

E-Herald of the Coming Kingdom

"The time has come, and the Kingdom of God is near.
Change the way you think and act, and believe the Good News."
Mark 1:15 GW

In This Issue:

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The Restoration of Israel
The London Riots
The Coming Economic Collapse
Liberal Dogma
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**DEDICATED TO SPREADING THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD'S COMING
KINGDOM TO BE ESTABLISHED WHEN JESUS RETURNS**

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I PRAISE YOU



**BECAUSE I AM
FEARFULLY**

&

**WONDERFULLY
MADE.**

Psalm 139:14

EDITOR'S NOTE

Co-Editors: Wally Winner - Kent Ross



Violence in the World

The violence that erupted last month in London deserves the fuller report in this issue that came from United Kingdom papers. It struck forcibly as I remembered the gentle times we wandered the streets of London late at night, after the theatre. Vendors still had shops open. There was fish and chips available, one of my favorites, but that was long ago.

Even back then the tube station that brought us back near our hotel, on the last day was featured as a centre for prostitution. And the world proceeded from there to this latest outbreak, all of which is symptomatic of the last days.

Civilization is breaking down. It has only been a veneer for a long time, and we knew that sooner or later things would begin to fall apart. Reading Jesus words, recorded for us in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 certainly predicts this.

Paul reiterated that in the last days “perilous times” would, and his ensuing description in instructions to Timothy, is certainly apropos to the days in which we live.

But we’ve always had violence, the skeptic says, and we have, but saying things haven’t changed since Noah is also mistaken and many, many will not be prepared because they have not watched.

No, not in white robes on a mountain or in a church, but watch, nevertheless. Some months ago, at a Conference, an eminent speaker assured us Christ’s Return couldn’t be imminent. That is dangerous. We certainly don’t know the day or the hour when the Lord will return. Neither did the angels, and even the Son, Himself, didn’t know, but in such a day and hour when we think not, BEHOLD . . .

Year of Evangelism

Which is why we need to declare this a year, of even THE year of Evangelism. In our searching for prophetic signs and issues (certainly themes of this periodical) we dare not lose sight of the coming end of this Age, this present “evil” Age.

It is evil for the prince of this world is still roaming about (however you visualize that) seeking who he may devour. Thousands and millions have found his way, but of His Way, few there be who have found it.

Proclaiming the Gospel is a mandate, not an option. The Kingdom of God is coming, and it is the things of and concerning Jesus Christ that are the only hope for people’s future.

It’s our mandate, even our obligation, but more importantly to join with God in reaching out and bringing others into His family. But the times grow short and darkness seems to be overtaking our world, more so than ever before.

But it is not ours to give up, but to seek strength and opportunity to be faithful in our calling to present the Bible’s message from God, our Father.

Francis Burnett & History

Our 7th Annual Heritage (formerly History) Conference is scheduled this month. One of our featured writers in this issue is Pastor Francis Burnett. He has been sleeping in the dust of the earth for some years, but his faith still resonated through what he left us.

His story, in the wonderful Church of God Biographical Encyclopedia, has him prominently feature, but some of his family will be at the Heritage Conf. to tell more of his story. Others are also featured . . . Pastor E. Milon Hall, Pastor Ed & Lois Graham.

It is well worth your investment to be there and to be challenged by the stories of these people of faith

It is in Ohio, at the North Hills Church of God over September 22-24, 2011. Obviously, it is unlikely that some of you can actually come, but the program will be live on “cogcast” (<http://www.cogcast.org>). Look it up and watch, if you can’t come.

Buzzard

Anthony Buzzard, a colleague of mine at Oregon Bible College and then Atlanta Bible College, has been used mightily by God to challenge many of so-called “orthodoxy,” (which it is not) to think clearly about the doctrines so taken for granted.

Now we present His translation of John, chapters 1-5, which make so clear what John originally wrote, and whose true meaning has been distorted through the centuries. Let us know what you think of this.



The History Committee is looking for issues of The Restitution 1874-1925. This magazine predated The Restitution Herald and was published first in Chicago, then Plymouth, IN, and finally Cleveland, OH. We have most of the issues on microfilm and CD, but the early years from 1874-1890 or so are scattered with many issues missing. The Restitution began publishing in Chicago in 1871 but those issues were lost in the Chicago fire. So any copies from 1871-1874 would be extremely rare and therefore very valued.

Please check all your files for any copies handed down from your parents or grandparents, or stored in your church records and archives that might have early dates on them. Pastors please announce this to your members and ask your isolated or shut-in members. If anything is located please contact Jan Stilson at jstilson21@comcast.net We would like to gather all these lost copies and interfile them in our existing files. We will accept loose copies or bound volumes. We will accept actual copies or jpg scans of them.

Why JESUS MUST COME AGAIN

By Wally Winner



It appears the Arab Spring is going to continue on into the Arab Fall or beyond. This appears to be the birth pangs of unrest against government regimes around the world.

It does not take a philosopher to know something is indeed increasingly and desperately wrong with this old world. What is wrong is sin! It is just that simple; yet that profound. Nor am I speaking of simply slipping a cookie on the sly or swiping fruit from the neighbor's apple tree. It is the sin of humanity from rejecting God; trying in vain to manage a world without Divine direction.

You'll probably be surprised what a lift it will give you to realize that this mad world is not just stumbling on into oblivion, taking you with it, but is moving rapidly toward a grand climax planned by God and promised by Jesus Christ.

Jesus was here once. He plans to come again. He said so. He said so plainly. He said many other things, every one of which has proved true. Not one has failed. He must come to earth the second time to make good His word that He would return.

He was here about thirty-three years. While he was here His presence was little noticed. Men refused to believe His claims. He was rejected, and He was charged with criminality, and executed.

Shortsighted, unbelieving humans thought that this disposed of Him permanently. They were wrong. It did not. He rose from the tomb. He ascended to the heaven.

Since then His importance to humanity has grown with the centuries. Men have seen more clearly what that first coming of His has meant and is still to mean to this world.

It is now admitted that this Being has become the greatest Figure in history. He has wielded greater influence in human affairs than has any other person.

And the greatest news of the immediate hour is that Jesus Christ, the divine Son of the living God, is about to come the second time to earth.

When He was here the first time, He laid the foundation of human salvation. When He comes again, He will carry that divine plan to completion. He will put into effect the eternal principles of His kingdom. He will establish righteousness, justice, equity, and peace in the entire world.

The positive certainty of the second coming of Jesus Christ to this earth rests upon the most substantial authority the world has ever known—the infallible word of Jesus Christ.

There is something altogether unique and startlingly different about the words of Jesus Christ. We are only now beginning to realize the significance of His statement: "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away" (Mark 13:31).

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He was the Teacher sent from God. He spoke with authority. This authority was not of Himself; He spoke as God gave Him utterance. Absolute reliance can be placed on what He said. For twenty centuries His words have been proved true.

The words He spoke were miraculous words; they have lived through all the centuries. They live today.

Ordinarily there is nothing quite as transient and evanescent as words. People use them all the time. People have been using them from the beginning of the world. Millions have talked from childhood to the grave and not a single word they ever said has been remembered. Other millions are talking now, and everything they say is forgotten five minutes after they say it.

But the words Jesus spoke will never pass away. He did not record them. He wrote no books. His speeches were not reported in public journals. But His words have lived. They live today. They live in the records of His apostles. They live in the literature of the ages. They live in the hearts of His people. They live because the power of life is in them.

Jesus claimed that the words He spoke would outlast the world. He claimed that they would judge men at the last day. They will.

His words have demonstrated their truthfulness. They have lasted through the centuries. They will continue to endure while men remain on the earth.

Consequently, the words of Jesus can be relied upon. They are dependable. They constitute the most substantial and absolute authority on earth.

So if Jesus said that He is coming the second time to this earth, that alone settles forever the question of the certainty of His return. He did say just that.

To the unbelieving Pharisees and scribes, just before His betrayal, He declared, "Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matthew 23:39).

In John 14:28 He repeats it, "I go away, and come again unto you."

Here in the words of the greatest authority on earth is a clear-cut, unequivocal declaration and pledge, the meaning of which there is no possibility of mistaking. Jesus Christ Himself said, "I'll come again."

Replying to the question of His disciples as to what should be the sign of His coming and the end of the world (Matthew 24:3), Jesus definitely declared, "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: . . . and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Verse 30).

On the occasion of His trial, when adjured by the high priest to say who He was, He replied, "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matthew 26:64).

In the last chapter of the Bible this same Jesus repeats three times to His servant John this great truth of His second coming. "Behold, I come quickly," and "Behold, I come quickly," and "Surely I come quickly" (Revelation 22:7, 12, 20).



Heaven & Earth
will pass away, but my
WORDS
will never pass away.
Matthew 24:35

Certainly every person who accepts Christ as his Guide and Teacher must have a conviction created in his heart regarding the certainty of the second coming of Christ by this definite testimony of his Master. These things admit of no doubt. Jesus must come again.

Not only did Jesus Christ make these plain, positive statements, giving assurance of His second coming, but during His public ministry He uttered many parables in which He forcefully presented this same great truth.

He spoke the parable of the 10 virgins in Matthew 25:1-13. In this He admonished His people, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" (Verse 13).

He spoke the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30. In this He represented Himself as "a man travelling into a far country." Before going away He delivered His affairs in this world, the work of human salvation, to the stewardship of His servants, giving them special privileges and opportunities to carry forward His word. "After a long time," now near at hand, He will come again and reckon with them all in a final judgment. They will be required to render an account of their stewardship, as a result of which they will receive reward or punishment according to their works.

He spoke the parable of the net and of the tares in Matthew 13:47-50. The teaching here of the coming of the final judgment is connected with His second coming.

He spoke the parable of the forgiven servant in Matthew 18:23-35. This is to receive its fulfillment at the time of the judgment and the return of our Lord.

He spoke the parable of the laborers in the vineyard in Matthew 20:1-16. Here, too, the lesson is regarding the future accounting of the work of the Lord's servants, when "the burden and heat of the day" is finished and the time of the reward comes.

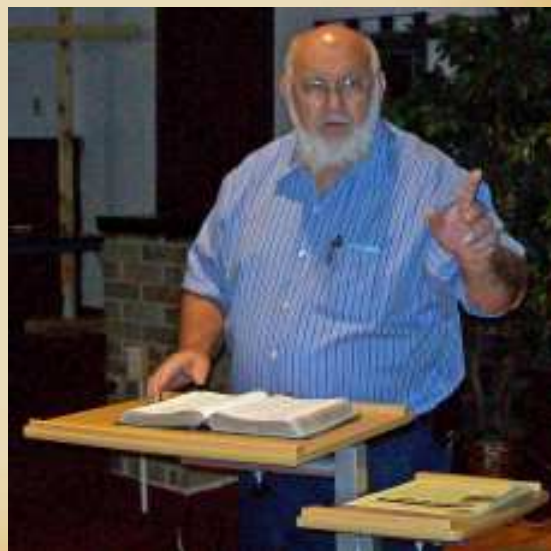
He also spoke the parable of the marriage of the king's son in Matthew 22:2-14. Here the gospel invitation is sent out and not answered. It is sent out again and made light of. It is sent out again with great urgency, and good and bad are gathered in. Wedding garments are furnished, and the guests thus wrapped in Christ's own righteousness are allowed at the marriage supper. Those not having them are cast "into outer darkness."

So in parable after parable Jesus Christ set before the world in His public teaching the truth of the coming of His kingdom, at which time final judgment of the world and ultimate rendering of rewards and punishment are to take place.

Plainly, then, the immutable Word of God teaches the second coming of Jesus Christ. This great event is bound to take place. Nothing can prevent its occurrence.

Unbelief will not hinder it. Fear of it will not keep it from coming. Procrastination will not stop it.

God has promised it, angels have announced it, inspired writers in scores of places have declared it will come to pass. The veracity of God Himself is at stake. There is no alternative. Jesus must come again.



Pastor Wally Winner

THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL

By Francis E. Burnett



**Ministerial Conference
April 28 - May 2, 1975**

**The Life & Ministry of Francis Burnett
will be one of the subjects at the
Heritage Conference**

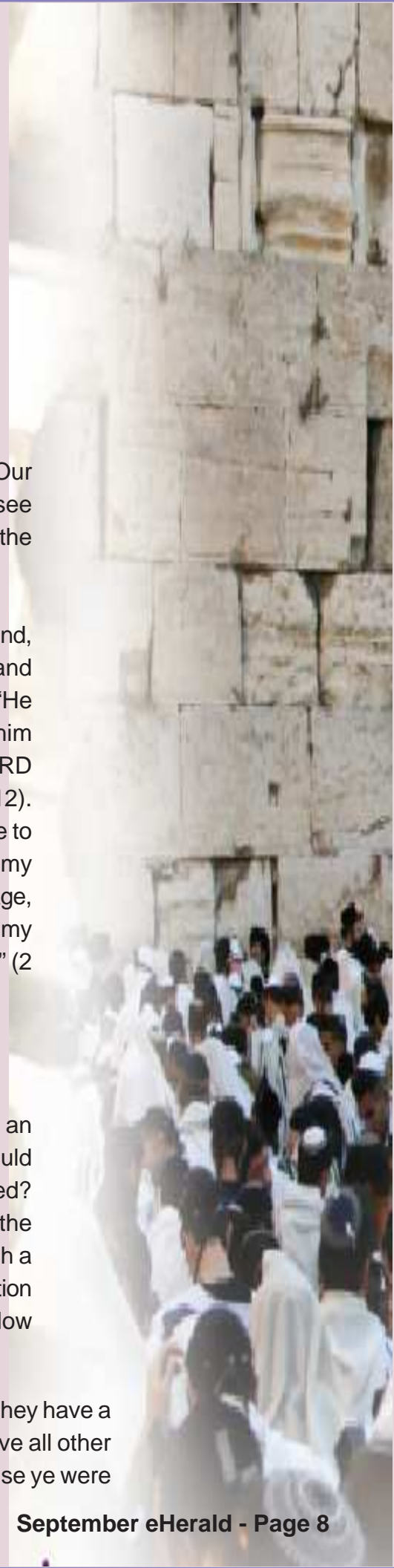
How glorious and wonderful are the times this generation is seeing. Our forefathers, men and women of devotion and zeal for our God, longed to see this “day” in the literal way that we do. They did see it through the “eye” of the Word of God.

The history of the nation of Israel begins, of course, with the father of all mankind, Adam. But for logical reasoning, it begins with Jacob, son of Isaac and grandson of Abraham. Moses described Israel’s origin in these words. “He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye... So the LORD alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him” (Deut. 32:10-12). Not only was this distinct people chosen but also the land where they were to dwell and the city that was to be the capital. “And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers” (Ex. 6:4). “But I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there; and have chosen David to be over my people Israel” (2 Chron. 6:6).

Because The Lord Loved Israel

So often the question is asked, “Why, Israel”? Why did God choose such an insignificant people, a small and weak nation, to be His people? Why should God have chosen a people who are considered by many as hard hearted? The answer to the proceeding questions is a matter of understanding. In the minds of many, the questions do not reveal the truth about Israel. Through a lack of knowledge regarding Israel, a large percentage of the world’s population consider the Israelites to be bitter enemies. And that bitterness would allow that these people should be destroyed.

But the truth is that Israel is a very “special people” in the eyes of God and they have a “special place” in His plan for the future. Why was this nation chosen above all other nations? “The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were



more in number than any people: for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers. . . Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep the commandments to a thousand generations” Deut. 7:7-9). And again, “Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day” (Deut. 10:15). Then add these words, “When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt” (Hosea 11:1).

To show God’s love and relationship with Israel, we must consider just a few of many scripture verses. Israel is called a son and firstborn, “And thou shalt say unto Pharoah, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn” (Ex. 4:22). God not only states that He their father, “for I am a father to Israel, and Ephriam is my firstborn” (Jer. 31:9b) but also likens Himself to a mother over Israel, “Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee” (Isa. 49:15). The depth of God’s love for this distinct and separate nation is found in these words, “Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands: thy walls are continually before me” (Isa. 49:16).

A Chosen People

One cannot study and write about Israel without reviewing the lives of some great men who were the forefathers and patriarchs. The Apostle Paul referred to them in a message in this manner. “The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought them out of it” (Acts 13:17). For practical study, the account begins with Abraham. Stephen preached, “Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him. Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee” (Acts 7:2, 3). Genesis 12:1-3, 13:14-17, 15:18-21 and 17:1-8 give many details of the manner in which Abraham was called, the purpose for which he was called and the covenant. These important associations which Abraham had with God revealed to him certain promises: 1) a nation from him, 2) his name to be great, 3) all people to be blessed or cursed depending on the treatment given to Abraham and his seed, 4) to be given land and the boundaries were described, 5) to be father of many nations, 6) kings to be from his lineage, 7) the covenant, which includes all these promises, to be everlasting.

This covenant, with its many parts, was reviewed with Isaac (Gen. 26:3-5) and with Jacob (Gen. 28:13-15). One more promise was added when God spoke to Jacob in the dream, “for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of” (Gen. 28:15b). Israel was to be righteous. “And thou shalt do that which is

right and good in the sight of the LORD: that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers” (Deut. 6:18). “And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us” (Deut. 6:25). They were to be a separated people. “I am the LORD your God, which have separated you from other people”...”And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine” (Lev. 20:24b, 26).

Also consider this, “For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth” (Deut. 7:6). A distinctive word, “special”, was used in the passage just quoted. The meaning of that word is to be compared to something like a treasure which would be closely guarded. The Apostle Paul gave recognition to that specialness in these words. “Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is overall. God blessed for ever. Amen” (Rom. 9:4, 5), Yes, Israel, truly was chosen of God as Isaiah plainly stated. “Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen: Thus saith the LORD that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen” (Isa. 44:1, 2).

A Scattered Sheep

The above sub-head is taken from the writing of Jeremiah. “Israel is scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones” (Jer. 50:17). While Moses was still in command of this peculiar and special nation, God warned that disobedience would result in It being scattered. “And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste” (Lev. 26:33). Very meaningful and vivid are the words of Moses in Deuteronomy. “When thou shalt beget children, and children’s children . . . and shall corrupt yourselves. . . and shall do evil in the sight of the LORD thy God, to provoke him to anger: I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day. . . And the LORD shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the LORD shall lead you” (Deut. 4:25-27). “And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone” (Deut. 28:64). The scattering is to be quite thorough as written in Jeremiah 18:17, “I will scatter them as with an east wind before the enemy; I will shew them the back, and not the face, in the day of their calamity...”

The “punishment is more than I can bear” are words that have been commonly used by man. One cannot help but wonder whether or not the Israelites may have expressed similar words several times in the past. In Deuteronomy 28:15-68, there are types of punishment listed. In reference to the sorrow from punishment, previously discussed, we read, “And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life: In the morning thou shalt say. Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see” (Deut. 28:66, 67). Several of the forms of punishment were to be: pestilence, consumption, fever, drought, stealing of possessions, servants to other nations and more. The severity of God’s displeasure is found in this: “Thou hast forsaken me, saith the LORD, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; I am weary with repenting. And I will fan them with a fan in the gates of the land; I will bereave them of children, I will destroy my people, since they return not from their ways” (Jer. 15:6, 7). In fact, Israel’s punishment was to be “double”. But the nation was promised never to be completely destroyed as is revealed in this message. “Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD: for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee: but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished” (Jer. 46:28).

A New Covenant

As man, through the promises made in Jesus Christ, has had hope since the beginning of time (Gen. 3:15); so Israel has had promise of redemption and restoration since its beginning. The promise in the covenant with Abraham was positive. It was to be fulfilled. Nothing can change God’s decrees. Therefore, they will come to pass. In Leviticus 26, a chapter which depicts God’s punishment for disobedience, we find that it ends with “hope” and “promise.” “Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember, and I will remember the land...And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God. But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors...that I might be their God: I am the LORD” (Lev. 26:42-45).

So God will “remember” and will again turn His attention toward the people chosen “because he loved them”. These words stress the reason for Israel’s unwavering faith in God’s promises. “Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid” (Jer. 30:10). And again, “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 travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither. . . For the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he” (Jer. 31:8, 11).

A new covenant is to be made with Israel. “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. . . But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith 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. . . for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” (Jer. 31:31-34). The new covenant that God will establish with Israel in the future time is to be everlasting. This word in the Hebrew means: to veil from sight.

This indicates sight not seeable or that which is beyond—such as into eternity. “Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David” (Isa., 55:3), “And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me” (Jer. 32:40). OH what a glorious time as revealed in the following promise. “Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore” (Ezek. 37:26). The outstanding fact which is so valuable in regard to these scriptures and all of God’s promises is that God cannot change Himself or what He has said. “My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips” (Psa. 89:34). “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James 1:17).

With Great Mercies

God’s concern for Israel is expressed in these words of Isaiah. “For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee” (Isa. 54:7). Israel, the descendants of Jacob, is to be gathered back and fully restored as a nation. In fact, it will be done in splendor. Yes! God is determined to bring back Israel from all the nations where they have been scattered. “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 doth his flock. For the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he” (Jer. 31:10, 11). A beautiful picture of God’s love and intent was given to Moses. “And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shall obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and

will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: and the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live” (Deut. 30:2-6). Israel is to be brought back to the land promised that nation through the forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. “For in mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel saith the LORD God, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the firstfruits of your oblations, with all your holy things. I will accept you with your sweet savor, when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen. And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have wrought with you for my name’s sake, not according to your wicked ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the LORD God” (Ezek. 20:40-44). We also see the change that is to take place in all Israelites who are redeemed. The message given to Ezekiel is quite touching. “For thus saith the LORD God; Behold, I even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers and in all the inhabited places of the country . . . I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the LORD God” (Ezek. 34:11-15).

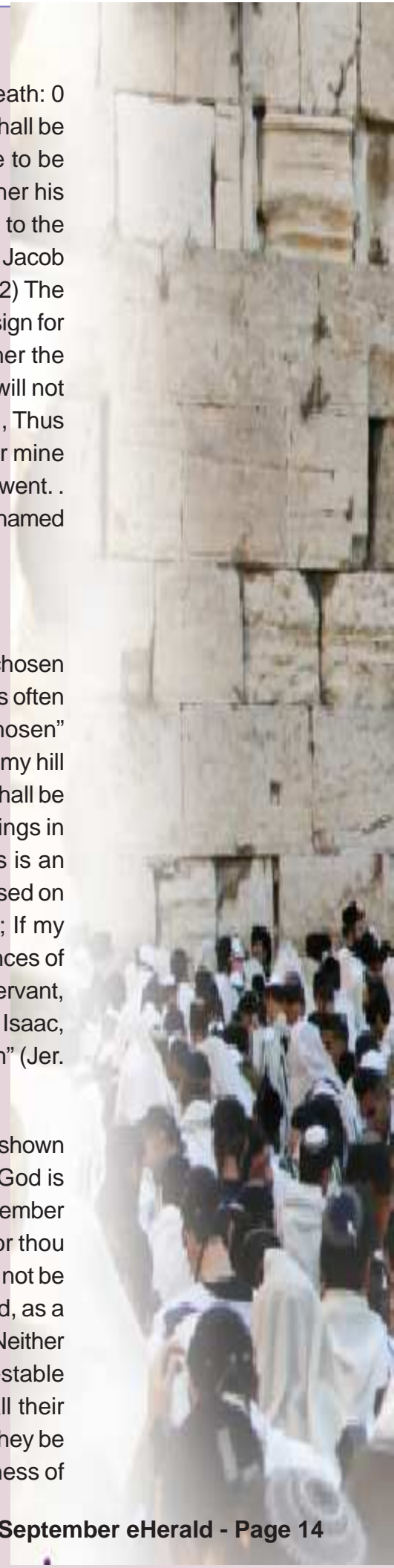
One of the significant teachings of the Bible is certainly to be fulfilled in the restoration of Israel. It is that of the resurrection. The faithful of God have always believed in being raised from the dead. It is not just the Israelite who are living when Jesus returns that are to be regathered. It is made plain in these scriptures. “Therefore prophesy and say unto them. Thus saith the LORD God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves. And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD” (Ezek. 37:12-14). Isaiah was very confident in his knowledge of being raised. “Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead” (Isa. 26:19). Even to the “unwise” and wayward Ephraim, who represented the separated 10 tribes, resurrection was promised. “I

will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes” (Hosea 13:14). When Jesus comes, the graves are to be opened and “all” shall “hear his voice” (John 5:28). He is to “gather together his elect from the four winds” (Matt. 24:31b). The “elect” is generally applied to the Church and only the Church. But God called Israel “elect”—His “elect”. “For Jacob my servant’s sake, and Israel mine elect” (Isa. 45:4). (See also Isa. 65:9, 22) The regathering of Israel will be a spectacular event. “And he 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” (Isa. 11:12). Yet, it will not be done because of Israel’s deeds. “Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the LORD God; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name’s sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. . . . Not for your sakes do I this, saith the LORD God, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel” (Ezek. 36:22, 32).

Showers of Blessings

Israel’s restoration is so fantastic according to the Scriptures that the best chosen words will surely be inadequate. So, the true Word of God will be inserted as often as possible to describe the “showers of blessings” to come upon that “chosen” nation and all the world. “And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing” (Ezek. 34:26). It would be difficult to place the blessings in an order according to importance. Yet, one of the very outstanding facts is an assurance of “eternal” existence. God declared Israel’s existence to be based on the continuance of day, night, heaven and earth. “Thus saith the LORD; If my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; Then will I cast away the seed of Jacob, and David my servant, so that I will not take any of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them” (Jer. 33:25, 26). (Compare the same promise in Jer. 31:35-37.)

Another great blessing is the forgiveness of their sin. Previously, it has been shown that Israel was to suffer “double” punishment because of disobedience. God is going to forgive all their wrongs. “For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” (Jer. 31:34b). “Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee” (Isa. 44:21, 22). “Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God” (Ezek. 37:23). Because of the forgiveness of

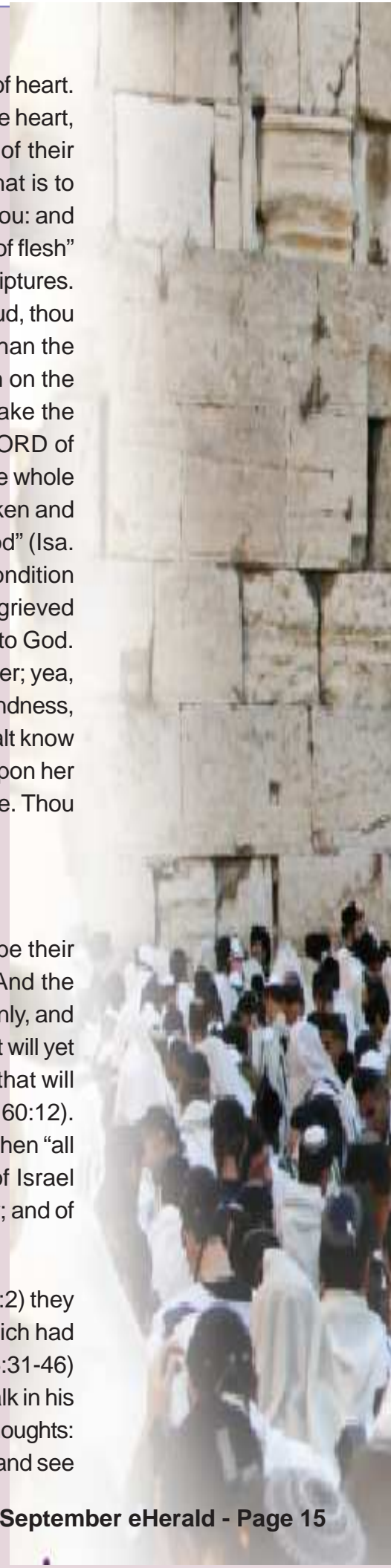


sin and transgression, this much loved nation will have a complete change of heart. “And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them” (Jer. 32:38, 39). Ezekiel shows the drastic change that is to transpire. “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” (Ezek. 36:26). The reunion of God and Israel is gloriously pictured in the Scriptures. “Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD. . . For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. . . For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called. For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God” (Isa. 54: 1-6), Note the descriptive words in this passage denoting Israel’s condition before restoration: desolate, ashamed, confounded, reproach, forsaken, grieved and refused. Yes, Israel is to be treated as a new bride in the great return to God. Hosea gives special emphasis to this. “And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the LORD... And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people. Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God” (Hosea 2:19-23).

All Nations to Bow

While Moses was leading Israel, God told them through him what could be their future by faithfulness and obedience. In Deuteronomy 28:13 we read, “And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath.” This was not fulfilled because of disobedience. It will yet come to pass as is foretold in this passage. “For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted” (Isa. 60:12). It will be a day of learning, teaching and of praising God. It will be the time when “all families of the earth: v/ill truly be blessed. Jesus Christ will be the king of Israel (Jacob) as Luke wrote, “And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end” (Luke 1:33).

When the nations “shall come...to the house of the God of Jacob” (Micah 4:2) they will receive blessings unmeasurable—blessings from Jesus and Israel which had been promised through Abraham. The nations that are left (see Matthew 25:31-46) will want to learn about God, “and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths...” (Isa. 2:3b). And they will be taught, “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



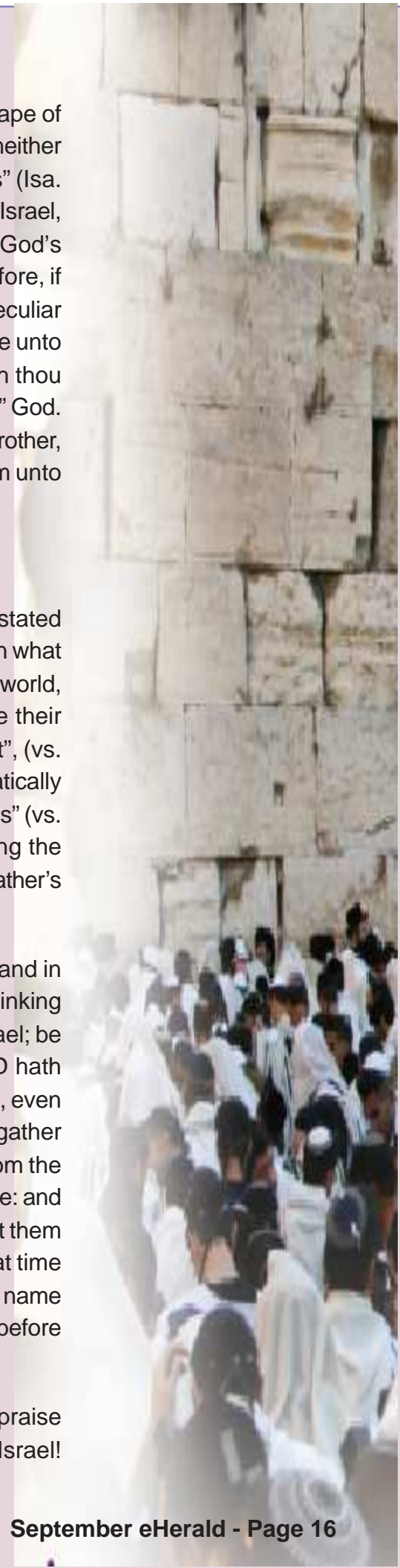
my glory. And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations. . . , to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles” (Isa. 66:18, 19). Take note that “those that escape”, understood to be redeemed Israel, are to “declare my glory among the Gentiles...” This is the fulfillment of God’s purpose for them from the beginning as these words indicate. “now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel” (Ex. 19:5, 6). Every man is to “know” God. “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, saith the LORD” (Jer. 31:34a).

Beloved For The Father

Chapter eleven of Romans was written in behalf of Israel. Paul definitely stated that God had not “cast away his people” (vs. 1). In fact, Paul was positive in what was going to be done for Israel. “Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness” (vs.. 12). He showed that Israel’s punishment, “blindness in part”, (vs. 25) will end, when “the fulness of the Gentiles be come in” (vs. 25). Emphatically stated, “For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins” (vs. 27) gives no doubt or misunderstanding. Then we read, “but as touching the election, (meaning to be selected or chosen out of) they are beloved for the father’s sake” (vs. 28).

Volumes could be written on this nation and its future place before God and in His Kingdom. May this message from Zephaniah stir our emotions and thinking concerning God’s “chosen”, Israel. “Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy; the king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee; thou shalt not see evil any more. .. I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it was a burden. Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee: and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out: and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame. At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD” (Zeph. 3:14-20)

What greater tribute could be given than to “make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth”!! Amen! and Amen! Praise to the God of Israel!



Peter Hitchens writes:

Police Water Cannon and Plastic Bullets? After 50 Years of the Most Lavish Welfare State on Earth? What an Abject Failure

**From the London Daily Times Online
August 14, 2011 12:39 AM**



Bitter laughter is my main response to the events of the past week. You are surprised by what has happened? Why? I have been saying for years that it was coming, and why it was coming, and what could be done to stop it.

I have said it in books, in articles, over lunch and dinner tables with politicians whose lips curled with lofty contempt.

So yes, I am deeply sorry for the innocent and gentle people who have lost lives, homes, businesses and security. Heaven knows I have argued for years for the measures that might have saved them.

But I am not really very sorry for the elite liberal Londoners who have suddenly discovered what millions of others have lived with for decades. The mass criminality in the big cities is merely a speeded-up and concentrated version of life on most large estates – fear, intimidation, cruelty, injustice, savagery towards the vulnerable and the different, a cold sneer turned towards any plea for pity, the awful realisation that when you call for help from the authorities, none will come.

Just look and see how many shops are protected with steel shutters, how many homes have bars on their windows. This is not new.

As the polluted flood (it is not a tide; it will not go back down again) of spite, greed and violence washes on to their very doorsteps, well-off and influential Left-wingers at last meet the filthy thing they have created, and which they ignored when it did not affect them personally.



No doubt they will find ways to save themselves. But they will not save the country. Because even now they will not admit that all their ideas are wrong, and that the policies of the past 50 years – the policies they love – have been a terrible mistake. I have heard them in the past few days clinging to their old excuses of non-existent ‘poverty’ and ‘exclusion’.

Take our Prime Minister, who is once again defrauding far too many people. He uses his expensive voice, his expensive clothes, his well-learned tone of public-school command, to give the impression of being an effective and decisive person. But it is all false. He has no real idea of what to do. He thinks the actual solutions to the problem are ‘fascist’. Deep down, he still wants to ‘understand’ the hoodies.

Say to him that naughty children should be smacked at home and caned in school, that the police (and responsible adults) should be free to wallop louts and vandals caught in the act, that the police should return to preventive foot patrols, that prisons should be austere places of hard work, plain food and discipline without TV sets or semi-licit drugs, and that wrongdoers should be sent to them when they first take to crime, not when they are already habitual crooks, and he will throw up his well-tailored arms in horror at your barbarity.

Say to him that divorce should be made very difficult and that the state should be energetically in favour of stable, married families with fathers (and cease forthwith to subsidise families without fathers) and he will smirk patronisingly and regard you as a pitiable lunatic.

Say to him that mass immigration should be stopped and reversed, and that those who refuse any of the huge number of jobs which are then available should be denied benefits of any kind, and he will gibber in shock.

Yet he is ready to authorise the use of water cannon and plastic bullets on our streets (quite useless, as it happens, against this sort of outbreak) as if we were a Third World despotism.

Water cannon and plastic bullets indeed. What an utter admission of failure, that after 50 years of the most lavish welfare state in the solar system, you cannot govern your country without soaking the citizenry in cold water and bombarding them with missiles from a safe distance. Except, of course, that it is because of the welfare system that this is so.

Here is an example of how little he knows about Britain. He says that the criminals of August will face the ‘full force of the law’. What ‘force’?

The great majority of the looters, smashers, burners and muggers have not been arrested and never will be. Our long-enfeebled police were so useless at the start that thousands of crimes were committed with total impunity.

Now we know why they don't call themselves 'police forces' any more. But they aren't 'services' either, for they certainly don't serve us or do what we want them to do, preferring to arrest us for defending ourselves. The criminals, who are cunning without being intelligent, all know this. They will wait for the next chance.

The loping, smirking, shuffling creeps who eventually appeared before the courts were the ultimate losers – the ones who came late to the looting and who were too slow or too stupid to run before they were put in the bag.

And what courts they are. In the one I sat in last week, self-confessed thieves are courteously addressed by magistrates and clerks as 'mister' and asked politely to stand up or 'accompany the officers' back to the cells or – more often – out into the street on bail. In the part of the dock reserved for those already free on bail, nobody has bothered to clean up the scribbled and disrespectful graffiti.

Why should anyone respect or fear this chamber of indifference? The wall-hangings behind the magistrates are scruffy and scratched. There is no sense of awe or determination or of much purpose. There is only a strong sense of going through the motions for the sake of appearances.

Nobody is directly punished for what he has done. Excuses must first be sought, and indulgence arranged where there should be cold rage. There will be 'social inquiry reports' and 'youth offender teams' who bustle smilingly in and out ready to start work on yet another 'client'.

All this piffle enshrines the official (and hopelessly wrong) view that crime is caused by circumstances and background, not by unleashed human evil. It is precisely because of this windy falsehood that the cells are crammed with young men who broke the law because they felt like it.

Hulking louts – black and white, for this was an equal-opportunity crimewave – are accompanied before the bench by alleged 'parents' who are obviously afraid of their broods. Nothing is said or done to express official disapproval of crime. The accused are treated more like patients than like wrongdoers.

Many in this rogues' parade are still trying to qualify for prison, but are only, as it were, at the GCSE stage. They have sheaves of previous convictions, no doubt a tiny sample of their many acts of spite, selfishness and cruelty.

You can bet their neighbours hate and fear them. Some are on bail for other offences, a state of affairs so common that it is almost funny. At least one is subject to a 'suspended' prison sentence, one of the many fake penalties handed down by the courts to fool the public into thinking that something significant happens to criminals.

They have all learned what most British politicians somehow cannot grasp – that the more encounters you have with our justice system, the less you fear it. A few 'exemplary' sentences – none of which will be served in full, or anything near it – will only help to spread the word that arson, robbery, violence, spite and selfishness are not punished here any more. Indeed these are the things we are now famous for around a world that once respected us.

And that is why we have many more nasty surprises waiting for us, here in The Country Formerly Known as Great Britain.

The Coming Economic Collapse

Reprinted from: <http://theeconomiccollapseblog.com/archives/20-signs-that-the-world-could-be-headed-for-an-economic-apocalypse-in-2012>



If you thought that 2011 was a bad year for the world economy, just wait until you see what happens in 2012. The U.S. and Europe are both dealing with unprecedented debt problems, the financial markets are flailing about wildly, austerity programs are being implemented all over the globe, prices on basics such as food are soaring and a lot of consumers are flat out scared right now. Many analysts now fear that a “perfect storm” could be brewing and that we could actually be headed for an economic apocalypse in 2012. Hopefully that will not happen. Hopefully our leaders can keep the global economy from completely

falling apart. But right now, things don't look good. After a period of relative stability, things are starting to become unglued once again. The next major financial panic could literally happen at any time. Sadly, if we do see an economic apocalypse in 2012, it won't be the wealthy that suffer the most. It will be the poor, the unemployed, the homeless and the hungry that feel the most pain.

The following are 20 signs that we could be headed for an economic apocalypse in 2012....

#1 Back in 2008 we saw major rioting around the world due to soaring food prices, and now global food prices are on the rise again. Global food prices in July were 33 percent higher than they were one year ago. Price increases for staples such as maize (up 84 percent), sugar (up 62 percent) and wheat (up 55 percent) are absolutely devastating poverty-stricken communities all over the planet. For example, one expert is warning that 800,000 children living in the Horn of Africa could die during this current famine.

#2 The producer price index in the U.S. has increased at an annual rate of at least 7.0% for the last three months in a row. We are starting to see huge price increases all over the place. For example, Starbucks recently jacked up the price of a bag of coffee by 17 percent. If inflation keeps accelerating like this we could be facing some very serious problems by the time 2012 rolls around.

#3 The U.S. “Misery Index” (unemployment plus inflation) recently hit a 28 year high and many believe that it is going to go much, much higher.

#4 Jared Bernstein, the former chief economist for Vice President Joe Biden, says that the unemployment rate in this country will not go below 8% before the 2012 election. In fact, Bernstein says that even the most optimistic forecast would be for about eight-and-a-half percent.

#5 Working class jobs in the United States continue to disappear at an alarming rate. Back in 1967, 97 percent of men with a high school degree between the ages of 30 and 50 had jobs. Today, that figure is 76 percent.

#6 There are all kinds of indications that U.S. economic growth is about to slow down even further. For example, pre-orders for Christmas toys from China are way down this year.

#7 One recent survey found that 9 out of 10 U.S. workers do not expect their wages to keep up with the rising cost of basics such as food and gasoline over the next year.

#8 U.S. consumer confidence is now at its lowest level in 30 years.

#9 Today, an all-time record 45.8 million Americans are on food stamps. It is almost inconceivable that the largest economy on earth could have so many people dependent on the government for food.

#10 As the economy crumbles, we are also witnessing the fabric of society beginning to come apart. The recent flash mob crimes that we are starting to see all over America are just one example of this.

#11 Some desperate Americans are already stealing anything that they can get their hands on. For example, according to the American Kennel Club, dog thefts are up 32 percent this year.

#12 Small businesses all over the United States are having a really difficult time getting loans right now. Perhaps if the Federal Reserve was not paying banks not to make loans things would be different.

#13 The U.S. national debt is like a giant boulder that our economy must constantly carry around on its back, and it is growing by billions of dollars every single day. Right now the debt of the federal government is \$14,592,242,215,641.90. It has gone up by nearly 4 trillion dollars since Barack Obama took office. S&P has already stripped the U.S. of its AAA credit rating, and more downgrades are certain to come if the U.S. does not get its act together.

#14 Tensions between the United States and China are rising again. A new opinion piece on chinadaily.com is calling for the Chinese government to use its holdings of U.S. debt as a “financial weapon” against the United States if the U.S. follows through with a plan to sell more arms to Taiwan. The U.S. and China are the two biggest economies in the world, so any trouble between them would mean economic trouble for the rest of the globe as well.





#15 Most state and local governments in the U.S. are deep in debt and flat broke. Many of them are slashing jobs at a feverish pace. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, state and local governments have eliminated more than half a million jobs since August 2008. UBS Investment Research is projecting that state and local governments in the U.S. will cut 450,000 more jobs by the end of 2012. How those jobs will be replaced is anyone's guess.

#16 The U.S. dollar continues to get weaker and weaker. This is renewing calls for a new global currency to be created to replace the U.S. dollar as the reserve currency of the world.

#17 The European sovereign debt crisis continues to get worse. Countries like Portugal, Italy and Greece are on the verge of an economic apocalypse. All of the financial problems in Europe are even beginning to affect the core European nations. For example, German industrial production declined by 1.1% in June. There are all kinds of signs that the economy of Europe is slowing down and is heading for a recession. French President Nicolas Sarkozy and German Chancellor Angela Merkel are proposing that a new "economic government" for Europe be set up to oversee this debt crisis, but nothing that the Europeans have tried so far has done much to solve things.

#18 The Federal Reserve is so desperate to bring some sort of stability to financial markets that it has stated that it will likely keep interest rates near zero all the way until mid-2013. The Federal Reserve is operating in "panic mode" almost constantly now and they are almost out of ammunition. So what is going to happen when the real trouble starts?

#19 Central banks around the world certainly seem to be preparing for something. According to the World Gold Council, central banks around the globe purchased more gold during the first half of 2011 than they did all of last year.

#20 Often perception very much influences reality. One recent survey found that 48 percent of Americans believe that it is likely that another great Depression will begin within the next 12 months. If people expect that a depression is coming and they quit spending money that actually increases the chance that an economic downturn will occur.

There is already a tremendous amount of economic pain on the streets of America, but unfortunately it looks like things may get even worse in 2012.

The once great economic machine that was handed down to us by our forefathers is falling to pieces all around us and we are in debt up to our eyeballs. The consequences of our bad economic decisions are hurting some of the most vulnerable members of our society the most.



YEARS OF LIBERAL DOGMA HAVE SPAWNED A GENERATION OF AMORAL, UNEDUCATED, WELFARE DEPENDENT, BRUTALISED YOUNGSTERS

By Max Hastings

Reprinted from the London Daily Mail Online August 10, 2011

A few weeks after the U.S. city of Detroit was ravaged by 1967 race riots in which 43 people died, I was shown around the wrecked areas by a black reporter named Joe Strickland.

He said: 'Don't you believe all that stuff people here are giving media folk about how sorry they are about what happened. When they talk to each other, they say: "It was a great fire, man!"'

I am sure that is what many of the young rioters, black and white, who have burned and looted in England through the past few shocking nights think today.



Hooded looters laden with clothes run from a Manchester shopping centre

It was fun. It made life interesting. It got people to notice them. As a girl looter told a BBC reporter, it showed 'the rich' and the police that 'we can do what we like'.

If you live a normal life of absolute futility, which we can assume most of this week's rioters do, excitement of any kind is welcome. The people who wrecked swathes of property, burned vehicles and terrorised communities have no moral compass to make them susceptible to guilt or shame. Most have no jobs to go to or exams they might pass. They know no family role models, for most live in homes in which the father is unemployed, or from which he has decamped.

They are illiterate and innumerate, beyond maybe some dexterity with computer games and BlackBerries.

They are essentially wild beasts. I use that phrase advisedly, because it seems appropriate to young people bereft of the discipline that might make them employable; of the conscience that distinguishes between right and wrong.

They respond only to instinctive animal impulses — to eat and drink, have sex, seize or destroy the accessible property of others.

Their behaviour on the streets resembled that of the polar bear which attacked a Norwegian tourist camp last week. They were doing what came naturally and, unlike the bear, no one even shot them for it.

A former London police chief spoke a few years ago about the ‘feral children’ on his patch — another way of describing the same reality.

The depressing truth is that at the bottom of our society is a layer of young people with no skills, education, values or aspirations. They do not have what most of us would call ‘lives’: they simply exist.

Nobody has ever dared suggest to them that they need feel any allegiance to anything, least of all Britain or their community. They do not watch royal weddings or notice Test matches or take pride in being Londoners or Scousers or Brummies.

Not only do they know nothing of Britain’s past, they care nothing for its present.

They have their being only in video games and street-fights, casual drug use and crime, sometimes petty, sometimes serious.

The notions of doing a nine-to-five job, marrying and sticking with a wife and kids, taking up DIY or learning to read properly, are beyond their imaginations.



Undercover police officers arrest looters in the Swarovski Crystal shop in Manchester. One rioter lies injured and blood can be seen on the wall

Last week, I met a charity worker who is trying to help a teenage girl in East London to get a life for herself. There is a difficulty, however: 'Her mother wants her to go on the game.' My friend explained: 'It's the money, you know.'

An underclass has existed throughout history, which once endured appalling privation. Its spasmodic outbreaks of violence, especially in the early 19th century, frightened the ruling classes. Its frustrations and passions were kept at bay by force and draconian legal sanctions, foremost among them capital punishment and transportation to the colonies.

Today, those at the bottom of society behave no better than their forebears, but the welfare state has relieved them from hunger and real want.

When social surveys speak of 'deprivation' and 'poverty', this is entirely relative. Meanwhile, sanctions for wrongdoing have largely vanished.

When Work and Pensions Secretary Iain Duncan Smith recently urged employers to take on more British workers and fewer migrants, he was greeted with a hoarse laugh.



Mindless: People wearing masks swig alcohol next to a burning car in Birmingham city centre.

Every firm in the land knows that an East European — for instance — will, first, bother to turn up; second, work harder; and third, be better-educated than his or her British counterpart. Who do we blame for this state of affairs?

Ken Livingstone, contemptible as ever, declares the riots to be a result of the Government's spending cuts. This recalls the remarks of the then leader of Lambeth Council, 'Red Ted' Knight, who said after the 1981 Brixton riots that the police in his borough 'amounted to an army of occupation'.

But it will not do for a moment to claim the rioters' behaviour reflects deprived circumstances or police persecution.

Of course it is true that few have jobs, learn anything useful at school, live in decent homes, eat meals at regular hours or feel loyalty to anything beyond their local gang.

This is not, however, because they are victims of mistreatment or neglect.

It is because it is fantastically hard to help such people, young or old, without imposing a measure of compulsion which modern society finds unacceptable. These kids are what they are because nobody makes them be anything different or better.



Rampage: We are told that youths roaming the streets are doing so because they are angry at unemployment, but a quick look at an apprenticeship website yields 2,228 vacancies in London

A key factor in delinquency is lack of effective sanctions to deter it. From an early stage, feral children discover that they can bully fellow pupils at school, shout abuse at people in the streets, urinate outside pubs, hurl litter from car windows, play car radios at deafening volumes, and, indeed, commit casual assaults with only a negligible prospect of facing rebuke, far less retribution. John Stuart Mill wrote in his great 1859 essay *On Liberty*: 'The liberty of the individual must be thus far limited; he must not make himself a nuisance to other people.'

Yet every day up and down the land, this vital principle of civilised societies is breached with impunity.

Anyone who reproaches a child, far less an adult, for discarding rubbish, making a racket, committing vandalism or driving unsociably will receive in return a torrent of obscenities, if not violence.

So who is to blame? The breakdown of families, the pernicious promotion of single motherhood as a desirable state, the decline of domestic life so that even shared meals are a rarity, have all contributed importantly to the condition of the young underclass.

The social engineering industry unites to claim that the conventional template of family life is no longer valid.



Protection: Asian shopkeepers stand outside their store in Hackney that was battered by the looters. This time, though, they're ready to take them on

And what of the schools? I do not think they can be blamed for the creation of a grotesquely self-indulgent, non-judgmental culture.

This has ultimately been sanctioned by Parliament, which refuses to accept, for instance, that children are more likely to prosper with two parents than with one, and that the dependency culture is a tragedy for those who receive something for nothing.

The judiciary colludes with social services and infinitely ingenious lawyers to assert the primacy of the rights of the criminal and aggressor over those of law-abiding citizens, especially if a young offender is involved.

The police, in recent years, have developed a reputation for ignoring yobbery and bullying, or even for taking the yobs' side against complainants.

The problem,' said Bill Pitt, the former head of Manchester's Nuisance Strategy Unit, 'is that the law appears to be there to protect the rights of the perpetrator, and does not support the victim.'

Police regularly arrest householders who are deemed to have taken 'disproportionate' action to protect themselves and their property from burglars or intruders. The message goes out that criminals have little to fear from 'the feds'.

Do rioters, pictured looting a shop in Hackney, have lower levels of a brain chemical that helps keep behaviour under control? Scientists think so



Figures published earlier this month show that a majority of 'lesser' crimes — which include burglary and car theft, and which cause acute distress to their victims — are never investigated, because forces think it so unlikely they will catch the perpetrators.

How do you inculcate values in a child whose only role model is footballer Wayne Rooney — a man who is bereft of the most meagre human graces?

How do you persuade children to renounce bad language when they hear little else from stars on the BBC?

A teacher, Francis Gilbert, wrote five years ago in his book *Yob Nation*: 'The public feels it no longer has the right to interfere.'

Discussing the difficulties of imposing sanctions for misbehaviour or idleness at school, he described the case of a girl pupil he scolded for missing all her homework deadlines.

The youngster's mother, a social worker, telephoned him and said: 'Threatening to throw my daughter off the A-level course because she hasn't done some work is tantamount to psychological abuse, and there is legislation which prevents these sorts of threats.

'I believe you are trying to harm my child's mental well-being, and may well take steps . . . if you are not careful.'

That story rings horribly true. It reflects a society in which teachers have been deprived of their traditional right to arbitrate pupils' behaviour. Denied power, most find it hard to sustain respect, never mind control.



Mob: A crowd of people rush into a fashion store in Peckham

I never enjoyed school, but, like most children until very recent times, did the work because I knew I would be punished if I did not. It would never have occurred to my parents not to uphold my teachers' authority. This might have been unfair to some pupils, but it was the way schools functioned for centuries, until the advent of crazy 'pupil rights'.

I recently received a letter from a teacher who worked in a county's pupil referral unit, describing appalling difficulties in enforcing discipline. Her only weapon, she said, was the right to mark a disciplinary cross against a child's name for misbehaviour.

Having repeatedly and vainly asked a 15-year-old to stop using obscene language, she said: 'Fred, if you use language like that again, I'll give you a cross.'

He replied: 'Give me an effing cross, then!' Eventually, she said: 'Fred, you have three crosses now. You must miss your next break.'

He answered: 'I'm not missing my break, I'm going for an effing fag!' When she appealed to her manager, he said: 'Well, the boy's got a lot going on at home at the moment. Don't be too hard on him.'

This is a story repeated daily in schools up and down the land.



A century ago, no child would have dared to use obscene language in class. Today, some use little else. It symbolises their contempt for manners and decency, and is often a foretaste of delinquency.

If a child lacks sufficient respect to address authority figures politely, and faces no penalty for failing to do so, then other forms of abuse — of property and person — come naturally.

So there we have it: a large, amoral, brutalised sub-culture of young British people who lack education because they have no will to learn, and skills which might make them employable. They are too idle to accept work waitressing or doing domestic labour, which is why almost all such jobs are filled by immigrants.

They have no code of values to dissuade them from behaving anti-socially or, indeed, criminally, and small chance of being punished if they do so.

They have no sense of responsibility for themselves, far less towards others, and look to no future beyond the next meal, sexual encounter or TV football game.



Behind bins: Rioters in Hackney stand in front of a makeshift barricade

They are an absolute deadweight upon society, because they contribute nothing yet cost the taxpayer billions. Liberal opinion holds they are victims, because society has failed to provide them with opportunities to develop their potential.

Most of us would say this is nonsense. Rather, they are victims of a perverted social ethos, which elevates personal freedom to an absolute, and denies the underclass the discipline — tough love — which alone might enable some of its members to escape from the swamp of dependency in which they live.

Only education — together with politicians, judges, policemen and teachers with the courage to force feral humans to obey rules the rest of us have accepted all our lives — can provide a way forward and a way out for these people.

They are products of a culture which gives them so much unconditionally that they are let off learning how to become human beings. My dogs are better behaved and subscribe to a higher code of values than the young rioters of Tottenham, Hackney, Clapham and Birmingham.

Unless or until those who run Britain introduce incentives for decency and impose penalties for bestiality which are today entirely lacking, there will never be a shortage of young rioters and looters such as those of the past four nights, for whom their monstrous excesses were ‘a great fire, man’.

A Translation of John's Gospel from the Greek

By Anthony Buzzard



Anthony Buzzard was born in Surrey, England and educated at Oxford University and later at Bethany Theological Seminary. He holds master's degrees in theology and modern languages. He has spent more than 24 years as an instructor at Atlanta Bible College. He continues to write, teach and travel, fulfilling a life-long desire to make the best of Bible scholarship available to the wider churchgoing public. He serves as co-editor of *A Journal from the Radical Reformation*.

This is an ongoing translation of the Gospel of John which has appeared chapter by chapter in the *Focus on the Kingdom* magazine (Oct. 2004, Jan. 2005, Oct. 2005, Aug. 2006, April + May 2009)

Chapter 1

In the beginning there was God's Grand Design, the declaration of His Intention and Purpose, and that declaration was with God as His project, and it was fully expressive of God Himself. This was with God in the beginning. Everything came into being through it, and without it nothing of what came into being existed. In it there was life and that life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness and the darkness does not overwhelm it. There came on the scene of history a man commissioned by God. His name was John. This man came as a witness [a preacher of the Gospel of the Kingdom, Matt. 3:2] so that he might bear witness to the light and that everyone might believe through him. He was not the Light himself, but he witnessed concerning the light. This was the genuine light which enlightens every man coming into the world.

He was in the world and the world came into existence through him, and the world did not recognize him. He came to his own land and his own people did not accept him. As many, however, as did accept him, to these he gave the right to become children of God — namely the ones believing in his Gospel revelation, his religion. These were born not from blood, nor from the desire of the flesh nor from the desire of a male, but from God. And the word became a human being and tabernacled among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of a uniquely begotten Son from a Father, full of grace and truth.

John witnessed concerning him and cried out with these words, "This was the one of whom I said, 'The one coming after me has now moved ahead of me, because he always was my superior.'" Because from his fullness all of us have received grace followed by grace. Because the law was given by God through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time. A uniquely begotten Son, one who is in the bosom of the Father — he has explained God. And this is the witness of John, when the Jews sent a commission of priests and Levites to him from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" And he confessed and did not deny, "I am not the Christ." And they asked him, "Who are you? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" And he answered, "No." And they said to him, "Who are you? So that we can give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord God,' as Isaiah the prophet spoke." And the ones sent were from the Pharisees. And they asked him a further question, "Why do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, or Elijah or the prophet who was to come?" John answered them, "I am baptizing in water. Among you there stands one whom you do not recognize — the

one coming after me, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.” These things happened in Bethany beyond the Jordan where John was baptizing.

The next day he saw Jesus coming towards him and he said, “This is the lamb of God, the one who removes the sin of the world. This is the one of whom I said, ‘After me there comes a man who has now moved ahead of me, because he was always my superior.’ And I did not recognize him, but so that he might be recognized by Israel for that reason I came baptizing with water.” And John witnessed with these words: “I saw the spirit descending as a dove out of heaven and remaining on him, and I did not recognize him. But the one who sent me to baptize in water spoke to me and said, ‘The one on whom you see the spirit descending and remaining on him, he is the one who baptizes with holy spirit.’ And I saw this, and I have witnessed to the fact that this is the Son of the One God.”

On the next day again John stood with two of his disciples, and seeing Jesus walking by, he said, “This is the Lamb of the One God.” And the two disciples heard him speaking and followed Jesus. Jesus, turning round and seeing them following him, said, “What are you looking for?” They said, “Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), where are you staying?” And he said to them, “Come and see.” And so they went and saw where he was staying and remained with him that whole day. And it was about the tenth hour. This was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, one of the two who had heard from John and followed him. He first found his brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which translated means the Christ). He brought him to Jesus, and Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon the son of John. You will be called Cephas, which translated means Peter.” The next day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and he found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.” Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip then found Nathaniel and said to him, “The one about whom Moses wrote in the law and whom the prophets mentioned, we have found, Jesus, the son of Joseph from Nazareth.” Nathaniel said to him, “Can anything good come from Nazareth?” Philip said, “Come and see.” Jesus saw Nathaniel coming towards him and he said of him, “Behold a genuine Israelite in whom there is no guile.” Nathaniel said to him, “How is it that you know me?” Jesus answered him, “Before Philip called you, I saw you under the fig tree.” Nathaniel answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God. You are the King of Israel.” Jesus answered him with these words: “Because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree, you are a believer? You will see greater things than this.” And he said to him, “I tell you on the authority of my Father, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

Chapter 2

Now on the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. When they ran out of wine, Jesus’ mother said to him, “They have no more wine.” Jesus said to her, “What do you and I have in common, lady? My hour has not yet come.” His mother said to the servants, “Whatever he tells you to do, do.” There were six water jars standing there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding about 20 or 30 gallons. Jesus said to them, “Fill the water pots with water.” And they filled them to the brim, and he said to them, “Now pour them out and bring them to the head steward of the wedding,” and they did this. When the head steward had tasted the water which had become wine and he did not know how this had happened, (but the servants who had poured out the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said, “Everybody serves the good wine at the beginning and when everyone has drunk sufficiently, poorer wine. But you have kept the best wine until now.” Jesus performed this, the first of his signs, at Cana in Galilee, and he displayed his glory and his disciples believed in him. After this he, his mother, his brothers and his disciples went down to Capernaum and they stayed there for a few days. And the Jewish festival of Passover was approaching and Jesus went up to Jerusalem and he found in the temple those selling cattle, sheep and doves. He made a little whip and drove them out of the temple and overturned the tables and said to those selling the

doves, "Take these things out of here. Do not make my Father's house into a market place." And the disciples remembered what Scripture had said: "A passion for your House consumes me." So the Jews answered Jesus with these words: "What sign are you going to show us, that you are able to do these things?" Jesus replied, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews answered, "This temple was under construction for 46 years and you say that you are going to raise it again in three days?" But he was speaking of the temple of his body. When Jesus was later raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said these words and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover festival many believed in his name [his claims and his Gospel teaching] when they saw the signs which he was doing. But Jesus did not commit himself to them because he knew the nature of every man. And he did not need anyone to testify about man, because he knew what was in man.

Chapter 3

There was a man from the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a Jewish ruler. He came to see Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we recognize that you are a teacher commissioned by God. No one can possibly do these signs which you are performing, unless God is with him." Jesus replied to him, "I tell you on the authority of God, unless a person is born again, he is unable to see the Kingdom of God." Nicodemus replied, "How is it possible for a person to be born when he is old? Surely he cannot enter his mother's womb a second time and be born?"

Jesus answered, "On the authority of God I tell you that unless a person is born from water and spirit, he will be unable to enter the Kingdom of God. What has been born of flesh is fleshly and what has been born of spirit is spiritual. Do not be amazed that I told you you must be born again. The wind blows where it wishes and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from and where it goes. So it is with anyone who has been born from the spirit." Nicodemus responded, "How can these things happen?" Jesus replied, "Are you a teacher in Israel, and you do not understand these things? On God's authority I assure you, we speak the things which we know about and witness to the things we have seen, but you do not accept our witness [Gospel]. If I have told you about things on earth and you do not believe them, how will you believe heavenly things if I tell you about them?"

"And no one has ascended to heaven [i.e. gained access to the secrets of God] except the one who has his origin in God, the one who is the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, in the same way the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that all who believe in him may gain the life of the Age to Come [the life of the Kingdom].

"God loved the world in this way, that He gave His uniquely begotten Son, so that every person who believes in him should not perish but have the life of the Age to Come. For God did not send His Son into the world for the purpose of condemning the world, but so that the world might be rescued through him. The person who believes in him is not condemned. But the one who does not believe has been condemned already, because he has not believed in the revelation [lit., the name] of God's uniquely begotten Son. This is the reason for condemnation: the light has come into the world and human beings loved darkness rather than light, because their activities were wicked. Every person who does wicked things hates the light and will not come to the light, so that his works will not be exposed. But the one who performs truth comes to the light, so that his works may be demonstrated as performed in God."

After these things Jesus and his disciples came into Judea and he stayed there with them and was baptizing people. And John the Baptist was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there were many

springs there and people were coming to get baptized. John the Baptist had not yet been thrown into prison.

There arose a dispute amongst the disciples of John with a Jew about purification. So they came to John and asked him, "Rabbi, the one who was with you on the other side of the Jordan, the one you bore witness to [i.e. said he was the Messiah], he is baptizing and a lot of people are joining him." John replied, "A man can receive nothing unless it is granted him from heaven. You yourselves will confirm the fact that I said, 'I am not the Christ, but I have been sent ahead of him.' The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. But the friend of the bridegroom who stands and listens to him has great joy hearing the bridegroom's voice. I am therefore full of joy. He must increase, while I must decrease.

"The one who comes from above is superior to all. The one who comes from the earth is of the earth and speaks from the earth. The one coming from heaven is above all. He bears witness to what he has seen and heard. But no one accepts his witness [Gospel]. The person who does accept his witness [Gospel] sets his seal on the fact that God is truthful. For the one whom God sent as His agent speaks the words of God, for he does not give out the spirit by measure. The Father loves the Son and has given him power over everything. The person who believes in the Son has the life of the Age to Come; the one who refuses to obey the Son will not see that life. Rather, the wrath of God remains on him."

Chapter 4

Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although Jesus himself was not actually doing the baptisms, but his disciples were), he left Judea and went back to Galilee. But he had to go through Samaria. So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. A Samaritan woman came to draw water and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, "How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)

Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you do not even have a bucket and the cistern is deep; where then can you get this living water? Are you a greater man than our father Jacob, who gave us this well and drank from it himself with his sons and his cattle?" Jesus replied, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again. But whoever drinks the water I will give will never thirst^[1]; the water I will give him will become^[1] in him a spring of water welling up to the life of the age to come." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."

"Go and get your husband," Jesus told her. The woman answered, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you are now living with is not your husband. What you have just said is true." The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." Jesus said, "Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You people worship what you do not understand; we worship what we understand, because salvation comes from the Jews. Yet a time is coming, and has now come, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is looking for such people to worship Him. God communicates through spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."^[2]

The woman said, "I know that the Messiah (called Christ) is coming. When *he* comes, he will tell us everything." Jesus replied "I am^[3] [he, the Messiah], the one speaking to you." At this point his disciples returned and were surprised to find him speaking to a woman, but none of them asked, What do you want from her? Or, What are you talking to her about? The woman left her water jar and went into the town and said to the men, "Come and meet a man who told me everything I ever did! Could this be the Messiah?"

They left the city and were on their way to him. Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, eat something." But he said, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." So the disciples said to one another, "Could someone have brought him something to eat?" "My food," Jesus said, "is to do the will of Him who sent me and to complete His work. Do you not have a saying: Four months and then the harvest? Well, I tell you, look around you, look at the fields; they are white, ready for harvest! Already the reaper is being paid his wage; already he is bringing in fruit for the life of the age to come, so that sower and reaper can rejoice together. You know the saying, 'One sows and another reaps.'^[4] I sent you to reap a harvest you have not labored for. Others have labored for it; and you have shared the rewards of their labor." And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in him because of the words of the woman who testified, "He told me everything I ever did." When the Samaritans came to him, they invited him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. Many more believed because of his word [i.e., Gospel]. and they said to the woman, "We no longer believe because of *your* word; for we have heard for ourselves, and we are convinced that this is truly the Savior of the world."

When the two days were over Jesus left for Galilee. For Jesus himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country. So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, having seen all the things that he did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they themselves also went to the feast.

Once more Jesus visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. And there was a certain royal official whose son lay sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, who was close to death. Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will not believe." The royal official said, "Sir, come down before my child dies." Jesus said to him, "You may go; your son will live." The man believed what Jesus said to him and departed. While he was on his way home, his slaves met him and told him that his boy was going to live. He asked them when he began to recover. They told him, "The fever left him yesterday, about one in the afternoon." Then the father realized that this was the exact moment at which Jesus had said to him, "Your son is going to live." So he and all his household believed.

This was the second miraculous sign that Jesus performed, on his return from Judea to Galilee.

Chapter 5

After this there was a Jewish festival and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.^[5] Now in Jerusalem at the sheep-gate there is a pool called in Aramaic Bethesda with five colonnades. In this there lies a mass of sick people, blind, crippled and paralyzed. There was one man there who had been sick for 38 years. Jesus saw him lying there and knowing he had been an invalid for a long time, asked him, "Do you want to be healed?" The sick man answered, "Sir, I have no one to take me down into the pool when the water is stirred up. As I try to go down, someone else goes down in front of me." Jesus said to him, "Pick up your bed and walk," and immediately the man was healed and picked up his bed and began to walk. Now that day was the Sabbath. So the Jews said to the man who had been healed, "It's Sabbath and it is not permissible for you to carry your bed." But he answered them, "The one who healed me said, 'Take up your bed and walk.'" They said to him, "Who is this man who told you to get up and walk?" The man who had been healed did not know who it was, because Jesus had left since there was a crowd at that place. After this Jesus found him in the temple

and he said to him, "Look, you are healed now. Don't sin any more. If you do a worse thing might happen to you."

The man went off and announced to the Jews that Jesus was the one who had made him well. So then the Jews persecuted Jesus, because he had done these things on the Sabbath. Jesus replied to them, "My Father is working up to now and I am working too." For this reason the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only had he broken the Sabbath but he was calling God his own Father and making himself equal to God. So Jesus answered them by saying, "Truly I tell you, a son is unable to do anything on his own authority. He can do only what he sees his father doing. Whatever his father does, the son does likewise. Because the Father loves the Son and has shown him what He is doing, and He will show him greater things, so that you may marvel. For just as the Father raises the dead and makes them alive so also the Son makes alive whom he wishes. The Father judges no one but has given all judgment to the Son, so that everyone may honor the Son as they honor the Father. The one who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who commissioned him as his agent. Truly I tell you that the one who hears my word^[6] and thus believes the one who commissioned me has the life of the age to come,^[7] and will not come into judgment but he has been transferred from death to life. Truly I tell you that the hour is coming, and now already is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will come back to life. Just as the Father has life in Himself, so also He has granted the Son to have life in himself, and He has given him authority to carry out judgment, because he is the Son of Man. Do not be amazed at this, because the hour is coming when all who are in their graves will hear the voice of the Son of Man. They will come out of their graves, the ones who have done good to a resurrection of life and those who have practiced evil to a resurrection of judgment. I can do nothing on my own authority. As I hear I judge, and my judgment is fair, because I do not seek my own will but the will of the one who commissioned me as His agent. If I witness about myself, my witness is not true. But there is another who witnesses about me and I know that the witness He gives on my behalf of me is true.

"You sent messengers to John and he witnessed to the truth, but I do not accept witness from men. But these things I am telling you so that you can be saved. He was a bright shining light and you were willing to rejoice in his light for a time. But I have a much greater witness than John because the works which the Father has given me to do, these works witness to the fact that the Father has commissioned me. And my Father who commissioned me has borne witness to me. You have never heard His voice or seen His form at any time.^[8] And you do not have His word dwelling in your heart. Because the one whom the Father commissioned — him you do not believe.

"You search the Scriptures because you imagine that you have the life of the age^[9] to come in them. These are the very Scriptures which bear witness to me. But you are not willing to come to me to have that life. I do not receive praise from men, but I know that you do not have God's love in you. I have come in the name of my Father and you do not accept me. Yet if another comes in his own name, you will receive him. How can you possibly believe when you accept praise from one another and you fail to seek the praise which comes from the only One who is God? Don't imagine that I will accuse you before the Father. There is one who will accuse you and that is Moses, in whom you have placed your hope. If indeed you believed Moses you would believe me, because he wrote about me. But if you will not believe his writings, how can you possibly believe my words?"^[10]

^[1]Possibly, "not thirst even during the coming age."

^[2]John appropriately calls the holy spirit, the "spirit of the truth." Hence the enormous importance of truth.

^[3]Note that Jesus said "I am." The meaning of the words "I am" is clearly "I am the Messiah." "I am the one in question." The same "I am" statements of Jesus found later in the Gospel do not mean "I am God," but "I am the Messiah," as this first example shows.

^[4]Note the obvious connection to the parable of the sower, where the seed is the saving Gospel of the Kingdom (Matt. 13:19).

^[5] John and his community do not think of these as Christian festivals but as Jewish festivals. Col. 1:16-17 describes the Jewish calendar, Sabbath, holy days and new moons as a single shadow of which Jesus is the substance.

^[6] i.e., my Gospel of the Kingdom as described in Matthew, Mark and Luke.

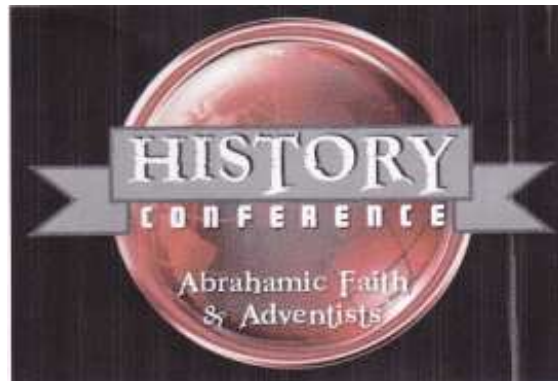
^[7] i.e. life in the future Kingdom of God, tasted in advance by the spirit given to believers.

^[8] The implication is probably that they *could* have had such a divine visitation, as did Moses.

^[9] “Eternal life” (*zoe aionios*, pronounced in Greek today as “zoe ai-ownios”) means “the life of the age to come,” and is based on the “life of the age” (Dan. 12:2), the promise of life in the future resurrection, tasted now by the spirit given to those who believe the Gospel and thus obey Jesus (Heb. 5:9). The spirit is a downpayment of that future immortality.

^[10] Showing that believing the words of Jesus (and Paul, of course) is the essence of New Covenant faith.

Church of God Heritage Conference 2011 September 22-24 North Hills Church of God Springfield, OH



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