN, as we stand as pillars in the Temple of God. Now, to be with Christ when He returns, we must remain FAITHFUL to our wonderful calling. Many are called, but few are chosen. Let us rejoice and remain faithful to the end. ❖

If you recognise the signs of the times as prophesied by Herbert W. Armstrong and the World Wide Church of God, and if you are seeking God’s True Church at this late hour, write or call to request our FREE Literature. Our contact information in on page 16 of this publication. Or download our booklets at www.setapartbytruth.org.

This Month's Top Articles from

The Faithful Watchman

Newsletter of the Church of God's Faithful



Through *The Faithful Watchman*, we endeavor to keep ourselves abreast of how our Lord Jesus Christ is orchestrating the ride of the 4 Horsemen as He sets the scene for the Two Witnesses to begin their 1260 days of prophesying and for the Great Tribulation to begin. Read daily updates to *The Faithful Watchman* online at setapartbytruth.org.

Greece urged to give up euro

THE Greek government has been advised by British economists to leave the euro and default on its 300 billion (£255 billion) debt to save its economy.

The Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR), a London-based consultancy, has warned Greek ministers they will be unable to escape their debt trap without devaluing their own currency to boost exports. The only way this can happen is if Greece returns to its own currency.

Greek politicians have played down the prospect of abandoning the euro, which could lead to the break-up of the single currency.

<http://business.timesonline.co.uk/...>

Comment: Mr Doug McWilliams of the Centre for Economics and Business Research has said that Greece departing from the euro was "virtually inevitable." The other nations labelled "Pigs" or Piigs", that's Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece and Spain could also follow suit. This would be disastrous for the nations which trade in Euro's especially for German and French banks to which Greece owes billions of Euros. This could be the start of weaker nations leaving the euro, and effectively the European Union, with the stronger nations forming a political and religious combine headed by Germany.

The Bible portrays a 10 nation power that will try to dominate this earth as our societies collapse around us. It will be a revival of the Roman Empire.

"After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it: and it had ten horns." Dan 7:7.

Ten successive kingdoms were prophesied to arise out of the Roman Empire: the next one will be the tenth and final one! This final revival will have ten kings or nations and will receive power from Satan!

"And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet: but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

These shall have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." Rev 17:12-14

The power of this ten nation combine will be short-lived. Thankfully Jesus Christ with His Firstfruits Saints will put down all opposition to His Royal rule, and then, and only then, will the world see peace; prosperity and plenty for all who dwell on this earth.

Frog horde closes major highway in northern Greece

THESSALONIKI, Greece (AP) - Greek officials say a horde of frogs has forced the closure of a key northern highway for two hours.

Thessaloniki traffic police chief Giorgos Thanoglou says "millions" of the amphibians covered the tarmac Wednesday near the town of Langedas, some 12 miles east of Thessaloniki.

"There was a carpet of frogs," he said.

<http://www.breitbart.com/...>

Comment: They should be thankful the frogs were only on the road!

“And if thou refuse to let them go, behold, I will smite all thy borders with frogs:

And the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into thine house, and into thy bedchamber, and upon thy bed, and into the house of thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy kneadingtroughs:

And the frogs shall come up both on thee, and upon thy people, and upon all thy servants. Ex 8:2-4

Germany prepares for floods as death toll reaches 15 in Poland

Germany is preparing itself for floods in the next few days as water levels reached the critical mark. Authorities say the situation in Brandenburg will become serious by the weekend. Meanwhile emergency teams in Poland are attempting to shore up river banks as the country continues to suffer its worst floods for decades.

If the bad weather continues the floods could continue for ten days or three weeks, according to the regional environment authority. It all depends whether the flood peak of the rivers Warthe and Oder meet in the Polish town of Kostrzyn.

<http://www.dw-world.de/...>

Comment: In the summer of 2007 as floods dev-

astated many areas of the English countryside a senior Church of England bishop said that it was judgement on the immorality and greed of modern society. One diocesan bishop even claimed that laws that have undermined marriage, including the introduction of pro-gay legislation, have provoked God to act by sending the storms that in 2007 left thousands of people homeless.

Whether or not we believe that disasters are an “act of God”, because of Western civilisation’s decision to ignore biblical teaching is a matter of individual consideration, however our church leaders should be warning us of our sins.

“Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins.” Isa 58:1

As Poland suffers with this serious flooding, and Germany prepares for it, they would do well to consider their ways. If only people would listen and get back to the basic truth and simplicity of the Bible, then certainly these ever increasing disasters would cease. God promised the ancient Israelites blessings for obedience. The same holds true for today, but it is doubtful that many are taking heed.

The Bible describes the downfall of the Roman Empire as a result of its immorality. Interestingly enough the final resurrection of the Roman Empire will be led by none other than the nation of Germany!

The Midnight Cry Has Begun

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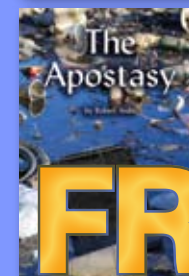
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