

THE

by Robert Ardis

# The Deep Things of God

By Robert G. Ardis



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# Introduction

The two greatest minds in the Universe have devised a plan to create God-beings just like themselves. How awesome! This plan is a step-bystep process revealed in God's seven annual feast days. In the Holy Bible, Leviticus 23 lists these holy days of God. We investigate the prophetic symbolism of the first four feast days in our booklet entitled *The Feast of Trumpets or Pentecost–Which*? To continue our study of the holy days, this booklet, *The Deep Things of God*, will thoroughly examine the significance of the last three feast days.

Let's read God's instructions to ancient Israel concerning the Day of Atonement, the fifth feast day of the year:

And the Lord spake unto Moses saying, Also in the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord . . . It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall you celebrate your sabbath (Lev 23:26-27,32).

And now God's commands regarding the sixth and seventh feast days:

Then the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the Lord. On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord: it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein . . . Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath (Lev 23:33-36,39).

No one in these latter days understood the significance of the feast days until God revealed it to His end-time Elijah and apostle, Herbert W. Armstrong. The feast days are part of the truths that were to be restored in the end-time. As they read these scriptures, Mr. Armstrong and his wife, Loma, realized that God commanded us to observe the feast days. Therefore, they kept them faithfully for 28 years without understanding their meaning. Then in the mid-1950s, God began to open Mr. Armstrong's mind to their profound purpose. God gave him wonderful understanding of these holy days and then revealed more new truths one by one.

Now we can take all of these truths that stand on the foundation of the Word of God and focus more clearly on each vitally important subject. More amazing truth emerges as we peer deeper and deeper into God's feast days.

To illustrate, I would like to quote the Introduction from another of our free booklets, The Little Book Unveiled at Last:

As a young high school student struggling through Physics class, way back in the 1940s, I was amazed and thrilled to read about the astounding discoveries recorded in our textbooks pertaining to the marvels of the Universe. The heavens were now being viewed through the new 200-inch telescope recently installed in Palomar, California. This was thought to be the largest and most powerful telescope ever developed by man. Our textbook described one particular star that was given a name and designated at a certain powerful luminosity. However, as the new Palomar telescope was focused on that star, it was discovered that it was not a star. It was a galaxy composed of millions of stars, similar to our Milky Way galaxy. That was truly amazing to me!

Since that time, more powerful and sophisticated telescopes have been developed. Computerized radio telescopes and the Hubble orbiting telescope are now being used. As these new instruments were directed toward the star that was actually a galaxy, another amazing discovery was made. That brilliant speck of light in the heavens was neither a star nor a galaxy. It was clearly seen through these new instruments that this was a cluster of galaxies-thousands of galaxies, each composed of millions of stars! How wondrous, marvelous and astounding!

In each case, as the trained astronomers viewed the heavens, using the tools available to them, they were correct in their conclusions. First, they could see only one bright star. That was as deep as they could peer into space. Now it is possible for the astronomers to see many light-years deeper into space and focus much more accurately on any distant object. The point is that, since they are able to see deeper and are more sharply focused, more truth about God's physical Universe is available to them. The same principle holds true for those who look deeply into the spiritual things of God.

Jesus Christ has polished and cleansed the lens of our spiritual eyes (our spiritual telescopes) by the Spirit of God. We peer into the deep things of God from the foundation of the Word of God and the framework of the 18 Restored Truths that were revealed to Herbert W. Armstrong. From this lofty perspective we can now focus on more crystal-clear understanding of revealed truth (see John 16:13).

The apostle Paul was inspired to write in 1Corinthians 2:10: "But God has revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God." Mr. Armstrong probably had this verse in mind as he referred to the revealed mysteries in Mystery of the Ages: "Such basic truths are revealed, not thought out in any human mind. They come from God, not man! And in all Biblically recorded cases the initiative was God's" (p. 12).

The initiative is still God's, and through His Spirit, He continues to allow us to peer deeper and deeper into revealed truth, "yea, the deep things of God" (1Cor 2:10).

God revealed to Herbert W. Armstrong the marvelous truth that the feast days picture God's plan of salvation, and He has blessed us, the Church of God, with this understanding. Now, God is revealing to His faithful Church even more about these holy days.

God is opening up unprecedented understanding only to the Church of God's Faithful. Why is God giving this tiny Church this wonderful new truth? There is a definite reason. God wants to show where Jesus Christ is working.

You can and must confirm *all* things by searching your Bible. Don't follow me or anyone just because we write or say something that sounds good, but follow Jesus Christ and His instructions from the Word of God. If He gives us new or more sharply focused understanding that we can

read in the pages of the Bible, the glory goes to God–He reveals it to us! You need to prove beyond any doubt that what you read or hear is the truth from God's Word. Follow Mr. Armstrong's wise admonition, "Don't believe me or any man–Believe the Bible!"

At this time, immediately before the worst time of trouble ever to come on Earth, God admonishes His servants to:

Go out into 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 (Lk 14:23-24).

If you are not familiar with the teachings of Herbert W. Armstrong or the Worldwide Church of God (WCG), it may be difficult for you to understand the information in this booklet. However, you might be one of those God is calling from "the highways and the hedges." If so, God is giving you an extraordinary invitation. God has begun to intervene in world affairs, time is short, and we are here to help you with any questions you may have.

Now, get your Bible, tighten your spiritual seat belt, and prepare to be thrilled with new understanding of *the deep things* of God!

# Part 1

# WHY CHRIST WILL RULE WITH A ROD OF IRON



# **Establishing the Millennium**

he concluding chapter of our booklet The Feast of Trumpets or Pentecost–Which? brought us to the soon-coming triumphal return of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Jesus Christ. With Him are His wife and the angelic armies of Heaven. Revelation 19:11-14 begins describing these events:

And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed Him on white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

Verses 7-8 describe His wife:

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for 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.

Verse 15 portrays Christ coming to establish the Millennium–and to rule the nations with a rod of iron:

And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and *he* shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the *winepress* of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

The winepress is the slaughter of the armies of the Beast (Rev 11:7) and the men of the East (Rev 16:12) who would dare fight against the returning

King of Kings. It is "the battle of that great day of God Almighty" (Rev 16:14), the Battle of Armageddon.

And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God (Rev 19:16-17).

In Revelation 19:18–21, we see two men alive and well today, who are possessed by demons (Rev 16:13), and who will be cast into a lake of fire:

That ye may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against His army. And the beast was taken and with him the false prophet who wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

These verses reveal the part of God's salvation plan portrayed by the fifth feast of the year, the Day of Atonement. First, Satan will be put away for a thousand years:

And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and *after that he must be loosed a little season* (Rev 20:1-3).

After a thousand years, God will release the insanely evil Satan from his prison for "a little season." Why would the Almighty do this?

God has now revealed the reason to His faithful Church. This revelation is fantastic new truth about the events leading up to and including the Second Resurrection and the Last Great Day. We will thoroughly explain this. But first, we need to go back to scriptures that describe the beginning of the Millennium.

## **The First Resurrection**

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark on their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years (Rev 20:4).

Pictured here are the saints, the firstfruits, the blessed and holy ones of the First Resurrection (v. 6), who will live and reign with Christ for a thousand years. Included are the Laodiceans and those of the outer court (Rev 11:2) who will have to overcome Satan by the power of God's Holy Spirit during the Great Tribulation (see Rev 12:11).

But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection (Rev 20:5).

At the sound of the last trumpet, when Christ returns, the First Resurrection occurs. (Our free booklet "The Feast of Trumpets or Pentecost... Which?" clearly explains the time frame of the First Resurrection.)

Those who "are alive and remain" (1Thes 4:15-17) will rise in the air, meeting Christ in the clouds. Then Christ will take us to the throne of the Father in Heaven to present us to Him without spot, wrinkle, or blemish. Finally, after these spectacular occurrences and the marriage ceremony, we, as the wife of the King of Kings, will return with our Husband to live and reign with Him 1000 years.

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

During the Millennium, all inhabitants of Earth will experience peace and prosperity all the days of their lives. As King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Jesus Christ (and we, as His wife) will reign righteously over the kingdoms of Earth for 1000 years. And the earth and all life forms will reap the excellent benefits of God's ways without any evil influence.

And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea (Rev 20:7-8).

Think about the transformation of Earth by the end of the Millennium. Why would God release Satan from his prison? How can the Devil deceive millions of human beings who have never known any god except the true God? If God gives His Spirit to everyone during the Millennium, aren't those who rebel and attack the headquarters of Jesus Christ lost forever?

## The World Tomorrow

Micah 4:1 portrays the Kingdom of God as a gigantic mountain:

But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it.

The mountains (except the mountain of the house of the Lord) and hills represent the large and small nations of Earth. Jesus Christ will rule over the entire planet, judging and rebuking the nations. Representatives from all over the world will come to Jerusalem to be taught by the God of Jacob:

And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn [be accustomed to] war anymore (Mic 4:2-3).

Christ will teach all nations that you don't wage war with your fellow man. Consequently, they will not be accustomed to fighting but will live in peace and safety. "The World Tomorrow" will be a time of productivity and happiness:

But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken it (v. 4).

All the earth will know that Christ is Lord and King. "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord and his name one" (Zec 14:9).

In Herbert Armstrong's inspiring book, The Wonderful World Tomorrow, he lists righteous characters of the Bible who qualify for high positions in the Kingdom of God. Under Christ, they will rule over the earth with justice and mercy.

First on this exalted list are "the fathers": Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Next, he lists Moses and Elijah and their probable positions over state and Church. King David, a man after God's own heart, will be King over all Israel (Eze 37:24). The twelve apostles, under David, will each have rulership over one of the twelve tribes of Israel. Daniel and Paul will probably be co-rulers over the Gentile nations. Noah, Job, Joseph, the prophets, those listed in Hebrews 11, and the saints of the seven Church eras (Rev 2 and 3) have all qualified for high positions in the Kingdom.

Mr. Armstrong also describes the Millennium's social, economic, ecological, and educational accomplishments. God will establish and enforce His financial system, making everyone monetarily sound. The entire world will speak one pure language (Zep 3:9). The cities of Earth will be clean and beautiful. The deserts will blossom like a rose (Isa 35:1), and food will be so plentiful that the plowman will overtake the harvester (Amo 9:13).

All this and much more will be the norm in the 1000-year World Tomorrow under the rule of Jesus Christ. But, at the end of the Millennium, what happens? Does God's plan fail when Satan is released? Isn't the Millennium a model for "the rest of the dead" raised in the Second Resurrection? Aren't they supposed to compare conditions on Earth during the age in which they lived to the magnificent improvements of the onethousand-year Kingdom of God?

With such ideal conditions, if God offers His Spirit to all nations, why will millions of people (as the sand of the seashore) rebel against the King of Kings and Lord of Lords? Are they to be eternally lost? Does God's plan fail?



# **Ruling With a Rod of Iron**



lease look at Micah 4:5:

For all people will walk everyone in the name of his *god*, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our *God* for ever and ever.

The words translated "god" and "God" are from the Hebrew word "Elohim," a plural noun (*Strong*'s #H430). Remember, the firstfruits, the wife of Christ, will be God-beings, too. The true God will be a family of many members in the Millennium (Eph 3:14-15).

Every nation will walk in the name of its God. What does this mean? Will they walk in the name of their God of their own free will? Or will "a rod of iron" force them to walk in the name of the true God?

Let's read the prophecies regarding the rod of iron:

And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne (Rev 12:5).

And out of his mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God (Rev 19:15).

And he that overcomes and keeps my works unto the end, to him will I give power [authority] over the nations: And he [Thyatira] shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father (Rev 2:26-27).

Ask yourself: Why will a rod of iron be needed in the Millennium? We

need to look carefully through our spiritual telescope. Something here is not clear.

We who have God's Spirit have the Law of God written in our hearts. We *want* to keep His ways. So do we need a rod of iron applied to us? If you are a baptized member of the Church of God, are you so stubborn that Christ needs to rule you with a rod of iron? Of course not. But the Bible says that, during the Millennium, Jesus Christ will rule with a rod of iron. If everyone has the Spirit of God in the Millennium, why will Christ need a rod of iron?

Isn't the Millennium a time of peace and safety? Shouldn't all nations be obedient and in harmony with God's laws? Why will God need those of an entire Church era (Rev 2:24-27) to have power over the nations and rule them with a rod of iron?

Everyone will learn to keep the Feast of Tabernacles and all the other holy days of God during the Millennium.

And it shall be, that whosoever will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the Lord will smite the *heathen* that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles (Zec 14:17-19).

What is this? Why will some nations not come to the Feast? Each year we go willingly and happily to observe the Feast of Tabernacles. It is the highlight of the year for God's people!

The word *heathen* (#H1471) in verse 18 is the same as *nations* (#H1471) in verse 19, and usually refers to the Gentiles (non-Israelite people) who populate most of the earth. If they had God's Spirit, wouldn't these Gentile nations want to come to the Feast, too? Why would they say, "I am not going to the Feast"?

Continue with verse 20:

In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, Holiness unto the Lord; and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar.

Righteousness, holiness, and instructions on God's Law will be everywhere on Earth. So why are these people so stubborn? Why won't they come voluntarily to the Feast of Tabernacles? Why does God have to hold a rod of iron over their heads?

#### The Great Deceiver

We haven't seen the whole picture, and we need to focus our spiritual telescope on more accurate detail.

Let's return to Revelation 20, where we find Satan cast into the bottomless pit:

And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season . . . And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them (Rev 20:3,7-9).

How can these nations be deceived after they have lived under the government of God for 1000 years? Did God's plan fail? Certainly not! God has everything planned just right. Therefore, we must look closer to see how the Devil could deceive these people who live during the Millennium.

## God's Spirit Poured Upon Israel

Turn to Isaiah 44:1-3 to see who God will pour His Spirit upon during the Millennium:

Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; *and* Israel, whom I have chosen: Thus says the Lord that made you, and formed you from the womb, which will help you; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and you Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon your seed, and my blessings upon your offspring. God plainly says He will pour His Spirit on Jacob and Israel and *their* offspring.

And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion [Israel] and he that remains in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem (Isa 4:3).

We see that Israel will be called holy during this time. It doesn't say Israel and the heathen or Gentiles. No, it says *Israel* will be called holy. And Israel will be justified:

But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: you shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end . . . In the Lord shall *all the seed of Israel be justified* [#H6663, cleansed, righteous], and shall glory [#H1984, be renowned, worthy of praise] (Isa 45:17,25).

I strongly encourage you to study these entire chapters and their context. Now, let's read Isaiah 59:20-21:

And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, says the Lord. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My spirit that is upon you, and my words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, nor out of the mouth of your seed, nor out of the mouth of your seeds' seed, says the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.

In the Millennium, God's Word will be in Israel's mouth and their descendants' mouths. And all Israel will know God and have access to His Spirit during the Millennium.

Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travails with child together: a great company shall return thither. They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd does his flock . . . But this shall be *the covenant that* I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, says the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, says the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more (Jer 31:8-10,33-34).

Therefore say, Thus says the Lord God; I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence. And I will give them one heart, and I will put a *new spirit within you*; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and *they shall be my people*, and I will be their God (Eze 11:17-20).

### God's Model Nation

God will gather Israel and bring them into their promised land during the Millennium. They will be His people, and He will be their God. Ezekiel 36:22-23 adds this:

Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the heathen, where you went. And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which you have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, says the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.

Originally, God called Israel to be the model for all other nations, but they failed miserably. Their bad behavior among the heathens disgraced God's name. But be assured, during the Millennium, Israel will be the model nation God intended. God will give Israel His Spirit to help them do His will and be an example to the whole world. For I will take you [Israel] from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you [Israel], and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you shall keep my judgments and do them. And you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and you shall be my people, and I will be your God (Eze 36:24-28).

Thus says the Lord of hosts; Behold, I will save my people [Israel] from the east country, and from the west country; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness (Zec 8:7-8).



# What About the Gentiles?

ou may have noticed in the numerous scriptures already given that God does not mention the Gentiles, although they make up most of the population of Earth. So, what about the Gentiles? Do the Gentiles receive God's Spirit in the Millennium? We have always assumed they do, but is it true? What does the Word of God say?

To see just what the Gentiles do receive in the Millennium, let's begin with Isaiah 11:9-12:

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign [#H5251, banner, standard, or beacon] of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he [Jesus Christ] shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

Everyone on Earth will know the Lord. Jesus Christ, the Messiah, will be a beacon to the Gentiles, and they will go to Jerusalem to learn God's laws. Consequently, they will have rest and peace in their lands.

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and *all nations shall flow unto it*. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and *let us go up to*  the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more (Isa 2:2-4).

All nations, the majority being Gentile, will learn the ways of God and will be compelled with "a rod of iron" to walk in His paths. Remember the words of Zechariah 14:17:

And it shall be that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon him shall be no rain.

No rain! It won't take long for even the most stubborn nations to understand that they are dealing with Almighty God, and they most certainly will come to Jerusalem to worship Him. Christ will rule in love but with a rod of iron, and every Gentile nation will learn to obey. They will understand that God will not tolerate rebellion.

Behold my servant [either Christ or Israel, or both] whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth *judgment* to the Gentiles (Isa 42:1).

Christ will bring *judgment* to the Gentiles. Judgment means justice, the righting of wrongs, and mercy.

Finally, God will give the Gentiles the example of Israel to follow. Israel will be a light to all the nations:

I the Lord have called you [Israel] in righteousness, and will hold your hand, and will keep you, and give you for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles (v. 6).

Israel will be the model nation in the Millennium!

# Israel's "Baby-Sitters"

Thus says the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard [#H5251, banner, beacon] to the people: and they

shall bring your sons in their arms, and your daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be your nursing fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers: they shall bow down to you with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of your feet; and you shall know that I am the Lord: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me (Isa 49:22-23).

During the Millennium, the Gentiles–even their kings and queens– will serve Israel.

And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vine dressers. But you [Israel] shall be named the Priests of the Lord: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: you shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall you boast yourselves (Isa 61:5-6).

During the World Tomorrow, the Gentiles will not be poor, oppressed, third-world nations. God says Israel will eat the *riches* of the Gentiles. All countries will be wealthy beyond their dreams, due to the enforcement of God's laws. Nevertheless, the Gentiles will serve Israel as herdsmen, and by working the fields and vineyards, while Israel will be the priests and ministers of the Gentiles.

Israel will have the Spirit of God. The Gentiles will know God, but it is not in His plan for them to receive His Spirit at that time.

Now, thoughtfully read Isaiah 60:1-22:

Arise, shine; for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you [Zion]. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon you, and his glory shall be seen upon you. And the Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. Lift up your eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to you: your sons shall come from far, and your daughters shall be nursed at your side. Then you shall see, and flow together, and your heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto you, the forces [Strong's #H2428, wealth, strength, riches] of the Gentiles shall come unto you. The multitude of camels shall cover you, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall show forth the praises of the Lord. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto you, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto you: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory. Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows? Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring your sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord your God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he has glorified you [Israel/Zion]. And the sons of strangers shall build up your walls, and their kings shall minister unto you: for in my wrath I smote you, but in my favor have I had mercy on you. Therefore your gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto you the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve you shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. The glory of Lebanon shall come unto you, the fir tree, the pine tree, the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious. The sons also of them that afflicted vou shall come bending unto you, and all they that despised you shall bow themselves down at the soles of your feet; and they shall call you, The city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas you have been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through you, I will make you an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. You shall also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shall suck the breast of kings: and you shall know that I the Lord am your savior and your Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob. For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make your officers peace, and your exactors righteousness. Violence shall no more be heard in your land, wasting nor destruction within your borders; but you shall call your walls Salvation, and your gates Praise. The sun shall be no more your light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto you: but the Lord shall be unto you an everlasting light, and your God your glory. Your sun shall no more go down; neither shall your moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be your everlasting light, and the days of your mourning shall be ended. Your people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. A little one shall become a thousand, and a small

one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time.

#### God's Righteous Plan

Study Isaiah chapters 61 and 62 to understand that God has a beautiful plan. God is not prejudiced and does not discriminate. He is all-wise and all-merciful. God has a complete plan for all who have ever lived and all who are yet to be born. God the Father and Christ are in the process of creating Gods just like themselves. It is a step-by-step procedure. Jesus Christ is the firstborn. Next, the firstfruits will be raised at the First Resurrection and will be the wife of Christ. We will be the spiritual guides for Israel during the Millennium when God will give His Spirit to all Israel. Millions of converted Israelites will live and die during the Millennium, then await the Second Resurrection when they will be born into God's family. Then they will be the spiritual guides for the billions raised in the Second Resurrection. Finally, the billions who lived as physical human beings but never received the Spirit of God in their lifetime will have their opportunity. We will continue exploring this subject in Part 2 of this booklet.

The Bible does not speak about the Gentiles in warm and enduring terms, even during the Millennium. And there is not one verse in the entire Bible that says Gentiles will have access to God's Holy Spirit during the Millennium!

Previously, we thought a few verses implied that all people would receive God's Spirit during the 1000-year reign of Christ. We will look at these verses shortly. But first, let's re-examine one significant blessing given to the Gentiles during the Millennium: the knowledge of God.

### The Entire Earth Will Know God

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the *earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord*, as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious (Isa 11:9-10).

For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters that cover the sea (Hab 2:14).

The Holy Scriptures say that the earth will be full of the knowledge of God. But nowhere does God's Word say that the earth will be full of God's Holy Spirit.

Does knowing the Lord save us? Ancient Israel knew all about God, didn't they? God spoke to them from Mt. Sinai as He gave them His Law. But did that keep them walking the straight and narrow of God's path? No, it did not.

For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse (Rom 1:20).

The world should be able to observe and understand that God is God. Ancient Israel knew God. In the wilderness, they could see Him constantly, in the pillar of cloud by day and in the pillar of fire by night. But they still did not follow God's ways, even though they possessed the knowledge of God. Look at what they did:

Because that, when *they knew* God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened (Rom 1:21).

These people knew God but rejected His way, even demanding a king to rule over them. All humankind has a hostile mind toward God and His Law (Rom 8:7). We all have the plague of our human hearts (1Kgs 8:38; Jer 17:9). However, in His mercy, God has called a few out of this evil world and given them His Spirit.

The rest of the world, not called by God, is not subject to the Law of God. That is why Christ will need a rod of iron in the Millennium. By the end of the thousand years, there will be millions, perhaps billions, of people who will not have the Spirit of God. However, these people will not be lost forever because they will not have had their opportunity to receive the Spirit of God.

Does this mean that the Gentiles will *never* receive God's Spirit and be converted? Of course not. But it does mean that only Israel will have God's Spirit poured out on them during the Millennium.

## Scriptural Evidence of Gentile Conversion?

Now let's study the verses which we thought proved that all people would receive God's Spirit during the Millennium.

In the Ambassador College Correspondence Course (1969), Lesson 38, page 5, we find the heading, "World to Be Converted in the Millennium." The scripture used to prove their conversion is Isaiah 2:3:

And many people will go and say; come you, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion will go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

Does this say all nations will be converted? No, it says that the nations will go to Jerusalem, where God will teach them His ways. The correspondence course writers imply that "we will walk in His paths" means they will receive God's Spirit and be converted. Does being taught God's laws convert you? Or does God's Holy Spirit convert you, giving you a willingness and desire to obey those laws?

The Israelites understood God's laws and agreed to obey them:

And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord has said will we do (Exo 24:3).

But they did not convert or obey. Their hearts did not change, and they did not comply, even though Moses taught them the words of God. If knowledge of God and His Law, and professing a willingness to obey, does not convert you, then what does? Romans 8:9 tells us that, unless we have God's Holy Spirit, we are not Christ's and not converted:

But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now *if any man have not the Spirit of Christ*, *he is none of his.* 

Does Isaiah 2:3 say anything at all about the Gentiles receiving God's Spirit? No, it does not.

Christ will force the Gentile nations to obey God's laws with a rod of iron. After learning all about the Lord, why won't they willingly do His will? John 6:44 informs us that no one can come to Christ unless God the Father draws him. Are the Gentiles going to be called during the Millennium? No!

Nevertheless, let's look a little further. Perhaps a few Gentiles will be called during the Millennium, just like today, to serve with Israel. The time of a person's calling is God the Father's responsibility.

## When Is God's Spirit Poured on All Flesh?

You may be wondering about Joel 2:28:

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.

There it is—the Bible says God will pour out His Spirit on all flesh! But when? Let's get the context by going back to verses 18-20:

Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people. Yea, the Lord will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and you shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen: But I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savor shall come up, because he has done great things.

At the end of the current age, the returning Jesus Christ, with His wife and the angelic armies, will completely conquer the armies of this world. Next, we see the World Tomorrow unfolding:

Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do great things. Be not afraid, you beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree bears her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength. Be glad then, you children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he has given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil. And I will restore to you the years that the locust has eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. And you shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that has dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed. And you shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed (Joel 2:21-27).

These verses describe the Millennium. So now let's reread verse 28:

And it shall come to pass *afterward*, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.

It is afterward, *after* the Millennium, that God is going to pour out His Spirit upon all flesh. The preceding verses provide the context to understand when God will give His Spirit to *all* flesh. Study verses 19-27 to confirm that they describe the Millennium. They show Christ's intervention and the establishment of His 1000-year reign. Then, there will be no more warring armies; animals will be fed and contented; trees will bear fruit; Zion will rejoice in the Lord; the rains will fall gently; wheat, wine, and oil will be plentiful; everyone will have plenty to eat. And Christ will be in Israel.

Then we come to verse 28: "And it shall come to pass *afterward*, that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh." God does not say "on that day" or "at that time." He says "afterward"—*after* the Millennium!

Webster's Dictionary defines *afterward* as: "later, or subsequently." Subsequently means "occurring or coming later or after."

God will indeed pour out His Spirit on all flesh after the Millennium, during the Last Great Day!

Read Moses' words to Israel:

But you that did cleave unto the Lord your God are alive every one of you this day. Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, which you should do so in the land whither you go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what nation is there so great, who has God so near unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that has statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day? (Dt 4:4-8)

These verses tell us that God intended Israel to be a living example of how His laws work. Unfortunately, they were unable to live by these laws. But after Christ returns with His saints, all Israel will have God's Spirit, and they will finally be able to fulfill their teaching role—in the Millennium.

The Gentiles will be forced to obey these laws and will learn how well these laws work. God is using a practical one-step-at-a-time method of converting all humanity. It makes good sense!

## **Deception and Rebellion**

Let's revisit Revelation 20, verse 3.

And cast him [Satan] into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

After 1000 years, God will release the raging Satan from his prison. Israel will have fulfilled its role as the model nation. The Gentiles will have walked in the ways of God under the rod of iron. But because the Gentiles will not have the Spirit of God, many of them will be victims of Satan's deception.

Continue reading verses 4-6:

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.) This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that has part in *the first resurrection*: on such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. Verses 7-10 prophesy events at the end of the 1000-year reign of Christ:

And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.

We previously thought this vast multitude of deceived people had received the Spirit of God. Hence, we assumed that, in their rebellion against the rule of Christ, they would be lost forever. But now we know that they will rise in the Second Resurrection and receive God's Spirit at that time. The Second Resurrection will be in the Last Great Day, when God will pour His Spirit out on all flesh. Our Mighty God is the God of Mercy, and He has a perfect plan for all of humanity.

In Part 2, you will read more exciting new truths about "the rest of the dead," the Second Resurrection, and the Last Great Day.

Part 2

# THE LAST GREAT DAY



# After the Millennium: The Nations Deceived by Satan

grew up in a wonderful average American family. My dad grew up on a farm and learned the value of hard work. He loved the outdoors. He loved to hunt, fish, and play baseball. But most of all, Dad loved God. He was ordained as a Christian minister when he was 40 years old. He taught us God's ways, or, at least, the ways he and Mother understood. We, like so many others, had some strange beliefs. Some of the ideas preached to us on Sundays were frightening– stories about ever-burning hellfire and brimstone. We believed that the "evil" people who drank whiskey, went to dances, gambled, or attended movies on Sunday, were headed straight for Hell. Our minister could vividly describe how the souls in Hell would be burning and screaming forever and ever!

On the other hand, we learned that those who were "good" and went to church every Sunday would go straight to Heaven at their death. They would receive wings, a white cloud to sit on, a harp to play, and they could look into the face of God forever. I wondered if that would get boring, but I wanted to see the streets and everything else made out of pure gold.

That is what we learned and sincerely believed. I continued to believe this even after I was married. Then, one day, I had an unexpected conversation with a Seventh-day Adventist lady that my wife had hired in her business. She asked me questions about the Sabbath day. "The Sabbath day?" I wondered, "What and when is the Sabbath day?" So, I began to study God's Word and soon saw that God has a plan. And in His mercy, He brought me to repentance.

## The State of the Dead

After nearly two years of studying the Bible and Seventh-day Adventist literature, God led me to The World Tomorrow radio program. Listening to the broadcasts, I was fascinated and astonished as Herbert W. Armstrong and his son, Garner Ted Armstrong, thundered forth the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. God had given them His truth. They taught the Holy Scriptures and made them easy to understand. The actual state of the dead was a delightful surprise to me. Mr. Armstrong's writings showed plainly from the Word of God that the wicked are not burning in an everlasting hellfire, nor are the righteous plucking on a harp in Heaven. The Bible reveals that the dead are not in Heaven or Hell, but they know and feel nothing at all!

The word rendered "hell" in the King James Version of the Bible is from the Greek word *hades* and the Hebrew word *Sheol*. The meaning is a *pit or a grave*. That is all–just a hole in the ground. The translators of the different versions of the Bible tried to connect the words *Sheol* and *hades* with another Greek word, *Gehenna*. *Gehenna* is from the Hebrew "ge-ben-hennom": in English, "the Valley of the Son of Hinnom" (Josh 15:8; 18:16), or later on, "Gehenna fire." We will come back to this subject later.

Mr. Armstrong taught us that man does not have an immortal soul, but man is a soul. When a man dies, his "soul" does not continue living in Hell or Heaven. He is just dead. Thus, I was very excited to learn that people I knew who did "bad things" are not in an ever-burning Hell with the Devil poking them with a pitchfork. God is not a harsh, sadistic, cruel monster. He is merciful, and He has a great and righteous plan.

We also learned that man has a spirit. The Bible says, "There is a spirit in man" (1Cor 2:11). This spirit is the mind with which we think, reason, love, and appreciate. It is the personality, the developing character of each person. It is this spirit essence that God retains at our death. Jesus Christ said, "Into your hands I commit my spirit" (Lk 23:46). Steven said the same thing (Acts 7:59). The spirit in man can be imbued with the Spirit of God when God calls an individual to repentance, baptism, and laying on of hands (Acts 8:17). Then, that person must grow spiritually, striving to overcome and grow up into Christ in all things (Eph 4:13-15).

At the return of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the firstfruits occurs. These are the righteous ones who have been called and chosen, received God's Spirit, and remained faithful to the end. Those in their graves will be raised to everlasting God-life and ascend to meet Christ in the air. Immediately following them will be those who are "alive and remain" at Christ's return (1Cor 15:51-52). This resurrection is the First Resurrection.

## The Second Resurrection Is the Last Great Day

Blessed and holy is he that has part in *the first resurrection:* on such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years (Rev 20:6).

"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished" (Rev 20:5). Doesn't this imply that there will be another resurrection after the Millennium, a Second Resurrection?

Let us now focus on the Second Resurrection, which correlates with the seventh feast day, known as the Last Great Day. John 7:37 provides the title of this holy day:

In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

In my Bible, the marginal reference to John 7:37 calls attention to Leviticus 23:

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, saying: The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days to the Lord. On the first day shall be a holy convocation: you shall do no servile work therein. Seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord: on *the eighth day* [the Last Great Day] shall be a holy convocation unto you, and you shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord: it is a solemn assembly; and you shall do no servile work therein (Lev 23:33-36).

Jesus Christ, the Word, is the Lord who instructed Moses to record "the feasts of the Lord" in the law books of the Bible. And, of course, during His days on Earth in the flesh, He kept God's feast days.

After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill him. Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand. His brothers therefore said to Him, De-

part from here and go into Judea, that your disciples also may see the works that you are doing. For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world. For even His brothers did not believe in him. Then Jesus said to them, my time has not yet come, but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify of it that its works are evil. You go up to this feast. I am not yet going up to this feast, for my time has not yet fully come. When He had said these things to them, He remained in Galilee. But when His brothers had gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret (Jn 7:1-10).

Jesus attended at least the first part of that feast in secret. It was 30 AD, and a price was on His head. As the sun set on the final day of the Feast of Tabernacles (a Friday that year), the seventh feast—the Last Great Day—commenced at the same time as the weekly Sabbath (Jn 9:14). Thus, it was a dual Sabbath that year: the Last Great Day (an annual sabbath) and the weekly Sabbath.

Although a death threat hung over Him, Jesus delivered a compelling message to all:

On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. But this he spoke concerning the Spirit, which they that believe on him would receive, for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified (Jn 7:37-39).

Notice, the Last Great Day pictures rivers of living waters, i.e., the pouring out of God's Spirit.

## Satan Released

Revelation 20:1-3 declares:

And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; And he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled. And after that he must be loosed for a little season.

Immediately after the Millennium, Satan will be free for "a little season." How long is that season? We aren't told, but we know it is long enough for the Devil to deceive millions of people.

And when the thousand years are expired, Satan will be released from his prison, and *will go out to deceive the nations*, which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea (Rev 20:7-8).

The time between sunset on the last evening of the Feast of Tabernacles and the beginning of the Last Great Day represents the interval when God will release Satan from his prison. There are no words to describe the pent-up hatred and insane rage this wicked being will have boiling inside as he goes out to deceive the nations. We don't know how long this will take, but we understand *why* Satan *can* deceive them—they do not have God's Spirit!

At one time, we believed that God would give His Spirit to everyone during the Millennium. We thought Gog and Magog would receive God's Spirit and yet rebel against their Creator. We thought they would have their chance for salvation, fail miserably, and head straight for the lake of fire.

But now we can see the mercy of God. Israel, only, is given the Spirit of God during the Millennium. The rest of the world will have knowledge of God but not His Spirit. Satan can easily mislead those who do not have the Spirit of God. (And, if we are not careful, he can deceive those who do have God's Spirit.)

Continue with Revelation 20:9:

And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

God will obliterate the millions Satan has misled into rebellion. Remember that this event is after the Millennium and immediately before the Second Resurrection (the Last Great Day).

## The Rest of the Dead

After Christ destroys the rebels, He will cast Satan into the lake of fire (v. 10). Then the Last Great Day begins with the Second Resurrection: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God" (v. 12).

Enforcement of God's laws will benefit the entire earth during the Millennium. Unimaginable production and riches will prepare Earth for the billions raised to life in the Second Resurrection. The planet will be like the Garden of Eden, except for the land of Israel.

As the Second Resurrection occurs, millions of dead bodies will litter the land of Israel, demonstrating the awesome power of the Almighty and how He will deal with any rebellion. Rising and standing before God, all of humanity will see the gruesome carnage, including the rebels who will see their own bodies decaying on the mountains of Israel (Eze 39:2-4).

Ezekiel 38 explains how the rebellion comes about:

And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him. And say, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against you, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: And I will turn you back, and put hooks in your jaws, and I will bring you forth, and all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet: Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people with you . . . After many days you shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them . . . Thus saith the Lord God; It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into your mind, [from Satan loosed from his prison] and you shall think an evil thought: And you shall say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them without walls, and having neither bars or gates (Eze 38:1-6,8,10-11).

Why will evil thoughts come into their minds? Because, in fulfillment of Revelation 20:8, Satan will deceive the nations. He will go to Gog in the land of Magog, and to the four corners of the earth, to put evil thoughts into their minds. For a thousand years, Satan will plan and plot to do this. He will trick them with ideas like these:

God is not fair! Why does Israel get to be the leading nation of the world? Why should we take orders from them and do their manual labor? Aren't we just as good as they are? Why are we sending *our* wealth to *them*? Let's teach Israel a lesson! It would be so easy-they have no walls and no weapons. So, let's go and take back all the wealth that belongs to us!

Again, we need to ask: Why will God allow this to happen? How will this prepare for the Second Resurrection?

Remember, Satan can deceive the Gentile nations because they do not have God's Spirit. Therefore, even though Christ will utterly annihilate them, they will have an opportunity to repent when He raises them from the dead and then offers them His Holy Spirit in the Last Great Day.

# **Deterrent to Sin**

Who will be in the Second Resurrection? Every human being who has ever lived, except the comparatively few in the First Resurrection. They will all be raised simultaneously, with the same mindset, personality, and character they had when they died. Imagine every sin and crime committed throughout history by this mass of humanity–all of the murder, rape, war, and destruction.

Think of all of the famous men of war–Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander, Caesar, Genghis Khan, Charlemagne, Napoleon, Hitler, and on and on– who spent their lives looting, killing, and destroying. These men know nothing but war and the personal power and glorification it brings to their carnal minds. They will still have this mindset at their resurrection. Thankfully, our minds cannot envision the magnitude of all the evil that will come back to life.

If Christ were to raise these men and women of war to view only the Millennial setting, with its peace and unprotected wealth, what would prevent them from following their instinct to take what they want and attempt to conquer the world? There would be nothing to discourage them from doing so. That is why they will *not* see the beauty and wealth of the Millennium, but instead, they will have to view the results of the greatest slaughter ever known to man.

Let's return to Ezekiel 38:

And you shall come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring you against my land, that the heathen [nations, peoples] may know me, when I shall be sanctified in you, O Gog, before their eyes (v. 16).

The *heathen* mentioned here are not the Gentiles who know about God and live according to His laws during the Millennium. Instead, Ezekiel is alluding to the resurrected billions who lived *before* the Millennium and never knew the true God and His ways.

God will release Satan to bring about this rebellion and the resultant slaughter. Since these millions do not have God's Spirit, they will not be lost eternally, as we once thought. It would have been a great victory for Satan if they were lost forever, but they will have their chance when they rise on the Last Great Day.



# **Preconceived Ideas**

Until now, the Church has never considered the connection between the Second Resurrection and the slaughter of Gog, Magog, and the nations who rebel against God's government. Since this is a new concept, we need to establish two biblical facts:

- 1. Only Israel will be given the Spirit of God during the Millennium.
- 2. All people throughout history (Gentiles and Israelites) who never received God's Spirit will have access to the Spirit of God when God resurrects them at the Last Great Day.

And now, we need to investigate two essential questions. First, how many resurrections does the Bible teach? Second, what is the fate of Satan and the demons? The answers are vital to our understanding of the Last Great Day.

## How Many Resurrections Does the Bible Teach?

So far, two resurrections are very apparent. But is there a third resurrection? There is not one scripture with the terms "third resurrection" or "white throne judgment." So how did the Church of God come up with the idea of a third resurrection? Could this be a preconceived notion similar to the mistaken ideas of Heaven and Hell that I had as a boy? What does the Bible say?

Paul outlines God's plan for the resurrection of the dead:

Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is vain, and your faith is also vain... But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward those who are Christ's at His coming (1Cor 15:12-14,20-23).

Everyone who has ever lived will rise from the dead–but in God's time order.

In the book of Revelation, John tells us of the people who will give their lives for the Word of God during the Great Tribulation:

And I saw thrones and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for their witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years (Rev 20:4).

These people are the Laodiceans and those of the outer court who will overcome through the Spirit of God. They will rise from the dead in the First Resurrection with the other righteous firstfruits.

Then verse 5 says, "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Doesn't this imply that *all* the rest of the dead will rise after the Millennium–in the Second Resurrection? Verse 6 declares:

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

The First Resurrection is for the firstfruits, who will reign with Christ a thousand years. God's Word very plainly states that the Second Resurrection is for the rest of the dead. Is there a third resurrection mentioned anywhere?

# **No Third Resurrection**

How many resurrections does Daniel mention?

At that time [the time of the end] Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people: and there

shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that time: and at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life [Which resurrection is this?], and some to shame and everlasting contempt [Which resurrection is that?] (Dan 12:1-2).

Daniel reports two groups of people who will awake from the dead, one to everlasting life and one to everlasting contempt.

Jesus tells us what will wake both groups: "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which *all* who are in the graves will hear his voice" (Jn 5:28, RSV). At the First Resurrection, not *all* will hear His voice, for God calls only a tiny fraction of all people who have ever lived to be the firstfruits.

Both Daniel and Jesus are speaking of a time when all that are in the grave-the rest of the dead-will hear.

Marvel not at this: for *the hour* is coming, in the which *all* that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation [judgment] (Jn 5:28-29).

Yes, a time is coming when *all* will hear His voice–all the rest of the dead–the good and the evil. But, do all rise at one moment in time–the good and the evil together, simultaneously?

Let God's Word give us the plain truth about this question:

And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be *a* resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust (Acts 24:15).

Notice, it says only one resurrection—of the just and the unjust. The good and the bad are both raised together. Paul does not say there will be resurrections, plural. He says "*a* resurrection," singular. So, who are the good or the just that will come forth with the evil or the unjust?

The Bible is clear that the First Resurrection occurs at the return of Jesus Christ. At His return, He establishes the Kingdom of God over all the earth. Then what happens? The 144,000 Israelites, sealed by God's Spirit immediately before Christ opens the seventh seal, will be protected from the horrors of the Day of the Lord's Wrath (Rev 6:17; 7:1-8; 9:4). They

will enter the World Tomorrow, the Kingdom of God, as physical human beings, as its first citizens. They will be the organized beginning of the model nation of Israel. All of Israel will have access to God's Spirit as they live during the Millennium.

Like those called into the Church now, all Israelites living during the Millennium will have the opportunity to be converted. They will live, work, and have families. When they die, they will "sleep" (1Th 4:14) in their graves until the Second Resurrection, just as most firstfruits are waiting in their graves today, for the First Resurrection. Doesn't that make perfect sense?

The millions of converted Israelites, who will live and die during the Millennium, are the good (the just) that will be raised to eternal spirit life, as children of God, at the Second Resurrection. And they will be resurrected along with the evil (the unjust).

Revelation 20:4-6 describes the First Resurrection and is more easily understood when the sentence "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished" is placed in parentheses:

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years 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.

The First Resurrection involves those called to be firstfruits in the age before the return of Jesus Christ. The firstfruits will reign as the wife of Christ for 1000 years. Then, after the Millennium, there is a Second Resurrection—of the just and the unjust. The just are the converted Israelites of the World Tomorrow who will receive eternal life at the Second Resurrection. The unjust are the billions from all ages of time who never had their invitation to receive God's Holy Spirit. Also included among the unjust are the comparatively few who did have their opportunity for God's Spirit but rejected their calling. Woe be to them!

The Second Resurrection is a resurrection to life everlasting or to judgment. That is what the Holy Bible plainly states.

This brings us to another fundamental but misunderstood issue about the resurrections. As stated previously, nowhere in the Bible can you find the terms "third resurrection" or "white throne judgment."

Let's read Revelation 20:11-15:

11 And I saw a great white throne [John describes what he saw–a great white throne. He is not naming an event or a space of time.] and him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: And another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged according to their works by the things which were written in the books. 13 And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Now, should we read these scriptures straight through, or are we supposed to stop at the beginning of verse 13? Do verses 11 and 12 describe the Second Resurrection, and verses 13 and 14 depict a third resurrection? Are two resurrections shown in verses 11-15? Or only one?

# The First Resurrection

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming (1Cor 15:22-23).

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years . . . 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 (Rev 20:4-6).

# The Second Resurrection

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation [judgment] (Jn 5:28-29).

And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be *a resurrection* of the dead, both of the just and unjust (Acts 24:15).

But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished . . . and I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God (Rev 20:5,12).

Observe that the scripture does not say some of the dead stand before God. "The dead, small and great" clearly indicates that *all of the dead* will stand before God at one time. Surely this includes those who perished in the sea (including Noah's flood) and those buried in their graves.

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell [#G86 *hades*, the grave] delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works (Rev 20:13).

Let me repeat: the Second Resurrection is a resurrection of *all the dead*. The just and the unjust will rise together, and there will be no more dead for a third resurrection.

We have explained that the just raised to everlasting spirit life in the Second Resurrection are:

- 3. the 144,000 Israelites (Rev 7) who will receive the Spirit of God immediately before the seventh seal is opened, and
- 4. all of the Israelites who will receive God's Spirit and overcome during the Millennium.

These two groups will not be raised to judgment but will rise to eternal life. Peter clarifies that those called by God are judged from the time of their calling: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God" (1Pet 4:17).

The vast majority of people who have ever lived are the unjust, and they, too, will be raised in the Second Resurrection. They have never had

an opportunity for salvation, and they have never been judged. They will be raised to judgment.

Reread Revelation 20:12-13:

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their work.

God will give His Holy Spirit to these billions of people so that they can understand the holy books (the Bible) and God's judgment of their lives according to the Scriptures, just as He judges us, the Church of God, today.

The rest of the dead-good and bad, just and unjust-will rise in the Second Resurrection. Consequently, all the graves on land or sea will be empty. Death from that point on is eternal death-the lake of fire. Those who had received their calling and failed to overcome will have already been judged and found wanting. The lake of fire awaits them.

For those who accept and rely on the Holy Spirit to overcome, the second death has no power, as Paul poetically tells us:

The last enemy that will be destroyed is death . . . So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your sting? O grave [Strong's #G86], where is your victory? (1Cor 15:26,54-55).

The Worldwide Church of God taught that Revelation 20:11-15 described a second and a third resurrection. But now, it should be evident that *all* "the rest of the dead" are raised in the Second Resurrection. Therefore, there is no need for a third resurrection.

#### A New Heaven and a New Earth

Before our calling into God's Church, we believed all sorts of erroneous doctrines of the world. Then God brought us His truth through Herbert W. Armstrong. Mr. Armstrong built the framework of the restored truths on the sure foundation of the Word of God. So, let's examine the scriptures that describe the 100-years we supposed would occur between verses 12 and 13 of Revelation 20.

The 100-year period comes from the WCG's interpretation of Isaiah 65:20:

There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die a hundred years old, but the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed.

But to understand Isaiah 65:20, we must first understand verse 17:

For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

The worst time of trouble ever (Mat 24:21) will ruin the earth, and God will need to re-create it before fulfilling Isaiah 65:20. The Four Horsemen's ghastly ride, the Great Tribulation, and the one-year Day of the Lord's Wrath will cause the planet to wobble through the solar system. Jeremiah and Isaiah record this horrible calamity:

My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet [the seventh seal-the trumpet plagues] the alarm of war. Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled: suddenly are my tents spoiled, and my curtains in a moment. How long shall I see the standard, and hear the sound of the trumpet? For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge. I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void [Strong's #H814 tohoo and #H922 bohoo-the exact words used to describe the destroyed earth in Genesis 1:2]; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord, and by his fierce anger (Jer 4:19-26).

Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited. Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously (Isa 24:17-23).

Matthew 24:21 means exactly what it declares: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."

## **Re-Creation**

After the Great Tribulation, Earth must be "created" again for the World Tomorrow. Peter reminds us of the prophecies and promises that God will fulfill before the Millennium can commence:

For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men . . . Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for *new heavens and a new earth*, wherein dwelleth righteousness (2Pet 3:5-7,13).

Verse 13 appears to have a dual application. First, the scriptures we have just reviewed in Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Matthew prophesy the horrendous events that will utterly destroy the planet at the return of Christ and before the establishment of the World Tomorrow. New heavens and a new Earth will be a necessity for the Millennium. Second, the heavens and earth will be renewed again after the Last Great Day, immediately before the arrival of God the Father to Earth at the time of Revelation 21:1-3.

We will examine the second application shortly. But at this point, we are concerned with the conditions on Earth at Christ's return. Paul clarifies the timing of these extraordinary events:

Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels. In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints (2Thes 1:6-10).

At His return for the First Resurrection!

The earth will be demolished, but we, as firstfruits, will have the privilege of watching the mighty Christ re-create Planet Earth! In 2Peter 3:13, Peter refers to Isaiah's prophecy:

For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind (Isa 65:17).

Let's read the remainder of Isaiah 65:

But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, *nor bring forth for trouble*; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord (Isa 65:18-25).

Notice that these verses portray life during the Millennium, not the Last Great Day. As Israel follows God's laws, their lives will not be cut short by sickness or accidents. Babies will not be killed by abortions (*Moffatt* says: "Children will not die suddenly, for they are a race that the Eternal blesses"). Obeying God's health laws will extend man's lifespan in the Millennium. People will be wonderfully healthy. However, as always, the habitual sinner will bring curses upon himself, and he will die.

Verse 23 shows that children will be born during this time:

They shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity; for they shall be the offspring of the blessed of the Lord, and their children with them (RSV).

Children will be born in the Wonderful World Tomorrow, generation after generation, but not during the Last Great Day.

Now let's see how 2Peter 3:13 applies to the time before the coming of God the Father to Planet Earth.

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the *first* [#G4413, protos] heaven and the *first* [#G4413, protos] earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the *former things* [#G4413, protos] are passed away (Rev 21:1-4).

Notice that first and former things are the same Greek word: #G4413, protos. Therefore, this scripture does not state that the first heavens and earth of Genesis 1 have passed away. Instead, it is saying that the former heaven and earth of Isaiah 65:17 will pass away in preparation for the New

Jerusalem and the coming of God the Father. The scriptures are correctly connected here for the first time that I am aware of, "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little" (Isa 28:10).

## How Long Is the Last Great Day?

It is easy to see the truth of the Second Resurrection in the Word of God. Mr. Armstrong believed that Revelation 20:11-15 contained a third resurrection and a 100-year judgment period between resurrections. Mr. Armstrong gave us what he understood, but God did not give him complete understanding of the Second Resurrection. Now, as we "grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2Pet 3:18), we can look much deeper into the resurrections and the meaning of the seventh feast of the year, the Last Great Day.

The Last Great Day is "the white throne judgment," if you want to use that term. It begins with the Second Resurrection. Does the Bible tell us how long this "day" will be? We thought it was a 100-year period, but we now see that this is not the case. The 100 years mentioned in Isaiah 65 refers only to the minimum average lifespan during the Millennium. And the chapter is not concerned with the Last Great Day whatsoever.

The judgment period is called the Last Great Day. Again, the name comes from John 7:37:

In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

Observe the plain statement of 2Peter 3:8:

But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

Is this the Bible definition of the duration of the Last Great Day–a thousand years? Think about this question as we continue.

# A Seven-Thousand-Year Plan or an Eight-Thousand-Year Plan?

Why would a thousand years be required for the judgment of the ma-

jority of humanity? Does this mean that those brought up in the Second Resurrection would have a thousand years to live and overcome? Does this seem too long? Perhaps it does from our narrow viewpoint. For us today, a person is fortunate to live 70 years. So why would God assign a thousand years to this important period?

Mr. Armstrong frequently referred to God's "7000-year plan." However, Mr. Armstrong believed there was a 100-year period for the judgment. So, in reality, he expected a 7100-year duration of God's plan. However, if it's true that a day is with the Lord as 1000 years, are we looking at an overall 8000-year plan to create billions of God-beings? Is this why we observe the Last Great Day as the *eighth* day after the Feast of Tabernacles (see Leviticus 23:39 and Numbers 29:35)?

We are inclined to think in narrow terms about lifespan: 70, 80, or maybe 90 years. Consequently, it is challenging for human beings today to believe the long lifespans man initially had. But Genesis 5 records that many people lived nearly 1000 years. Adam lived 930 years. Seth lived 912 years, Enos 905 years, Cainan 910 years, Mahaleel 895 years, Methuselah 969 years, and Noah 950 years.

We tend to think that our current life expectancy is correct and normal, and that God did something unusual to lengthen the lives of men before the flood. But, in reality, just the opposite is true. God first created the human body to last a very long time. Then, in Genesis 6:3, we see that, because of sin, God performed a miracle to shorten man's life:

And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

After Christ returns and sets up the Kingdom, there will be a restitution of all things:

And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of *all* things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began (Acts 3:20-21).

God will restore not some things, or most things, but *all* things. Would this not also include the lifespan he initially created for mankind?

God declared the decrease of man's lifespan when He saw the wickedness that filled the earth. Noah was 500 years old when God told him to construct the ark. Noah and his family entered the ark one hundred years later, and the flood began (Gen 7:11). Three hundred and fifty years later, Noah died at 950 years of age (Gen 9:29).

From that point on, we can see man's life expectancy diminishing generation by generation (Gen 11:10-32; 35:28; 47:28):

Noah's son Shem lived to be 600 years old. Shem's son Arphaxad lived only 438 years. Arphaxad's son Salah lived 433 years. Salah's son Eber lived 464 years. Eber's son Peleg lived 239 years. Peleg's son Reu lived 239 years. Reu's son Serug lived 230 years. Serug's son Nahor lived 148 years. Nahor's son lived Terah lived 235 years. Terah's son Abraham lived 175 years. Abraham's son Isaac lived 180 years. Isaac's son Jacob lived 147 years.

Eight hundred years after the flood, Jacob's son Joseph was the first man recorded in the Bible who lived less than 120 years. He died at the age of 110 (Gen 50:22).

The point of all of this is that God created the human body to endure. Before the flood, for the first 1600 years of human life, man's lifespan was nearly 1000 years. God told Adam not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, "for *in the day* that you eat thereof you shalt surely die" (Gen 2:17). This scripture substantiates 2Peter 3:8, "that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." Adam died at the age of 930 years, within the 1000-year *day* that he did *eat thereof*. The human body is wonderfully made (Ps 139:14), and God created it to last much longer than Moses' 120 years or our expected 70-90 years of today.

We must expand our thinking and look at lifespan as God does. The long-lived, pre-flood people will rise at the Second Resurrection with everyone who has ever lived. And except for a very few righteous men and women, all of them led their long lives steeped in sin. This habitual sin's effect on them is hard for us to imagine.

Consider your habitual sin that you continually battle. Even with the power of God's Holy Spirit, we still struggle, as the apostle Paul confesses:

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwells no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do (Rom 7:18-19).

Aren't we just like Paul? Don't we often cry out just as Paul did, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death" (v. 24)? We can be very grateful for the answer: "I thank God [it is] through Jesus Christ our Lord" (v. 25).

Through an average of 30 to 50 years of the Christian life, we struggle to overcome. Now imagine you had spent over 900 years wallowing in every sin imaginable with no thought of right or wrong. The pre-flood person's every thought, deed, and action was evil:

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every *imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only* evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart (Gen 6:5-6).

Now consider Christ's words in Matthew 24:37-39:

But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Look at our world today. We read in our newspapers and see on television the evils of this world. Some of us have suffered violent wrongs thrust upon us by the depraved society in which we live.

Consider the evils that are becoming commonplace: divorce and the breakdown of the family, child abuse, murders, thefts, lies, rape, incest, homosexuality, same-sex marriages, and on and on and on. Now, understand that these actions were the norm in the generations before the flood. All were guilty of evil behavior. The Bible records that every thought in their minds was only evil continually for hundreds of years.

God sent the murderer, Cain, away to live in isolation, and he soon lost any knowledge of God's ways which his parents had taught him. Generation after generation of his descendants grew up thinking that their evil ways were natural and right. If you wanted something, take it! If a man got in your way, kill him! If a woman appealed to you, take her! When finished with her, throw her away and get another! This behavior was not the exception—it was the rule. Every person learned this way of life in early childhood and practiced it for over 900 years. The pre-flood people were monsters who will come to life again on the Last Great Day.

We cannot grasp the enormity of the task involved in converting these people into sons of God. If Christ were to give these people only 100 years to grow and overcome their sins, can't you hear their cries of protest? Wouldn't some say God was unfair? Wouldn't they say, "You gave me 1000 years to develop these sinful habits but have given me only 100 years to overcome them"?

Remember 2Peter 3:8, where it says that a thousand years is as a day, and a day is as a thousand years. Mr. Armstrong used this scripture to compare a week of seven days to the plan of God. He observed that the first 6000 years of God's plan was to allow man to go his own way and do his own thing, as is done in the six working days of each week. And Mr. Armstrong saw that the seventh day, the holy Sabbath day of rest, belongs to God. Thus, he could see the pattern of a seven-day week applying to 7000 years. But an added 100-year period of the judgment created the necessity of seven and one-tenth days to represent God's plan. The 100 years really did not fit.

But now we can understand! God has now revealed the truth of the Lord's Day. The Lord's Day-or the Day of the Lord-is the seventh day, but its duration is not just 1000 years. The Day of the Lord continues throughout eternity. Within the Day of the Lord is the 1000-year Wonderful World Tomorrow, the Millennium. The multitudes in the Second Resurrection-from the world before the flood to the present evil world of today-will be forced to compare their worlds with the Wonderful World Tomorrow. The Last Great Day is a full 1000-year day, not one-tenth of a day. If God gives Israel 1000 years with His Spirit during the Millennium, He will surely give 1000 years to those who did not receive His Spirit in their lifetime.

#### **Time for a Review**

We have covered quite a bit, and now would be a good time to review what we have learned. Let's begin with the spectacular return of Jesus Christ and the resurrection of the 144,000 firstfruits (Rev 14:1-5), including those who are alive and remain in the place of safety. As born sons of God, we will reign with Christ 1000 years, and during that Millennium, Satan and the demons will be locked away. In preparation for the Millennium, God will re-create Earth (Isa 65:17-18). The Gentiles still alive will be separated geographically and located in the areas God always intended for them. The 144,000 physical Israelite survivors of the Great Tribulation, protected from the Day of the Lord's Wrath (Rev 7:1-8), will return to the land of Israel. They will have children and live and die just as people do today.

All of Israel will have access to God's Spirit during the Millennium. They will not have Satan and the demons to contend with, as we do today. But they must use God's Spirit to grow and overcome their human nature. Those who do will be the good and just that will be born into the family of God at the Second Resurrection.

Just as the Church today is being trained to be Israel's teachers in the Millennium, Israel will be trained to teach all humanity in the Last Great Day. Israel will be God's model nation during the Millennium. They failed to fulfill that role anciently because they did not have the Spirit of God. But the will of God shall be done, step-by-step!

At the beginning of the Last Great Day, the Second Resurrection occurs. Millions of Israelites will rise as spirit beings (God-beings). They will be ready to teach the billions of people from all ages, nations, kindreds, and tongues, who are resurrected simultaneously, as human beings in the flesh (Lk 24:39). These individuals will rise with the same mind, personality, and character they possessed at the time of their death.

God does not discriminate against the Gentiles or anyone. God is love! He has a beautiful plan designed by the two greatest minds in the Universe. He knows what He is doing. God Almighty will bring about the fulfillment of His master plan one step at a time.

Those of us called to be firstfruits in the First Resurrection will guide, educate, and influence the Israelites during the Millennium. Under the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, we will rule over them in love, teaching them to rule in love and righteousness over the billions resurrected in the flesh at the Second Resurrection.

The good, or just, referred to in John 5:28–29 and Acts 24:15, are simply those Israelites who use God's Spirit to overcome during the Millennium. Then they will make up the field staff needed to rule and teach the newly resurrected billions in the Last Great Day.

The wicked, bad, or unjust will include every human that has ever lived during all the ages of humanity but never had access to God's Spirit. They will have their first chance for salvation at the Second Resurrection.

Within this group of the wicked will also be those who received God's

Spirit within their lifetime but failed to use it to overcome and develop God's character (see Mk 3:28-29). As a result, they will be judged guilty and will immediately be cast into the lake of fire. Others will be tossed into this fire as time goes on, if and when Christ determines that they will not repent.

Isaiah 66:22-24 describes this:

For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

The lake of fire is ignited (Rev 20:9) as Christ destroys Gog and Magog, just before the Last Great Day begins. Remember, God will raise up the rest of the dead at the Second Resurrection–all of them. There is no need for a third resurrection. The raging lake of fire that will not be quenched is Gehenna fire, the second death, and it is where Satan and the demons will be cast:

And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are [were cast], and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever (Rev 20:10).



# Hellfire and Satan's Fate

od is opening our minds to some profound things of God. For example, what effect does the lake of fire have on Satan and the demons? Fire cannot hurt a spirit. This fire is the second death that will consume all unrepentant human beings—those who had their chance for salvation and rejected it. But "a spirit is immortal and cannot die!" Is that an accurate statement? Or is this supposition another preconceived idea?

Before we explore the answer to this question, let's return to the end of the Millennium, when Christ will release the Devil from his prison to go out and deceive Gog, Magog, and the nations in the four quarters of the earth (Rev 20:8). It is astounding to think that Satan will be able to convince masses of people from all over the planet to fight with the mighty Jesus Christ, who has been King over the earth for a thousand years!

Since Israel will have God's Spirit during the Millennium, there will be many sermons warning of Satan's release and the resulting deception and rebellion of the Gentile nations. By the last generation at the end of the Millennium, millions of God's Priests (Isa 61:6) will be preaching these warnings to the Gentiles. The nations will have heard the warnings all their lives and should be expecting and preparing for the temptation. But without God's Spirit, they will still rebel against Him.

How long will it take for Satan and the demons to deceive the nations so that they will gather to attack the only God they have ever known? Wouldn't you think such deception would require at least a couple of generations of Satan's evil influence? What other conditions and circumstances would show up in a society that succumbs to the wicked devices of Satan? We will return to this question later.

## A Burial Place for Gog and Magog

Let's return now to Ezekiel:

And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that my fury shall come up in my face, For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; so that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground. And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God: every man's sword shall be against his brother. And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord (Eze 38:18-23).

Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. [This does not conflict with the picture presented in Isaiah 11, of the tame beasts. These ravenous birds and animals, such as buzzards and opossums are just performing as they have always done, devouring carrion and cleansing the land.] Thou shalt fall upon the open field: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God. And I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles: and they shall know that I am the Lord . . . And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall burn them with fire seven years [Notice that the weapons are primitive, made of wood, because "modern" weapons will not have been produced for a thousand years.]: So that they shall take no

wood out of the field, neither cut down any out of the forests; for they shall burn the weapons with fire: and they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord God (Eze 39:4-6,9-10).

Is it possible to picture this ghastly scene in our minds? Littering the land of Israel will be millions of dead, decaying, stinking bodies when the Second Resurrection occurs. This scene will greet everyone as they rise from the dead. God has demonstrated His unlimited power and how He will deal with any further rebellion-total annihilation! But how can the resurrected billions be brought to this area to view the carnage? How will they be brought before Christ for judgment? What role will this immense slaughter play?

First, let us look at Ezekiel 39:11-15 in the NRSV:

On that day I will give Gog a place for burial in Israel, the Valley of the Travelers [or the Valley of Those Who Pass By, NKJ. God will provide the time for them to walk there and see Hell.] east of the sea: and it shall block the path of the travelers, for there Gog and all his horde will be buried; it shall be called the Valley of Hammongog. Seven months the house of Israel shall spend burying them, in order to cleanse the land. All the people of the land shall bury them; and it shall bring them honor on the day that I show my glory, says the Lord God. [How will Israel accomplish this gory task of burying this huge number of corpses?] They will set apart men [What men?] to pass through the land regularly and bury any invaders who remain on the face of the land, so as to cleanse it; for seven months they shall make their search. As the searchers pass through the land, anyone who sees a human bone shall set up a sign by it, until the buriers have buried it in the Valley of Hammongog.

#### Those Who Have Earned the Job

So, to whom will Israel give this gruesome assignment? Who will be required to gather and bury these millions of revolting, half-rotted bodies? And what does this have to do with the Second Resurrection? We have not previously understood the scriptures connecting the Second Resurrection and the Last Great Day, but they will become clear as we proceed. Observe what our Lord Jesus Christ had to say about certain ones that would come up in the Second Resurrection:

And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they shall ask the more (Lk 12:47-48).

Here Jesus tells us that there will be different levels of punishment and reward (also Lk 19:17-19).

Look also at Luke 11:29-32:

And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

The individuals given the disgusting job of gathering and burying the rotting bodies in the Valley of the Travelers will be those who earned the chore by their works in this lifetime. Undoubtedly, Christ will sternly judge and sentence the generation that experienced His earthly ministry. Perhaps all of Israel, which had been given the knowledge of God through the years and rejected it (see Mat 23:37), will have their part in this massive clean-up when they rise in the Second Resurrection. Surely, the notorious men who have caused so much death and destruction will also be assigned to this task.

# Spoken by the Prophets of Old

At this point, we also need to look at Ezekiel 38:17:

Thus says the Lord God: Are you he [Gog], of whom I spoke in former days by my servants the prophets of Israel, who in those days prophesied for years that I would bring you against them?

This verse plainly shows that there should be scriptures by the other prophets that will shed more light on the rebellion of Gog, Magog, and the other nations, and the results of the uprising and its effect on people. One of these writers was the royal prophet, Isaiah:

For by fire and by the sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many [as the sand of the sea, Rev 10:8]. They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse [What race of people does this sound like?], shall be consumed together, saith the Lord. For I know their works and their thoughts: It shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory (Isa 66:16-18).

Think again, how does the great slaughter relate to the Second Resurrection? Israelites and Gentiles have lived and died in every habitable part of the planet, and they will rise all over the earth. Observe what God will cause to happen next:

And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles (Isa 66:19).

God will send the survivors of the battle to their homelands, to the nations and islands afar off. They will declare God's glory to the people just resurrected who have never known God or never heard the name of Jesus Christ.

These survivors will proclaim that Almighty God is gathering all the resurrected descendants of Jacob back to the land of Israel. The Gentiles will escort them to Jerusalem and also present themselves before God for judgment:

And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord. And I will also take of them [Israel] for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord. For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain (Isa 66:20-22).

Now carefully read verses 23 and 24:

And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall *all flesh* [everyone raised in the flesh at the Second Resurrection] come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

In Mark 4:22, Jesus tells us that everything hidden will be revealed, and every secret will be made known. As you continue reading, God will reveal to you one of the greatest secrets ever kept—more of the truly deep things of God!

#### Hell—Gehenna Fire

From another of the very early writers, the prophet Joel, we learn more about the Valley of the Travelers:

I will also gather all nations [at the Second Resurrection] and will bring them down into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead [#H8199, to judge, i.e., pronounce sentence] with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land (Joel 3:2).

Continue in verses 12-14:

Let the heathen [Gentiles or nations] be wakened [#H5782, to open the eyes, raise up (be resurrected, see Job 14:10-12)], and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the *heathen* round about. Put you in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the vats overflow;

for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for *the* day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.

The article "the" veils the meaning of verse 14. As we read here, the Second Resurrection has just occurred, and the Last Great Day has begun. Now understand this: The Last Great Day is "a" day in the Day of the Lord. Remember, also, the Day of the Lord continues throughout eternity. Therefore, instead of the definite article "the," the translators should have used the indefinite "a." Mr. Armstrong often compared Isaiah 49:8 with 2Corinthians 2:6 to prove that "today" is not the only day of salvation:

Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee (Isa 49:8).

For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in *the* day of salvation I have succored thee (2Cor 6:2).

Therefore, as Joel writes, "for *the* day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision," he does not mean the overall Day of the Lord or the Day of the Lord's Wrath. He means *a* day of the Lord, namely, the Last Great Day. The book of Joel is in chronological order. From Joel 2:28 to the end of the book, we read of events after the Millennium to a crucial day of the Lord–the Last Great Day.

# The Valley of Decision

Where exactly is the Valley of the Travelers that will be full of dead bodies? Where is this Valley of Decision—the Valley of Jehoshaphat? Another of God's prophets, Jeremiah, carefully describes the area and pronounces it holy:

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner . . . And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, shall be holy unto the Lord; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever (Jer 31:38,40).

We can readily locate this valley with a good map of ancient Jerusalem. There can be only one area to collect dead bodies—in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, on the west side of Jerusalem. It runs south from that point, then circles east below the city until it joins the Brook Kidron. Why has God chosen this valley for His judgment on humanity?

God's Word explains His purpose and plan for the Valley of Decision:

For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the Lord: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it. And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be called Tophet, nor the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of slaughter: for they shall bury in Tophet, until there be no place [no more room]. And the carcases of this people shall be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth; and none shall fray them away (Jer 7:30-33).

For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king [the word "king" is Strong's #H4428, Melek. The chief deity of the Ammonites was Molech, Strong's #H4432, Molek. Both words come from #H4427, *malak*] it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it (Isa 30:33).

# **Another Review**

Before we continue, we need to recap what we have just studied. First, after 1000 years of confinement in the bottomless pit, Satan is released. Then, he goes to Gog and all Gentiles and deceives them into attacking Israel. God fights them to complete destruction, and as a result, millions of dead bodies litter the land of Israel. At this point, the Second Resurrection happens, and billions of people come to life all over the earth. As a punishment, many of those resurrected must gather the rotting bodies and throw them into the Valley of Hinnom.

The survivors of the massacre will go back to their own countries to spread the word that all flesh, including those just resurrected, must come to the land of Israel to worship the living God. They are to bring every son of Jacob (Israel) with them as an offering to the Lord. Then, after they have all bowed before the true God, judgment will be pronounced upon these multitudes of people from all ages. They will be declared guilty and sentenced to death. However, they will learn that their penalty has already been paid. Jesus Christ paid the price for their past sins by His death. They will then have their first opportunity for salvation by receiving the Spirit of God.

On their way into and out of Jerusalem, the multitudes will pass the Valley of Hinnom and see the results of rebelling against God. They will understand that this is their fate if they fail to overcome and change their past behavior.

And they shall go forth and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh (Isa 66:24).

In the New Testament, we read very similar words from our Lord:

And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell [#G1067, the Valley of the Son of Hinnom], into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched (Mk 9:43-44).

Then, as if for emphasis, He repeats this phrase twice more (vv. 45-48). God is making this point very clear. The Valley of Decision, the Valley of Slaughter, the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, is the actual Hell of the New Testament–Gehenna. When Jesus says that it is better to enter into *life* maimed, or as verse 47 says, "into the kingdom of God," He is referring to those of the Second Resurrection, raised in bodies of flesh to live in the Kingdom of God during the Last Great Day. Jesus emphasizes the importance of obeying His government to avoid being thrown into Hell, the Gehenna Valley.

Then shall he say also to them on his left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting [#G166] fire, prepared for the devil and his angels (Mat 25:41).

This fire is the same completely destroying, eternal fire that fell upon the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah: "God made an example of them and punished them with eternal [#G166] fire" (Jude 7 CEV). This permanently destroying fire is for those humans who have cursed themselves by rejecting their opportunity to overcome and enter the God family. The same fire is also for Satan and his demons. Mark records our Lord's encounter with an evil spirit who cries out:

Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to *destroy* us? I know who thou art, the Holy One of God (Mk 1:24).

The word "destroy" is Strong's #G622 and is also used as "perish" in John 3:15: "That whosoever believeth in him should not *perish*, but have everlasting life." We of the Church of God have long known, in light of this well-known scripture, that "to perish" means the opposite of "to have eternal life." Simply stated, "to perish" would be "to have eternal death." Romans 6:23 makes it plain: "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." The evil spirit knew exactly what was in store for him.

There is still more for us to see about the Valley of the Son of Hinnom. Note Jesus' comforting promise:

I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear [grasp] them now. Howbeit, when it, the Spirit of truth is come, it will guide you into all truth: for it shall not speak of itself; but whatsoever it shall hear that shall it speak: and *it will show you things* to come (Jn 16:12-13).

And 1Corinthians 2:10: "God has revealed them to us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God!"

# Can Spirits Die?

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might *destroy* him that had the power of death, that is, the devil (Heb 2:14).

The word "destroy" is *Strong*'s #G2673, "to make void, abolish, bring to nought, vanish away, destroy." But, can a spirit-being be put to death? Can spirit-beings die?

Jesus Christ, the living Word of God, created all things (Col 1:16), including the angels. In Him is life (Jn 1:4). He is the supreme "I am," or the self-existent one (Exo 3:13-14 and Jn 18:6,8). Jesus Christ is the Lord, the Eternal, of the Old Testament. He is God (Heb 1:8).

Nevertheless, He became flesh and was brutally killed–He *died*! And if God the Father had not resurrected Jesus, He would still be dead. The fact that the eternal God could give up His life is proof that He can take away the life of any of His created beings, "For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Lk 1:37)!

The Word became flesh (Jn 1:14). This eternal Spirit became mortal and died to destroy Satan. Is there a passage in the Holy Bible that declares Satan will become mortal to be put to death? Yes, there most certainly is–Isaiah 14:16. We will look at that shortly. But first, let us examine some scriptures regarding spirits and death.

Begin with Romans 16:20: "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." The word "bruise" is *Strong's* #G4937, meaning "to crush completely, to shatter, to break in pieces." That sounds like death, but doesn't Luke say that angels do not die? Aren't they immortal spirit creatures that never grow old, become ill, or die?

But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world [the World Tomorrow], and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any *more: for they are equal unto the angels*; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection (Lk 20:35-36).

This verse certainly gives evidence that angels can never die. But in our Bible studies, we must put *all* the scriptures about a particular subject together to reach the true meaning (Isa 28:10,13). So, let's see the simple answer which Mark presents:

And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God? For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels *which are in heaven* (Mk 12:24-25).

The righteous angels of heaven have not sinned and will live forever. The sons of God born into the family of God will receive the same gift of eternal life that the righteous angels possess. The evil angels (demons), who have grievously sinned, will die, just as the incorrigibly wicked of humanity will die, in the lake of fire. God's Word declares: "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom 6:23)!

### Satan's Fate

Zechariah 13:2 asserts that God will rid the land of unclean spirits. In Matthew 8:29, evil spirits cry out to Jesus, "Are you come to torment us before the time?" What form of torment were they speaking of? How will God punish or torment Satan and the demons? What penalty do you give a being whose vanity is so boundless, his ego so incredible, that he could look his Creator in the eye and ask Him to fall down and worship him, as recorded in Matthew 4:9.

Torment to a being such as this could only be through humiliation. Satan's shame only begins in Revelation 20:10:

And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone ...and will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

We have read the plain scriptures that the fate of wicked, unrepentant humans is the lake of fire "prepared for the devil and his angels" (Mat 25:41). Christ tells us the lake of fire is Gehenna fire or hellfire (the Valley of the Son of Hinnom) "where their worm dies not and the fire is not quenched" (Mk 9:45-46).

Satan will deceive Gog, Magog, and the nations in the four quarters of the earth. Then God will destroy this mass of humanity that comes to fight against their Creator. He will obliterate them with the sword, pestilence, overflowing rain, huge hailstones, fire, and brimstone (Eze 38:21-22). Thousands will die in the geographic location of the Valley of Hinnom, and the fire and brimstone will ignite and consume the fallen bodies that litter the area. Satan and the demons will be cast into the raging fire as Jesus Christ directs. These evil creatures will still be spirits, but they will be visible to all, completely subdued and confined in this Hell.

After the Second Resurrection, there will be millions of sons of God, Israelites, who qualified during the Millennium. They will compel all flesh from every place on Earth to come to Jerusalem to be judged and to observe the activity at the Valley of Hinnom. Everyone will behold this ghastly sight! Everyone will see the conquered Satan and his demons among the maggots and fire of their prison, among the dead for whose death they are responsible. For Satan and the demons, this humiliation will be torture.

Isaiah 14:4 directs a taunt at the king of Babylon, who is possessed by Satan. Now read verse 9:

Hell [Sheol, #H7585, the grave, pit] from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.

Now for clarity, read from the NRSV verses 10-21:

All of them speak and say to you; You too have become as weak as we. You have become like us! [The word "like" is Strong's #H4911, mashal, "to liken or to resemble." Satan appears here as a human being, or mortal, just as we are. He must still be spirit, but he appears as a man wallowing around in the filth.] Your pomp has been brought down to Sheol [#H7585], and the sound of your harps; maggots are the bed beneath you, and worms are your covering. How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of the dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God, I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the heights of Zaphon; I will make myself like the Most High. But you are brought down to Sheol, to the depths of the Pit. Those who see you will stare at you, and ponder over you: Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, who made the world like a desert and overthrew its cities, who would not let his prisoners go home? All the kings of the nations lie in glory, each in his own tomb; but you are cast out away from your grave [#H6913, a sepulchre, grave. Zodhiates defines it as "a burial place, an open pit." In Satan's case, perhaps this is the bottomless pit where he will spend 1000 years.] like loathsome carrion, clothed with the dead, like a corpse trampled underfoot. You will not be joined with them in burial, because you have destroyed your land, you have killed your people. May the descendants of evildoers nevermore be named! Prepare slaughter for his sons because of the guilt of their father [See Jn 8:44]. Let them never rise to possess the earth or cover the face of the world with cities.

In the past, we thought one verse meant the human king, and the following verse meant the Devil. But there is nothing to indicate such a difference. We thought the same about Ezekiel 28:12-19. However, we must not interpret God's Word with our reasoning or preconceived ideas. The scriptures tell their own story, and we are to believe God and His Word. Now let's read and understand Ezekiel 28:12-16 just as written:

Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus [Satan possessed this man, as he did the King of Babylon. As we read, it becomes evident that God is speaking about Satan.] and say unto him, thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering . . . The workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee ["Destroy" here is Strong's #H6, to perish, to be made void, destroy.] O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

God's Word gives us the plain truth. It clearly states that Satan, the former anointed cherub, will perish–God will totally destroy him!

Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth *a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth* in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and *never shalt thou be anymore* (vv. 17-19).

You should underline or highlight verses 17-19 in your Bible, which vividly describe Satan's fate. Stripped of his power and glorious appearance, Satan and his demons will be a gazing-stock for all flesh to see, as they are confined to Hell for the duration of the Last Great Day. They will be an example of terror to all who behold them. They will be tormented and humiliated, stared at by the masses of humanity who pass by the lake of fire.

And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another,

and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh (Isa 66:23-24).

However, the Last Great Day will finally come to an end. Just like the unrepentant humans who will perish forever in the flames of the lake of fire, Satan and the demons will come to an end, too. Remember, the wages of sin is death. John 16:11 states: ". . . because the prince of this world is judged [#G2919, condemned, sentenced]." Satan is judged guilty and will be condemned to death. Just as their eternal Creator became material flesh, Satan and the demons will be changed from spirit to flesh (Isa 14:10) and will be put to death–forever!

#### The Beast and the False Prophet

Before concluding this section, we need to clarify more scriptures relating to Satan and the demons. Let's start with Revelation:

And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and they that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone (Rev 19:20).

This verse has led us to believe that the lake of fire created for Satan and the demons is burning when Christ returns for the First Resurrection. But that is not the case. The Beast and the False Prophet suffer their first death in *a* lake of fire, a type of the final lake of fire where they will meet their second death during the Last Great Day.

If the final lake of fire begins burning when Christ returns for the First Resurrection, who will go into it besides the Beast and the False Prophet? The Second Resurrection will not occur until over a thousand years later, and anyone who has earned the final lake of fire will not be cast into it until the Last Great Day.

Revelation 19:21 declares that the armies that fight Christ at His return will die by the sword, and the vultures will consume their flesh. However, it says nothing about these armies going into a lake of fire. Jeremiah says: And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth, even to the other end of the earth: They shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground (Jer 25:33).

Revelation 19:20 tells us what will ultimately happen to the Beast and the False Prophet, but not when. Perhaps this is not even speaking of these two individuals, but rather the evil demons that possess these men (Rev 16:13). Furthermore, where will the demons be imprisoned during the Millennium while Satan is in solitary confinement? Revelation 18:2 gives part of the answer:

And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold [#G5438, the place or condition of being guarded, cage, hold, imprisonment] of every foul spirit and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird (See also 2Pet 2:4 and Jude 6).

During the Millennium, the demons will be in prison where Babylon or Rome once stood-not in a lake of fire. These evil spirits are held there only until the time of their judgment and ultimate doom in the Valley of Gehenna, in the "fire prepared for the Devil and his angels" (Mat 25:41).

#### Day and Night Forever and Ever

How long is forever and ever? The Bible reveals it is a long time, but it is not eternity! Look at Revelation 20:10:

And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are [cast], and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

If Satan is to die, how can he be tormented forever and ever? The combination of words rendered "for ever and ever" is *Strong's* #G1519, till the end, perish, and #G165, age, world. #G165 is translated as "world" in many scriptures, e.g., 2Corinthians 4:4, which states that Satan is "the god of this world."

The statement in Revelation 20:10 means that Satan will be tormented day and night *from age to age*. He will be tormented from the age that he spends in the bottomless pit during the Millennium, to the age he will

spend in the Valley of Hinnom during the Last Great Day. Verse 10 also indicates that Satan will be tormented as long as there is day and night. Now read God's description of the New Jerusalem:

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof . . . And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there (Rev 21:23,25).

There will no longer be "day and night" in the New Jerusalem. The brightness of the Father and Christ will outshine the sun and make it of no effect–and Satan will be gone forever!

### Leviticus 16 and the Scapegoat

In Leviticus 16, God explained how He wanted ancient Israel to keep the feast of Atonement (the fifth holy day of the year):

And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat [representing Satan] and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness . . . and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness (Lev 16:21-22).

In the past, we believed that the live scapegoat set free in the wilderness represented Satan never dying. But we now know that Satan canand will-be put to death. So, what happened to the goat after it was set free? Did it live for one day or ten years? Did it fall into a pit, or did wild animals eat it? Was the goat found by another herder and taken home with him? Of course, no one knows. Leviticus 16 is a perfect symbolism of Satan's banishment during the Millennium. As the ceremony was enacted year after year, no one knew the fate of the live goat, just as no one has seen the destiny of Satan-until now!



## **God's Great Harvest**

Everything in Part 2 of this booklet involves the Last Great Day. There is a compelling reason why God is focusing our attention on this very important day. Let's understand why.

First, look at 1Corinthians 15:51-52:

Behold I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep but we all shall 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.

Next, we read Matthew 24:31:

And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

These two verses show us how the firstfruits are to be gathered when Christ returns in His glory. However, we are only the small early harvest. The great harvest occurs later. Why does God need an early harvest? When does the great later harvest take place? Luke 10:2 states:

Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

The firstfruits of the First Resurrection and the Israelites who receive God's Spirit and overcome during the Millennium are the laborers for the great harvest, which takes place during the Last Great Day. Indeed, everything God has been doing on Earth is preparation for the Last Great Day!

The Second Resurrection begins the judgment period that we formerly called "The Great White Throne Judgment." Judgment will be ongoing throughout the Last Great Day. Each person will be taught, trained, watched, and evaluated. Finally, God will bring all to repentance (Rom 2:4; 14:11), and they will receive His Spirit. Most will come to love God and His laws, but some will not. Christ will know when each person has hardened himself to the point that he will not repent. He will not need another special resurrection to put the unrepentant out of their misery, but He will condemn them to the fire at whatever time He knows them to be beyond hope. The lake of fire and its lasting results will be an excellent deterrent to sin!

The tragedy is that those who have misused God's Holy Spirit and contemptuously turned their backs on God's ways during their lifetime will go into the lake of fire at the beginning of the Last Great Day. This presents an even more frightening scenario than a third resurrection. They, too, will be forced to bow before Jesus Christ and then be put out of their misery. And this fire will continue to consume impenitent sinners throughout this judgment period.

God will also know when overcomers have reached their maximum potential and developed their talents to the full. At that point, they will join the God family as Christ changes them to immortal spirit.

The apostle Peter connects the Last Great Day and the 1000-year-day principle to those who lived before the Flood.

Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they will-ingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against *the day of judgment* and perdition of ungodly men. But beloved be not ignorant of this one thing, that *one day is with the Lord as a thousand years*, and a thousand years as one day (2Pet 3:3-8).

From the context, it appears that the Last Great Day will last 1000 years. Why?

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any

should perish, but that all should come to repentance (v. 9).

The billions of people resurrected at the Last Great Day, let me repeat, will be restored with the same mind, personality, and character they died with. Converting these deceived, twisted, satanic personalities into sons of Almighty God will be a fantastic undertaking, possibly not equaled even by the creation of the Universe. It will take time, effort, and energy to accomplish this grand mission. So, does it seem unreasonable for God to give them the same general lifespan that He created man to have in the first place–which those who lived before the flood had?

Again, God is righteous and does not discriminate. Our God is mighty in wisdom, and He works out His plan step-by-step. He will give this enormous multitude of people (the last of all called) every advantage and opportunity to be born into His Kingdom. They will have the time necessary to learn, grow, and overcome. God will evaluate and judge them, just as He always evaluates and judges those He calls. It will be a process of character development for them, as it is for us now. Hopefully, most will be successful, but some will not. Those who are unsuccessful will feed the continually burning fire of the Gehenna Valley. Thus, at the end of the Last Great Day, every human who has ever lived will be either a son of God or ashes.

After the Last Great Day, Satan and all of his wretched demons will be ashes under the feet of the saints (Mal 4:3).

Now read 2Peter 3:12-13:

Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness.

Christ will have prepared all things for the Father to come to Earth. The great harvest will be completed, and billions of sons of God will greet Him as He arrives and takes His place on His throne.

After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb ...And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (Rev 7:9-10,13-14).

However, only a few of that innumerable multitude will have come through the Great Tribulation of Matthew 24:21. So what does this mean?

The Greek word for "great" is *Strong's* #G3173, *megas*, exceedingly, great, high, large, loud. The Greek word for "tribulation" is *Strong's* #G2347, *thlipsisi*, pressure, afflicted [-tion], anguish, burdened, persecution, tribulation, trouble. Now observe the use of these words in several other scriptures:

For then shall be great [3173] tribulation [2347], such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be (Mat 24:21).

For in those days shall be affliction [2347], such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be (Mk 13:19).

Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Chanaan, and great [3173] affliction [2347]: and our fathers found no sustenance (Acts 7:11).

How that in a great [3173] trial of affliction [2347] the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality (2Cor 8:2)

Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great [3173] tribulation [2347], except they repent of their deeds (Rev 2:22).

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation [2347] (Jn 16:33).

Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation [2347] enter into the kingdom of God (Acts 14:22).

Matthew 24:21 and Mark 13:19 are unmistakably referring to the most

horrible time of trouble ever to come upon humankind-the Great Tribulation. However, Acts 7:11 makes it very obvious that the same expression, great tribulation, is used to vividly portray conditions in the patriarch Joseph's day over 35 centuries ago. In the apostle Paul's day, 1900 years ago, the Corinthian Christians were experiencing great tribulation. Also, Revelation 2:22 shows that the condition of great tribulation existed in the Thyatira era approximately five centuries ago. Our Lord was emphatic in His statement in John 16:33 that Christians will have tribulation. Acts 14:22 declares that Christ's disciples enter the Kingdom of God through much tribulation.

Therefore, when we read Revelation 7:14, we see the same plain truth we saw in the scriptures just reviewed. The elder speaking to John is saying (paraphrased), "This innumerable multitude has entered into the Kingdom of God through much trial and affliction." From righteous Abel to the last person qualifying during the Last Great Day, everyone will suffer trial, affliction, tribulation, persecution, and trouble in their efforts to be born into the God family.

Revelation 7:9-17 is a preview of the successful creation of an innumerable multitude of God-beings. After the Last Great Day, when Jesus Christ has made everything ready, God our Father will come to make His abode on Planet Earth.

It is during the Last Great Day that the King of Kings and Lord of Lords shall proclaim, on behalf of God Almighty:

Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed (Isa 45:22-24).

Every knee will bow, and every person who has ever lived will have his or her opportunity to become God—as God is God. Then the Father and the Son will have reached the goal of their magnificent plan of salvation for humanity. Or as the apostle Paul writes:

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1Cor 15:53-57).

What a wonderful, vital part the Last Great Day plays in the plan of God! It pictures God's tremendous love and mercy and the fulfillment of His will–His determination to bring billions of sons into His family, the successful completion of the creation of billions of God-beings!

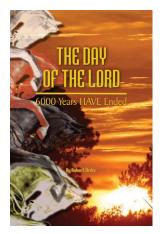
The Last Great Day truly is . . . a great day!

And beyond the Last Great Day comes our part in the completion of the wondrous Universe!

#### Conclusion

In this booklet, you have read astounding new truths taken directly from the Word of God. You will probably need to go back and re-read this presentation all the way through, and you need to study diligently every scripture reference. We have examined many of the deep things of God. Be sure you understand all we have stated. Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong urged us: "Don't believe any man, believe your Bible." When you prove what is written here, realize that new truth comes from Jesus Christ–and He has only one true Church!

## Additional Reading



#### The Day of the Lord 6000 Years Have Ended!

Where are we in God's master plan? Six thousand years have ended! What is the Day of the Lord? Are you sure you know? Are the Day of the Lord and the Day of the Lord's Wrath the same occurrence?

The Day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, according to 1Thessalonians 5:2 and 2Peter 3:10. Christ says he will come as a thief-unexpectedly (Rev 3:3 and Lk 12:39-40). However, we read in Revelation 1:7, "Behold, he comes with clouds and every eye shall see him." How do you reconcile these scriptures? Can it be that the Day of the Lord and the Day of the Lord's Wrath are not the

same event?

Yes! The Day of the Lord's Wrath is only one year within the Day of the Lord. The Day of the Lord has come "as a thief in the night," and you did not know it. What happens now?

You can read all about it in our free booklet, The Day of the Lord.

#### Holding Fast...God's Way!

Only a few of the nearly 100,000 former members of the Worldwide Church of God have remained faithful to the doctrines taught by Mr. Armstrong. Others hold fast to the end-time Elijah's teachings, but they refuse to grow in new truth.

Did Mr. Armstrong restore all things? Can new truth be received at this present time?

2Peter 3:18 tells us to "grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Growth in the knowledge of Christ is new truth. So, can you grow in the knowledge of Christ and still hold fast to what Herbert Armstrong taught 35 years ago? You canif you are holding fast God's way! Holding Fast... GOD'S WAY! The Feast of Trumpets OR The Day of Pentecost... <u>WHICH?</u>

#### The Feast of Trumpets or Pentecost—Which?

God's feast days reveal His plan of salvation. Mr. Herbert Armstrong kept these holy days for years without understanding their entire meaning. Nevertheless, as he continued to "grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ," he understood more and more of God's overall master plan. As God's faithful people continue to seek growth and knowledge of Christ, new truth is given for anyone with the Spirit of God to see that this tiny Church is God's true Church.

New truth answers questions such as the following:

1. Does the First Resurrection occur on the Feast of Trumpets or the Day of Pentecost?

2. Where and when does the marriage of the Lamb take place?

3. Do the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years of the Church's protection in the place of safety, the 42-month rule of the Beast power, and the 1260-day ministry of the two witnesses all begin and end simultaneously?

God gives this new truth for our inspiration and encouragement, but more importantly, to show that Christ is here in the Church of God's Faithful. Request our free booklet, The Feast of Trumpets or Pentecost–Which?

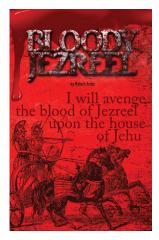
#### **Bloody Jezreel**

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In his Hosea booklet, Gerald Flurry states on page 5, "We are typed by Jezreel. The same message taught in the PCG, or Jezreel, today is going to fill the earth."

Mr. Flurry says the book of Hosea is an end-time book, and that is true. But, if the PCG is Jezreel, what is the meaning of the following declaration?

And the Lord said unto him, Call his name Jezreel . . . and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu (Hos 1:4).



Think about what this is saying-"the blood of Jezreel"-Jezreel's blood!

If you are a member of the PCG, and the PCG is Jezreel, and these scriptures are for the end-time, isn't this speaking about your blood? Shouldn't this give you an uneasy feeling? And who is Jehu? You very much need to read the explanation of this in our free booklet, *Bloody Jezreel*. It is a matter of life and death!



#### Elijah's Message to the Philadelphia Church of God

Herbert W. Armstrong was the end-time Elijah and a type of Zerubbabel. What was finished at Mr. Armstrong's death? When Mr. Armstrong died, did the sixth candlestick cease to burn? No, it continued to glow brightly in the inner court. However, the WCG leaders began to dismantle God's doctrines and drifted into the outer court (Rev 11:2) (the Synagogue of Satan, Rev 3:9). Only those faithful few of the sixth candlestick stayed with Christ in the inner court (Eze 43:5; Rev 11:1-2). After four years of the systematic destruction of the WCG, God ignited the seventh candlestick and gave it to Gerald Flurry. The

Laodicean work of God began. The sixth and seventh candlesticks worked together in the Philadelphia Church of God, warning the outer court to return to the truth. Now, true to the prophetic description of the Laodicean Church, that candlestick/ Church has become lukewarm to the Law of God (Rev 3:15; Mat 5:19). The faithful of the Church of God, the sixth candlestick, have had to separate from the Laodicean seventh candlestick. Our free booklet explains this separation and what you must do to come out of the Laodicean Church. Write for your free copy.

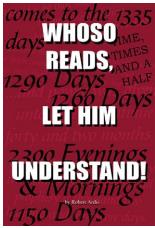
#### Whoso Reads, Let Him Understand!

#### ~~~~~~~~~~~

We live in a violent world. Wars and rumors of wars everywhere are the news of the day. International terrorism plagues the earth. Yet life goes on, especially here in the western world– eating, drinking, living it up, marrying, starting families, just as it was in the days of Noah.

But how long can life continue as usual? Where are we in Bible prophecy? Can we know?

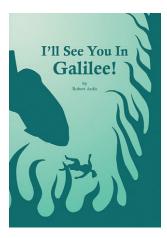
Matthew 24:15 states, "When you therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso reads, let him understand)."



Today, many understand that the prophecy of the man of sin sitting in the Temple of God (2Thes 2:3-4) has been fulfilled. But do you realize that "the abomination . . . in the holy place" has also been fulfilled? Do you know what happens next in prophecy? Do you understand the prophecies of 1335, 1290, and 1260 days?

These are the urgent subjects of this booklet.

Please write for your copy, read it carefully, and understand.



#### I'll See You in Galilee

#### 

Why was it necessary for the prophet Jonah to remain three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish? Did it require 72 hours for him to repent of refusing to follow God's instructions? Couldn't he have repented after one day, or one hour, or one minute? Why three days and three nights?

What about Jesus' resurrection from the dead? Didn't He declare He would be in His grave three days and three nights, just as Jonah was in the fish's belly three days and three nights (Mat 12:40)? But most "Christians" believe He was in the grave only one day and two nights, from Good Friday to Easter Sunday.

What do you believe? And why do you believe it?

Why would our Lord claim He would be entombed three days and three nights if it were not true? What is the significance of three days and three nights? Neither the Church of God nor the world has understood that world history has been seriously altered for not knowing the real meaning of why three days and three nights were necessary. In this booklet, you will read the fantastic story and the all-important lesson of paying close attention to the words of God, as revealed in answer to the question: Why three days and three nights?

#### The Little Book... Unveiled at Last!

**~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~** 

Malachi's Message to the Church of God Today is claimed by its author, Gerald Flurry, to be the Little Book of Revelation 10! He also claims that the Mighty Angel who has the Little Book open in His hand and the 7th Angel (Laodicea) of verse 7, are the same Being. However, by a careful reading of this section of scripture it is evident that Mr. Flurry's claim is not true!

The Mighty Angel is easily identified by the Holy Scriptures, not by erroneous ideas of a man. The days of the 7th Angel (Laodicea) and the sounding of the Angel are also clearly revealed in light of recent history. *Malachi's* 



Message is just that! It is the vitally necessary message of the book of Malachi, but has NOTHING to do with the LITTLE BOOK of Revelation 10. Mr. Flurry has no understanding of the 7 Thunders of Revelation 10. Unaware of the true significance of these thunders, he minimizes their meanings with his own interpretations. His "seven thunders" are actually blunders away from the TRUTH of God!

When Malachi's Message was first written in 1989, it was not the TIME for the LITTLE BOOK to be UNVEILED, BUT IT IS NOW! Request your free booklet and prove these statements for yourself.

All of our literature is available at our website:

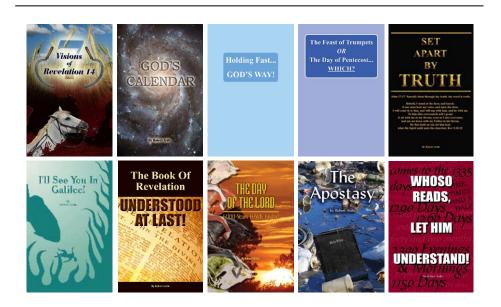
www.setapartbytruth.org

Or you may write or call for our free booklets:

Church of God's Faithful 136 Woodland Drive Harleyville, SC 29448

843-462-7977

Please write or call with any questions you might have. We are here to help.



The door is open and the bridegroom has come. Go ye out to meet Him. Rev. 3: 7-12 & Matt. 25: 1-13

The Midnight



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# "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day..." (Rev. 1:10)

Who's day? The day belonging to Who? Paul was obviously taken in Spirit to behold an increadible vision. But when does the vision take place?

# IN THE DAY OF THE LORD!

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Yes! All the miratelous visions including: the ride of the four horsemen, the heavenly signs, the greatest time of trouble ever to befall mankind, the resurection, the thousand year rule of Christ and the Saints, the last great day, the coming of God the Father to set up Earth as the headquarters of the universe, and beyond all occur within The Day of the Lord!

Write for or download our booklet THE DAY OF THE LORD, 6000 years HAVE ended to find out more, but don't delay. We are almost 18 years into The Day of the Lord and the end of the first 19 year time cycle! It's time to hear His voice!