A sunset over a mountain range with the text "A PIVOTAL SIGN OF THE END TIME" overlaid.

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He would return already been fulfilled?

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# **A PIVOTAL SIGN OF THE END TIME**

Has the major sign Jesus Christ gave of when  
He would return already been fulfilled?

JOEL HILLIKER



**T**HE WORLD TODAY IS CONVULSING IN DRAMATIC, dangerous developments and events. A perilous and even deadly future seems to be unfolding. Many people are wondering: *Are we in the “end time”?*

The Bible prophesies that in the “time of the end,” the world will be engulfed by shocking, cataclysmic, violent events that will threaten the life of every person on the planet—and then, Jesus Christ will return.

For generations, individuals have tried to interpret the end-time prophecies of the Bible. And in most every case, their interpretations have proved to be a farce.

But Bible prophecy is not a farce. God recorded and preserved hundreds, even thousands, of prophecies in the Holy Bible—so many, in fact, that they constitute *one third* of this extraordinary book. The flawless accuracy of these prophecies is one of the major proofs that the Bible is the Word of God.

Many people don’t realize this, but *Jesus Christ* was a prophet. He spoke specific, detailed, dramatic *prophecies*. He prophesied of a number of signs to watch for that would reveal when His return is imminent. God recorded and preserved Jesus’s prophecies, and you can read them today, nearly 2,000 years later, in your own Bible.

God wants you to *understand* Bible prophecy!

This booklet focuses on THE MOST PIVOTAL END-TIME BIBLE PROPHECY. And it was spoken by Jesus Christ Himself. People who truly believe in Jesus Christ and in what He taught can *know* whether we are, in fact, living in the end time.

## **Vision of Jesus Christ’s Return**

Toward the end of His ministry on Earth, Jesus took Peter, James and John up a high mountain. There,

something extraordinary happened. These three disciples saw Jesus Christ transfigured: His face began shining like the sun, and His clothes became as white as light (Matthew 17:1-2).

This vision dramatically emphasized that Jesus was not only a human being who preached a message about the coming Kingdom of God—He was also the Son of God, who would be resurrected, who would ascend to His Father in heaven, who would be glorified, and who would ultimately return to Earth to *establish* that Kingdom and rule all nations as the King of kings!

In this dazzling preview of Jesus Christ's return, two spiritual giants of the Old Testament—Moses and Elijah—appeared along with Him. Then a bright cloud appeared overhead, out of which a voice said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!" This vivid experience was so intense that the disciples fell forward in fear with their faces toward the ground. Jesus told them not to be afraid, and when they looked up, Moses and Elijah were gone, and Jesus's appearance had returned to normal (verses 3-8).

Three disciples had just seen a miraculous vision of the Second Coming—the culmination of all end-time prophecy, the greatest event in the history of the universe! The return of the glorified Jesus Christ will mark the *end* of this age and the beginning of a new one: the establishment of the Kingdom of God over everyone on Earth.

After Peter, James and John saw this magnificent vision and descended back down the mountain, what was the first thing they asked Jesus about?

"Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" they asked (verse 10; New King James Version).

## Preparing the Way

The disciples were asking Jesus to explain the meaning of a specific Old Testament prophecy: “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD” (Malachi 4:5).

“The great and dreadful day of the LORD” refers to the *culmination* of the destruction and calamity that will conclude this age of man and will end with Christ’s return. That is the *time setting* of this prophecy.

The Prophet Elijah lived more than 800 years before Jesus. He boldly corrected the nation of Israel for turning away from the true God to the false gods of paganism. His name means “my God is God.”

But through the Prophet Malachi, God was saying that He would send *another man*, in the power and spirit of the ancient Prophet Elijah, IN THE END TIME—“before” the events leading directly to Christ’s Second Coming.

This prophecy is what came to the disciples’ minds when they saw a vision of the glorified Christ.

This prophecy relates to *another* prophecy in the book of Malachi—chapter 3: “Behold, I will send my messenger, and *he shall prepare the way before me*: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap” (verses 1-2). This is a prophecy about Christ coming to Earth—but it was not completely fulfilled at His first coming. It clearly refers to Christ’s Second Coming, when He will come in His brilliant, glorified, spiritual form (“like a refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap”). At His first coming, He preached

the gospel of the future establishment of the Kingdom of God. At His glorified Second Coming, He will actually ESTABLISH that Kingdom.

Before the epic, dramatic “day of his coming,” God says, “I will send MY MESSENGER, and he shall prepare the way before me.”

The scribes said these verses in Malachi 3 meant that, before the cataclysmic day of the Lord—which will occur just before the coming of the Savior—a man like the ancient Elijah would come and “prepare the way.” Seeing a vision of the glorified Christ made the disciples wonder: *Were they wrong? Were they right? What role would Elijah fulfill?*

How did Jesus Christ answer them?

Return to the passage in Matthew 17: “[Elijah] TRULY SHALL first come, and RESTORE ALL THINGS” (verse 11).

Jesus *confirmed* what Malachi prophesied and the scribes and disciples believed: A man like Elijah *would definitely come* to PREPARE THE WAY before Christ’s glorious return. He then *added* an additional prophecy: This man would “RESTORE ALL THINGS.”

Thus, the Bible is clear: Before Jesus Christ returns, the world is going to explode with terrifying violence. And BEFORE THAT OCCURS, GOD WILL SEND A MAN LIKE THE ANCIENT ELIJAH.

The Bible contains many end-time prophecies. People naturally tend to focus on the ones describing wars, earthquakes and supernatural disasters. Some people focus on things like blood moons. But what Jesus Christ focused on, immediately after His dramatic transfiguration, was THIS PROPHECY.

Malachi and Jesus Christ said that this man would be God’s messenger, he would prepare the way for the

Savior, he would build God's Family, and he would "restore all things" (Malachi 3:1-2; 4:1-6; Matthew 17:10-11).

THIS MAN WOULD BE A SIGN THAT THE WORLD HAD ENTERED THE "END TIME." He would be a sign that the "great and dreadful day of the LORD" was about to start. And he would be a sign that the glorified Jesus Christ was returning soon.

Who is this man? Who is this "Elijah"?

## **Who Is 'Elijah'?**

"That vision given to Peter, John and James tied right in with the arrival of an ELIJAH in the end time, just before Christ returns! ... This is a SIGN TO THE WORLD that Jesus Christ's return is IMMINENT. When 'all things' are restored, that is the BEGINNING OF THE END!" This is how Gerald Flurry explains Matthew 17:10-11 in his booklet *The Epistles of Peter: A Living Hope* under the subhead "The MOST PIVOTAL End-Time Prophecy" (emphasis added throughout).

The work God does through this "Elijah" is THE PIVOTAL SIGN that the end time has come, that the dreadful Day of the Lord is imminent, and that the return of Jesus Christ is almost here!

Jesus Christ confirmed that a man like Elijah would come before He returned in power and glory. Then He revealed to the disciples that *another* man had *already* fulfilled this role, in type, within their lifetimes: "But I say unto you, That [Elijah] is come already, and they knew him not ..." (verse 12). Jesus showed that this man had come "in the spirit and power of [Elijah]" (Luke 1:17), he had exposed the false religions of the day, and he had prepared the way for Jesus's *first coming*.

Notably, He did not say that this man had "restored

all things.” The disciples realized that the man who prepared the way for Jesus’s *first* coming was John the Baptist (Matthew 17:13).

Elijah and John the Baptist were both dead by the time Jesus spoke this prophecy. Jesus revealed that they were predecessors of *another* Elijah-type to come prior to His earthshaking Second Coming.

Herbert W. Armstrong, founder of the Worldwide Church of God, spoke about this prophecy in a landmark sermon on December 17, 1983, saying: “As John the Baptist was the physical messenger in the physical wilderness of Jordan, so there would be a messenger with a message—with a voice crying out in the spiritual wilderness of the modern 20th century. ... Preparing the way for ... Jesus to come to His spiritual temple [which is the Church] ... this time to set up the Kingdom of God and to rule.”

Christ said this Elijah figure who would come before His return would “restore all things.” “Now John the Baptist didn’t RESTORE anything,” Mr. Armstrong noted. “They already knew about the law, and he called them to repentance; but he didn’t have to give them sermons about what all the law is. They knew that. He just called them to repent and turn to another way, and baptized them.”

After John the Baptist had already been killed, Jesus Christ told His disciples, “Elijah truly SHALL first come [*future tense*], and RESTORE ALL THINGS.” Who would this Elijah be? And in what way would he “restore all things”?

When the glorified Jesus Christ returns, He will “restore all things”—to the whole world. He will use His supernatural power to establish “the times of refreshing,” and “the times of restitution of all things” (Acts 3:19-21), restoring His truth, His law and His government to all peoples and nations.

But Jesus said that this end-time Elijah-type would “restore all things” *before He returned*. How is that possible?

He would restore all things *to God’s Church!*

This is a critical detail. Before the dreadful Day of the Lord and the return of Jesus Christ, Elijah would restore the truth to God’s true Church. This would be a major preparation for Jesus Christ restoring the truth to *the whole world*.

At His first coming, Jesus Christ Himself established the New Testament Church. He personally taught His disciples the true doctrines and the true prophecies of the Bible. He said His Church would be only a “little flock,” not a large, powerful organization (Luke 12:32). He also promised that this little group would never die (Matthew 16:18): It would exist all the way up until His return.

But as God later prophesied in Revelation 2 and 3, over time, that Church—as it passed through seven eras in its history—would be counterfeited, would suffer persecution, would neglect and compromise with God’s doctrines, and would actually *lose* much of the truth Jesus Christ had established at His first coming.

After Jesus established the Church of God, it endured through 2,000 years of history. By the 20th century, it had lost many of those doctrines. It still kept the Ten Commandments, including the seventh-day Sabbath, as well as the law of first tithe, but many other biblical doctrines had been changed or forgotten. The Church’s work to the rest of the world had gone dormant. It was in an era that Revelation 3:1-6 characterized as “dead.” The Church still existed, but it was in desperate need of doctrinal restoration.

In the end time, a man did come and “restore all things” to God’s Church—the same doctrines Jesus taught to the

Church in His human lifetime 2,000 years ago. Through his 57-year ministry to the Church and to the world, this man *prepared the way* for the Second Coming of the glorified Jesus Christ. And a few years before he died, he realized that the fruits of his ministry showed he had fulfilled Jesus Christ's prophecy about the end-time Elijah!

That man was Herbert W. Armstrong.

## Identifying 'Elijah'

Identifying the end-time Elijah as Herbert W. Armstrong is an extraordinary claim to make. Is the Bible that specific? Can you really match a modern individual to Jesus Christ's ancient prophecies?

Consider again: Malachi prophesied there *would be* a man like Elijah to prepare the way for the coming of the Savior. The scribes and disciples believed it. Jesus Christ believed it. He revealed that John the Baptist had been a type of Elijah for His first coming, but for His Second Coming, another type of Elijah “truly *shall* first come, and *restore all things*.” God recorded and preserved that prophecy for more than 2,000 years. This prophecy is meant to be understood. When God makes a promise, He *will* fulfill it—He cannot lie (Isaiah 55:11; Titus 1:2). *Someone* would fulfill this prophesied role.

Who was Herbert W. Armstrong, and how did his life fulfill this prophecy?

As a young man, Mr. Armstrong was not interested in religion. But when he was challenged by his wife on which day Christians should worship God, and challenged by a relative on evolution and the existence of God, he intensively studied the Bible, commentaries and evolutionary texts. This study—which he conducted independently, on his own, and not in a theological school—produced

an outcome he did not expect. He became not only convinced that the Bible is God's Word, that God is Creator, and that His command to keep the seventh-day Sabbath is binding, but also personally convicted by the scriptures he read, underwent an arduous repentance to turn away from his previous life, and then devoted himself to the God he was learning about.

From the pages of the Bible, Mr. Armstrong studied question after question.

And he found God's answers.

Mr. Armstrong wrote in his autobiography that he "had to examine every doctrinal tree in the religious forest." He wrote that some of these proved to be dead and fell when examined against the Bible, and others came into sight for the first time.

"In this conversion process, Jesus put me through the wringer," Mr. Armstrong wrote. "He squeezed out—cleared my mind—swept it clean of earlier false assumptions—such as going to heaven or hell—immortality of the soul—the false 'trinity' doctrine.

"I was started out knowing WHO and WHAT God is—WHAT, and WHY man is—the TRUTH about Israel—WHAT IS Christ's true gospel—the coming Kingdom of God" (*Good News*, April 1980).

Mr. Armstrong wrote that the whole forest of truth came into view only after *years* of study, prayer and experience. But from the very moment God had called him, he began to learn truths that had been largely or completely lost, even to God's Church.

"The important thing is that in this study Jesus Christ, through His written Word, opened my mind to the PRIME BASIC TRUTHS He wanted me to have in starting me out as His servant" (*ibid*).

Before devoting himself to God, Mr. Armstrong had enjoyed business success. But during these years of learning and teaching the lost foundational truths of the Bible, he and his family suffered 28 years of poverty, which eased only after he had reached his mid-50s. Yet during this time of physical want, he said, he felt spiritually rich as he learned truths unknown to mainstream Christianity.

The work Mr. Armstrong led started in the early 1930s with sermons, Bible studies, lectures, a broadcast on one local radio station and a handmade magazine that reached about 250 people in western Oregon. More than 50 years later, his sermons and Bible studies were heard by over 120,000 members of the Worldwide Church of God in 57 countries. The Church was supported by another 210,000 regular contributors. The *World Tomorrow* program aired on 382 television stations and 36 radio outlets worldwide, and the *Plain Truth* magazine was publishing 8.4 million copies per month in seven languages, a larger circulation than *Time* magazine's. The Church had an annual operating budget of \$163.7 million (\$384.1 million, adjusted for inflation), larger than the operations of well-known televangelists Billy Graham and Jerry Falwell combined. Mr. Armstrong personally wrote hundreds of articles, letters, booklets and books: More than 5 million copies of his most-requested book were distributed worldwide.

Mr. Armstrong established Ambassador College, where thousands of students were taught on three campuses in the United States and Britain. He also founded the Ambassador International Cultural Foundation, which contributed funding and laborers to biblical archaeology in Jerusalem and an acclaimed

concert series at the Church headquarters campus in Pasadena, California. The foundation also supported cultural, charitable and humanitarian projects in the Bahamas, Belgium, China, Costa Rica, Egypt, England, Hong Kong, India, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Monaco, Nepal, the Netherlands, New Guinea, the Philippines, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Tanzania and Thailand.

Mr. Armstrong personally met over 500 heads of state: prime ministers, presidents, kings, emperors, princes and princesses, as well as legislators, ambassadors, cabinet ministers, first ladies, governors, mayors, generals, judges, chief executives, college presidents, musicians, artists, athletes, Nobel Prize winners and other leaders of government, industry and culture, as well as many everyday people and many who were in poverty.

The leaders he met included Britain's Prince Charles and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, King Leopold III of Belgium, First Lady of the United States Nancy Reagan, King Juan Carlos I of Spain, Chinese Premier Deng Xiaoping, Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie, King Hussein of Jordan, Egyptian presidents Anwar Sadat and Hosni Mubarak, Otto von Habsburg, Bavarian Premier Franz Josef Strauss, the emperor, crown prince and seven successive prime ministers of Japan, and six prime ministers and three presidents of Israel. He also met the presidents, prime ministers or kings of Argentina, Bangladesh, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Lebanon, Mexico, Nepal, the Netherlands, Panama, Peru, the Philippines, Romania, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam, as well as dozens of ambassadors, plus numerous cabinet ministers, legislators, judges and other representatives.

These leaders spoke with Mr. Armstrong in their government offices and homes, some of them repeatedly. Some of these meetings were covered by national news media. Other leaders he met at banquets or formal meetings in which he was frequently the guest of honor and keynote speaker. Legislators, mayors, professors, princesses and kings accompanied him on the Church's corporate jet he used to convene with other world leaders or to visit Ambassador College, where some of them enrolled their children. These leaders referred to Mr. Armstrong as an "ambassador without portfolio" and "an ambassador for world peace."

Six months before his death, at the 40th Anniversary Commemorative Convention of the signing of the United Nations Charter in 1945, Mr. Armstrong was honored with a standing ovation from the ambassadors of 101 countries as the individual who had met with more world leaders than any other man alive.

This was a work that started very small and was led by a man with no government office, no royal title, no political party, no family fortune, no state funding, no corporate guarantor, no massive endowment. The Church's publications and other materials were distributed free of charge or obligation, paid for by the freewill offerings of members and co-workers. Yet for its first 35 years, the Church's income grew at a rate of 30 percent per year.

The reason for this unusual growth and large impact for a comparatively small Church revolved around Herbert W. Armstrong and what he taught from the Bible. It was unlike any other church. Millions read, watched and listened to learn more about the Bible and its answers to life's most important questions.

Few other respected religious leaders even *claim* to

teach answers to some of these questions. Fewer still have had a similar nationwide and worldwide impact. Perhaps none understood Jesus's prophecy of an end-time Elijah or said that their work fulfilled that prophecy. And most importantly, none restored or taught the same doctrines.

No one else "restored all things."

## **Restored Truths Rejected**

Herbert W. Armstrong died on January 16, 1986, at the age of 93. He left behind a Church and a work that was at its peak. One out of every 48 Americans subscribed to the *Plain Truth*, as well as 1 out of every 27 Canadians. More than 200,000 people per year were joining the 2 million others who had enrolled in the *Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course*. Over 5 million people had requested his book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*, and about 3 million had requested *The Seven Laws of Success*. Mr. Armstrong had just completed his most important book, *Mystery of the Ages*. From the time the book arrived from the printer in September 1985 to December, 740,000 people had requested it, the highest rate of demand for any publication the Church had ever produced.

*Mystery of the Ages* was a synopsis of the major teachings of the Bible and an encapsulation of Mr. Armstrong's life's work. Its chapters covered biblical answers to seven fundamental mysteries: "Who and What Is God?," "Mystery of Angels and Evil Spirits," "Mystery of Man," "Mystery of Civilization," "Mystery of Israel," "Mystery of the Church" and "Mystery of the Kingdom of God."

Mr. Armstrong had preached the very gospel Jesus Christ preached—about the Kingdom of God—around

the world as a witness (Matthew 24:14). Mr. Armstrong had “restored all things.”

The pivotal sign of the dreadful Day of the Lord and the return of Jesus Christ had come—and gone!

This was in 1986. But what happened after that?

The leaders who succeeded Mr. Armstrong in the Worldwide Church of God destroyed it. They ended the broadcasts, cut back the publications, closed the college, dissolved the cultural foundation, and sold off the Church’s many physical assets. They even changed the name of the Church.

The main focus of the destruction was the doctrines. Immediately after—and even before—Mr. Armstrong died, other Church leaders were undermining and changing the doctrines he had restored. They altered the Church’s teachings to resemble those of mainstream Protestant Christianity. The process at first was subtle. Church leaders told members that they were not changing doctrines, even while they told outside observers that they were changing them. Those who firmly held to the biblical truths established by Mr. Armstrong left the Church or were forced out. Eventually, the Church splintered into dozens of groups, and what remained of the original organization morphed into a Protestant organization that officially repudiated the doctrines Mr. Armstrong had restored—and assassinated his character.

The reason for the existence of the Church, the core of this Church controversy, the answers to the greatest questions of human life, and the key to understanding “the time of the end” all revolve around the doctrinal truths restored by God through Herbert W. Armstrong.

The fundamental question is: What are those restored truths?

## Restored Truths

In the April 1980 *Good News*, Mr. Armstrong summarized the history of the New Testament Church of God. He then described how God had used him in the modern era: “God’s TIME had come! His time for one, of whom John the Baptist was a type and forerunner, to prepare the way for Christ’s *Second Coming*.”

In the last few years of his life, he repeatedly returned to this prophecy of an end-time Elijah, and became much more bold and direct about having fulfilled it himself.

In his December 17, 1983 sermon, after reviewing the prophecies of Malachi 3 and 4 and Matthew 17, Mr. Armstrong talked about these “restored truths” and directly linked the biblical doctrines he had been teaching throughout his ministry with this “most pivotal end-time prophecy.”

In the conclusion of his sermon, he briefly summarized the truths God had restored to the Church through him from a list he had written down (which he said weren’t “in any special order”). He revisited this list and lightly amended it in subsequent messages, but it was not published in writing until after he died. After being published for Worldwide Church of God ministers, a list of the doctrines was produced for the whole Church in its newspaper, the *Worldwide News* (Aug. 25, 1986).

However, this published list deviated from the outline Mr. Armstrong gave in 1983. It noticeably *skipped* some of the truths he clearly stated. Writing this only months after Mr. Armstrong died, the leaders who succeeded him *intentionally omitted* some of the more “controversial” doctrines he had restored.

What follows is a list of restored truths based more closely on the list Mr. Armstrong gave in his 1983

sermon, with a few adjustments based on his subsequent statements. In no specific order, these doctrines are the truths restored over the course of decades, the truths Jesus Christ told Christians to look for in Matthew 17:10-11 as a sign of His imminent return: “[Elijah] truly shall first come, and restore all things.”

These teachings answer the most important and most mysterious questions of human existence. They were taught by Jesus Christ during His first coming to Earth as a human being and by the apostles after Him. They are unique to the Church and to God’s Work through Mr. Armstrong. They are THE determining factor in the restoration of God’s Church prior to the dreadful Day of the Lord and the glorious return of Jesus Christ.

## **The True Gospel**

In His famous Olivet prophecy, Jesus Christ gave specific signs of His Second Coming. One was this: “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (Matthew 24:14). Consider carefully: Christ said that preaching the true gospel around the world would be a sign of the end time. That means this message *was not broadly preached* for the 1,900 years since Christ spoke these words!

This tells you that, even as “Christianity” flourished in various ways throughout those centuries, *it was not publicizing* “the gospel of the kingdom” that Christ Himself had preached. There have been many *counterfeit* gospels preached. But the true gospel message of Christ—the gospel the Father sent Him to preach—has been *suppressed* for most of that time.

However, in the 20th century, God did reveal the full truth about the true gospel so it could be preached in this end time, in fulfillment of Christ’s prophecy! Mr. Armstrong broadcast that gospel worldwide on the *World Tomorrow* television program, he published it in the *Plain Truth* and *Good News* magazines, he wrote books and booklets read by millions of people, and he made personal visits to leaders of countries all over the world. That gospel of the Kingdom was preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations. *This sign of the end has been fulfilled.*

You can prove from your own Bible what that gospel is. Mr. Armstrong wrote an entire book about it called *The Incredible Human Potential*, and we will gladly send you a free copy upon your request.

The traditional gospel taught by Protestant denominations *is not the same gospel Jesus Christ taught*. It is a gospel

*about* Christ, not the gospel *of* Christ. Jesus Christ was the Son of God, He did die for the sins of mankind, Christians must have faith, and salvation is God’s free gift—grace. But these are simply facts about Jesus Christ’s ministry; they are not the gospel message He Himself preached. The gospel that Jesus Christ actually taught at His first coming focused not on those facts but on *announcing* the coming Kingdom of God: the government of God, which is the key to restoring peace to the world and the universe (e.g. Mark 1:14-15; Matthew 9:35; Luke 4:43; 9:1-2).

That is the gospel Jesus preached to His disciples and that they preached to the Church. (Scriptures showing that the *disciples* preached the same gospel include Acts 8:12; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23, 30-31.) “The true gospel, when viewed with all that it embodies ... becomes the most all-encompassing subject that can enter the mind of man. Beside it, everything else shrinks to total unimportance. ... [A] full and complete understanding of the message sent by God to all mankind, by His Divine Messenger Jesus Christ, involves a vast comprehension of God’s great purpose, and of events prehistoric, historic, present and future. I might say it means an overall understanding of everything!” (*The Incredible Human Potential*). Mr. Armstrong wrote that the true gospel included a grasp on world conditions, human nature, the source of world evils and the way to world peace, and God’s purpose for angels, mankind and the universe.

To learn more about the true gospel, request *The Incredible Human Potential*. Also, enroll in the Herbert W. Armstrong College Bible Correspondence Course (Lesson 1). See the last page of this booklet to order your free literature.



## **The Purpose of God**

Some religions teach that God's purpose for human beings is to turn them into angels, or to gaze upon His glory for eternity, or to give them some other ill-defined eternal future. Other ideologies teach that man is basically an animal and has no purpose.

God's purpose in creating man is clearly revealed in the Bible, and it is none of these. That revelation begins in Genesis 1:26 where God says, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness ...." "What the world does not grasp is that God is *reproducing Himself*," Mr. Armstrong wrote, "creating, in mortal humans, His very own divine CHARACTER ..." (*Good News*, November 1952).

For eternity, there was only God and the Word. Then they created angels—brilliant spirit beings with their own individual minds and the freedom to make their own choices. God then created the universe, giving one of the greatest angels rule over the Earth. But that angel, Lucifer, turned against God and His way. He led one third of the angels in rebellion and open war against God. God defeated this rebellion, but for the first time in eternity, selfishness, hatred, violence, destruction and sin existed. "As God surveyed this cataclysmic tragedy, He must have realized that since the highest, most perfect being within His almighty power to create had turned to rebellion, it left God Himself as the only being who *would not and cannot sin*," Mr. Armstrong wrote in *Mystery of the Ages*. "To fulfill His purpose for the entire vast universe, God saw that nothing less than Himself (as the God Family) could be absolutely relied upon to carry out that supreme purpose in the entire universe. ... God then purposed to *reproduce Himself*, through humans,

made in His image and likeness, but made first from material flesh and blood, subject to death if there is sin unrepented of—yet with the possibility of being born into the divine Family begotten by God the Father. God saw how this could be done through Christ, who gave Himself for that purpose.

*“And that is why God put man on the Earth! That is what caused God to do this most colossal, tremendous thing ever undertaken by the supreme, Almighty God—to reproduce Himself!”*

Gaining a full understanding of this point is an inspiring scriptural study. Romans 8 says of true Christians, “that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ ... that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (verses 16-18). The glorified Jesus Christ is called “the firstborn among many brethren” (verse 29). 1 John 3:2 says “it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”

God reveals in the Bible that human beings can ultimately become God as God is God. His purpose is for us to be literally born as spirit-composed members of His Family—divine beings with His very perfect character. “[W]e must now be begotten as God’s own children, inheriting His divine nature,” Mr. Armstrong wrote. “Through His power, through feeding on His Spirit, we GROW in grace and knowledge and spiritual character, until, at the resurrection, we shall be BORN of God as His very SONS—elevated to HIS plane and level!” (*Good News*, November 1952).

This is why God created man. This is why He made human beings with physical bodies yet with magnificent minds. This is why human beings even resemble God physically. This is the purpose of God.



*To learn more about God's purpose for man,  
request The God Family Vision.*

## **The Holy Days Reveal God's Master Plan**

God gave the nation of Israel seven annual festivals, outlined in Leviticus 23. Most people dismiss these as being done away with or being only for Jews. The large majority of Christians celebrate holidays, but these observances are mixtures of pagan religions and other teachings. Some few observe the seven holy days of the Bible, but do not know that these festivals reveal God's master plan to accomplish His purpose for mankind. Those who keep these days as commanded are reminded throughout the year of important past events and future events that accomplish His purpose for human life.

These seven observances coincided anciently with the small spring harvest season and the large fall harvest season. This symbolizes two great spiritual harvests of human beings into God's Family: a small initial harvest of saints within His Church (e.g. James 1:18); and a larger, later spiritual harvest of humanity in general (e.g. 1 Timothy 2:3-6). Although some ceremonial aspects of these observances were changed, the holy days remain in force. Jesus Christ and the New Testament Church kept—and still keep—these commanded observances.

- **Passover:** This ceremony is not a holy day but a sacred observance that memorializes the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sin. Christians are reminded of God protecting the Israelites from the death angel in Egypt and then delivering them from slavery (Exodus 12:3-14, 29-32). The sacrificial lamb anciently pointed to Christ's sacrifice—also on Passover—the blood of which redeems New Testament Christians (1 Peter 1:18-19). Christians today keep this observance using the New Testament symbols instituted by Christ Himself (Matthew 26:26-29; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29).
  
- **The Days of Unleavened Bread:** This seven-day observance, which begins and ends with a holy day, represents the removal of sin from a Christian's life. God's people remove all leaven from their areas prior to the first day of this seven-day feast, during which leaven symbolizes sin (Exodus 12:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5:6-8). Just as the Israelites, after being redeemed from slavery, were completely delivered from the Egyptians (Exodus 14:26-31), those Christians are to draw on God's power to conquer sin and to walk in the Spirit.
  
- **Pentecost:** At the end of seven weeks of the spring harvest comes this festival, also known as the "feast of firstfruits" (Exodus 23:16). This day represents those "firstfruits" God has called into His Church during this present age, in preparation for the later time when He will call the rest of humanity. (This restored truth is so

important, it is listed later as a separate point.) The members of His Church today must grow by doing His Work so they can ripen and be harvested, receiving eternal life in the Kingdom of God. This day also corresponds to the giving of God's perfect spiritual law to the Israelites (Exodus 20) and the giving of God's Holy Spirit to members of the New Testament Church (Acts 2).

- **Feast of Trumpets:** This festival represents the most earthshaking event in human history: the Second Coming. Celebrated anciently with blowing of trumpets (Leviticus 23:24), it foreshadows the catastrophic events that accompany the seven trumpet blasts of the Day of the Lord (Revelation 8-9; 11:15-19). The multiple cataclysms of this day culminate in the most hopeful event of all: the return of the empowered, glorified Jesus Christ (Matthew 24:30-31). That event will also mark the first resurrection—the resurrection of the saints to glory (1 Corinthians 15:52).
- **Day of Atonement:** This day symbolizes human beings becoming “at one” with God. It is kept today, as it was anciently, with a fast—going without food and water for 24 hours (Leviticus 23:27). On this day anciently was a ceremony in which a goat representing Christ was killed and its blood brought before God to make atonement for the people's sins—symbolic of His crucifixion and intercessions on our behalf (Leviticus 16:15-16; Hebrews 9). Another goat was laden with the

people's sins and released in the wilderness—symbolic of Satan's future banishment in a bottomless pit (Leviticus 16:20-22; Revelation 20:1-3). The end of Satan's malevolent influence will enable all men to build a relationship with God under His government.

- **Feast of Tabernacles:** This seven-day festival, also called the “feast of ingathering” (Exodus 34:22), is celebrated by gathering at special sites chosen by God (Deuteronomy 16:13-17). It represents the great fall harvest—a thousand-year period after God has established His Kingdom when salvation is open to everyone. For a millennium, human beings will live in peace and harmony, according to God's law (even holy day laws—Zechariah 14:16) and under His Kingdom (Revelation 20:6). (This truth is so important, it too is listed later, separately.)
- **Last Great Day:** This day, which is celebrated immediately after the Feast of Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:36) and whose fulfillment will occur right after the Millennium, represents the culmination of God's master plan for man (John 7:37-39). In the second resurrection, all who have ever lived and who were deceived by Satan and not yet called by God will be brought back to physical life (Ezekiel 37; Revelation 20:11-12). God will judge them and present them the opportunity to choose His joyful way of life under His government in His Kingdom. (This too is listed as a separate point later.)

These are the seven holy days God ordained for ancient Israel, for spiritual Israel and for the whole world, and this is the true meaning behind these days.

Pagan Holidays—or  
God's Holy Days—  
Which?

To learn more about the holy days, request  
Pagan Holidays—or God's Holy Days—Which?

## The Government of God

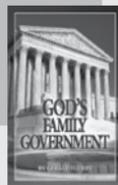
God's government on Earth was removed as a result of Satan's rebellion. The restoration of that government to Earth is *uppermost* in God's mind. God restored His government to His Church. Christ is Head of the Church (Colossians 1:18). Under Him is one man, an apostle, supported by evangelists, pastors and elders, then deacons and other helpers (1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11-16).

But God's government is more than merely ministerial ranks and offices within the Church: It is Christ *ruling His people*. The Church submits to Christ; within families, husbands submit to Christ, wives submit to their husbands and to Christ, and children submit to their parents and to Christ. Christ submits to God the Father (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:23; 6:1; Colossians 3:18-20). Malachi's prophecy about the end-time Elijah included this: "And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Malachi 4:6). This man's work would build families and restore God's family government. God wants a people *prepared* for Christ's Second Coming, and they must have His family government to be ready.

When Jesus Christ returns, He will establish God's government over the whole Earth. God the Father will be the ultimate authority, with Jesus Christ under Him, and

the Church, His Bride (Revelation 19:7), helping Christ to govern humanity and to teach and enforce God's perfect law. Although much maligned by Satan and many others, God's law is eternal, just and good (Romans 7:12; Psalm 19:7-11). It is the *cause* for the *effect* of human happiness. It is encapsulated by a single word: love (Romans 13:10).

*To learn more about God's government,  
request God's Family Government and our  
reprint article "And God Raised Up ... One Man."*



## **Who and What God Is**

For millennia, scholars, scientists, theologians and priests have used observation, experimentation and human reasoning to establish who or what their god is. Even many religions struggle to define the nature of the god they worship. Perhaps no subject requires a sweeping away of previous misconceptions and an unbiased study of the Bible's plain meaning as much as this.

The Bible reveals that God is not an impersonal force, nor is He a solitary being, nor is He a trinity. Scripture reveals that there are presently *two* God Beings: God and the Word (John 1:1-2), who at Jesus's birth became Father and Son (verse 18; John 5:20 and many other verses). This is not a metaphor: God is a Family. The Father leads the Family, and the Son carries out His will. These two Spirit Beings have eternally existed, have unlimited minds and creative power, and perfect, holy, righteous character.

Scripture is also clear that human beings have the potential to be born as spirit beings into God's Family. Baptized members of God's Church are betrothed to become the Bride of Jesus Christ (e.g. 2 Corinthians 11:2). Every human

who has ever lived or ever will live will have the opportunity to be born as children of God. Understanding the nature of the God Family reveals why human family exists, why God made husband, wife, marriage and children. It is a vision-filled, and also deeply practical, truth of the Bible.

*To learn more about who and what God is, request*

*Mystery of the Ages and read Chapter 1, "Who and What Is God?" Also, request Does God Exist? and God Is a Family.*



## **God the Father Is Preeminent**

Throughout His ministry, Jesus revealed and emphasized the preeminence of His Father above Himself (e.g. John 5:30; 8:28-29; 12:49; 14:24, 28). It is God the Father to whom Jesus instructs us to pray (Matthew 6:6). Yet since the first century after Jesus Christ's human life-time, churches have emphasized Jesus and ignored the Father. This reveals a lack of understanding about God's government. An understanding of God's true nature makes plain why Jesus consistently pointed people to His Father, reinforcing a family government structure that will remain in place for eternity (e.g. 1 Corinthians 15:24).

Before Jesus Christ's first coming, mankind generally knew of only one God Being. But Jesus revealed the existence of God the Father (John 1:18), the God Family and the fact that human beings were created to be born into that Family (e.g. John 20:17). This doctrine of the Father's preeminence was taught by Christ, rejected by Christianity, and restored by the end-time Elijah.

*To learn more about God the Father, request "Revelation—The Father Focus" reprint article.*



## What and Why Man Is

The reason so many scientists, psychologists, philosophers and religionists have failed to explain what man is, is that they have not understood man's purpose. Humans are physical beings, but we are not animals. God made us after His own image and likeness (Genesis 1:26). We are mortal, flesh and blood, yet with the potential to develop the very character of God.

Understanding what man is reveals what the afterlife holds. We do not have immortal souls: When we die, we return to dust (Genesis 3:19; Ecclesiastes 9:5; Ezekiel 18:4). But we can be resurrected to physical life and, ultimately, to spirit life (1 Corinthians 15:42-54). Understanding the purpose for man—to be born into God's Family—enables you to understand what and why is man.

*To learn more about what man is, request The Incredible Human Potential and Mystery of the Ages, of which Chapter 3 is "The Mystery of Man."*



## The Spirit in Man

God created in human beings a *spirit* (Job 32:8; Ecclesiastes 3:21; 12:7; 1 Corinthians 2:11). This spirit imparts to the brain intellect, the ability to think and reason, giving human beings a thinking ability. This is why human beings can speak, write, build, produce, share relationships and do many other things that animals cannot. This also explains why scientists have failed to explain the vast difference between the mental capacity of animals compared to humans, despite human brains being physically similar to animal brains.

The real value of a human life lies solely in this human spirit as it works in combination with the human brain. This human spirit also makes it possible for a human being to have a relationship with God: When the spirit in man interacts with God's Holy Spirit, a human being can grow spiritually in God's character (e.g. Romans 8:16).

*To learn more about the human spirit, request*

What Science Can't Discover About the Human Mind.



## **Truth About the Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is God's power (Luke 1:35; Acts 1:8—incorrectly translated “Ghost” in the King James Version). It is the indescribably powerful force He used to create angels and the universe and human beings, and which He uses to perform His will (Psalm 104:30). It is not a third person of a trinity and is never referred to in Scripture as such.

When a person receives the Holy Spirit at baptism, that individual is spiritually begotten by God the Father (not “born again”). This is typified exactly by how physical human beings are conceived: Just as a sperm cell impregnates an ovum, the Holy Spirit “impregnates” a true Christian with spiritual life. It empowers his or her mind with spiritual understanding and allows humans to partake of God's divine nature (1 Corinthians 2:9-16; 2 Peter 1:4). The Christian must then follow as God leads through the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:14). This spiritual power from God empowers the true Christian to overcome sin and causes him or her to grow in spiritual character to the point of spiritual birth. The Holy Spirit

is the power by which God can bring human beings into His Family.

To learn more about the Holy Spirit, request *Just What Do You Mean ... Born Again? and God Is a Family.*



## **The Church Is the Firstfruits**

God's master plan is to save as much of humanity as He can (1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9). Yet during this present age, He is not trying to save the whole world—in fact, starting at the Garden of Eden, He *cut off* the vast majority of human beings from having a relationship with Him (Genesis 3:23-24). Individuals *cannot* come to Christ of their own choice—they can only do so if God the Father calls them (John 6:44).

Yet God has reserved the right to choose some few at this time *in preparation* for the future time when He opens up the opportunity for salvation to all mankind. This was evident in Christ training a handful of disciples while keeping His truth hidden from most people (e.g. Matthew 13:10-16). Yet “God is no respecter of persons” (Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11) and *will* make His truth freely available to everyone (e.g. Habakkuk 2:14; Zechariah 14:9). As stated above, God's plan involves two harvests, beginning with the smaller harvest that helps prepare for the larger, later harvest.

The Church is represented by the small “firstfruit” harvest. These individuals must resist and conquer Satan, use God's Holy Spirit, and grow in spiritual character. From the time of the patriarchs, God has also given these few the job to proclaim a warning and to preach the true gospel as a witness. By doing so, they prepare

to be born into His Family, become the Bride of Jesus Christ, and help bring a much larger number of humans into the God Family.

*To learn more about the Church, request Mystery of the Ages and read Chapter 6, "Mystery of the Church."*



## **The Millennium**

The Bible plainly speaks of a thousand-year period when Satan will be bound and Christ will rule with His saints (Revelation 20:2-6). However, few understand the *purpose* for the Millennium and how it fits within God's plan. Mr. Armstrong linked prophecies throughout the Bible with that period and showed how it is pictured by the annual Feast of Tabernacles. God will purge the world of sin, root out the influences of Satan's rule, and establish a new world of law, love, peace and prosperity (Isaiah 2:1-5; 11:6-16). The glorified Jesus Christ will rule the Earth from Jerusalem as King of kings, enforcing the perfect law of God, and God will make salvation available to everyone on Earth.

Mr. Armstrong's ministry focused on proclaiming the good news of this future reality. His television program was called *The World Tomorrow*. He showed how God is preparing for that world today, and how throughout that thousand-year period, Earth will be prepared for the second resurrection that will follow it. "The glorified Christ—coming in all the splendor, the supernatural power and the glory of God Almighty—coming to save mankind alive—coming to stop escalating wars, nuclear mass destruction, pain and suffering—coming to usher in peace, abundant well-being, happiness and joy for all

mankind,” he wrote (*The Wonderful World Tomorrow—What It Will Be Like*). This is what will occur during the 1,000-year rule of Jesus Christ known as the Millennium.

*To learn more about the Millennium, request The Wonderful World Tomorrow—What It Will Be Like.*



## **The Resurrection to Judgment**

“For as in Adam all die,” wrote the Apostle Paul, “even so in Christ shall ALL be made alive” (1 Corinthians 15:22). The Bible is clear that there is coming, at the end of the Millennium, a resurrection of all people who have ever lived—of all nations and all ages in history—without knowing God! (Revelation 20:11-12). God will judge them in this “great white throne” judgment, showing them that they ALL have sinned (Romans 3:23), and ALL have a need for Christ’s sacrifice and for forgiveness. Having lived and died in a world cut off from God, they will now have free access to learn the truth, come to repentance, and receive salvation and God’s Holy Spirit.

This is the biblical teaching on the afterlife, contrary to teachings of an immortal soul, a rapture and eternal life in heaven or hell. Many believe erroneously that a great number of people throughout history are suffering in hellfire. The Bible teaches that when a human being dies, his body returns to dust, and the human spirit, which recorded his mind and experiences, returns to God (Ecclesiastes 3:20-21). The man is no longer conscious; he does not have an immortal soul. The dead will only regain consciousness in the resurrection, during which time they will be given 100

years to learn about God and to choose His way of life (Isaiah 65:20-25).

The truth about the resurrection to judgment gives tremendous hope for every human being who has ever lived.

The Bible also teaches of a third resurrection, in which those who have known God but rejected Him will be revived and sentenced to eternal death (Revelation 20:13-15).

*To learn more about the resurrection, request the reprint article "7,000 Years of Preparation."*



## **The Modern Identity of Israel**

Most people believe that the Jewish nation in the Middle East is descended from ancient Israel. The Jews are indeed the modern descendants of ancient Israelites, but predominantly *one tribe* of that ancient 12-tribed nation, Judah. The northern 10 tribes, called the kingdom of Israel, are now generally known to history as the “lost 10 tribes.” The prophecies concerning them are considered unfulfilled, and many people discount the Bible partially or completely because of this.

But Herbert Armstrong proved from the Bible and from secular history that these Israelites migrated north and west from the Holy Land—and that the “lost 10 tribes” of Israel include most modern English-speaking nations, including Britain, its Commonwealth nations and the United States.

Many people have some knowledge of this identity, but no major denomination teaches it. Knowing who the modern Israelites are reveals the major thread of

the Bible and shows why Britain, the United States and other countries have received unparalleled blessings. God intends the history of Israel to teach us, “upon whom the ends of the world are come” (1 Corinthians 10:11).

*To learn more about the modern Israelites, request*

The United States and Britain in Prophecy.



### **Israel's Identity Opens Prophetic Understanding**

The Bible is a book about Israel. Fully *one third* of the Bible is prophecy, and 90 percent of prophecy is for the end time. Although the Old Testament and the New Testament contain numerous prophecies, most synagogues and churches shy away from the subject of prophecy. But God preserved those prophecies for millennia so they would be available—and understood—in our day. He is warning the nations of Israel and the world about the coming Great Tribulation. He is revealing and explaining *why* these punishments are coming. And He is giving people hope, with the understanding of these events and where they are ultimately leading.

Take Jeremiah 30, as one example. Verse 4 says this is a prophecy “that the LORD spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah.” You must know who Israel and Judah are for this to be meaningful. Verses 5-7 speak of a time of unparalleled suffering coming on these nations, and it calls it “the time of Jacob’s trouble.” You don’t know who this worst of all calamities is going to befall unless you know that Jacob placed his name on Ephraim and Manasseh, and that Ephraim is modern-day Britain and

Manasseh is the United States. There are hundreds of these types of end-time prophecies. Understanding the modern identity of Israel enables you to understand what is prophesied for Britain, the U.S. and other nations.

Israel's identity was one of the very first truths God revealed to Mr. Armstrong. This shows how crucial it was that this truth be known in this end time, so those prophetic warnings could be understood and publicized.

“Not knowing how and where these nations are specifically mentioned in basic and major prophecies,” he wrote, “the educated of the world have been utterly blinded to the plain and simple meaning of prophecy.” Understanding Israel's modern identity unlocks a large portion of the Bible to be understood as God intended.

*To learn more about modern Israel in prophecy, request  
The United States and Britain in Prophecy.*



## **The Identity of Babylon and Her Daughters**

Another crucial end-time prophecy is found in Revelation 17: the vision of a woman “[w]ith whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication,” who is riding upon a terrible beast. This woman is called “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.”

Mr. Armstrong showed how the Bible often uses a woman as a symbol of a church, and this woman riding a beast symbolizes a church guiding a great political empire. In *Who or What Is the Prophetic Beast?*, he assembled all the relevant scriptures (including, most

notably, Revelation 13, and Daniel 2 and 7) and history to show how this beast is a *European* empire, and that church with which it has repeatedly aligned is the Roman Catholic Church.

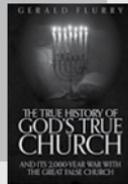
This truth warrants deep historical and scriptural study. Most of the world is unaware of the Catholic Church's origins, which date back to the first century with Simon Magus and the Babylonian mystery religion he introduced in Samaria (Acts 8). This sorcerer mixed his pagan religious teachings with the revolutionary teachings of Jesus Christ. Subsequent church leaders increased the power of the religion by influencing political leaders. The Holy Roman Empire, which from the time of the Imperial Restoration of A.D. 554 has repeatedly risen within Europe over a period of centuries, represents the full realization of the terrifying vision of Revelation 17.

This church is called a "MOTHER" (verse 5) even by people unaware of this prophecy, because it has given rise to many daughters—Protestant churches that still retain the mother church's day of worship, holidays and many other doctrines. And, also in accordance with prophecy, these churches are drawing closer to that mother church in this end time (Isaiah 47).

In John's vision, this woman is "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" (Revelation 17:6). History shows that since its founding this church has persecuted and martyred God's people. For 2,000 years, this church has been Satan's greatest weapon against God's true Church, and it is prophesied to wage yet another violent persecution before the end of this age of man. The identity of Babylon and her daughters shines a light on 2,000 years of history

and religious conflict, as well as the immediate religious and political future of a powerful empire to come.

*To learn more about Babylon and her daughters, request The True History of God's True Church, as well as Who or What Is the Prophetic Beast? and The Holy Roman Empire in Prophecy.*



## **Satan Has Deceived the Whole World**

Most people who consider themselves Christians believe that God and Satan are waging a battle for men's souls, with God trying to save as many as He can from the devil's clutches. The truth of the Bible is not only that God has actually *cut off* mankind from access to the tree of life and to Himself (Genesis 3:23-24), but also that He has allowed Satan to remain on the throne He placed him on when he was the archangel Lucifer. The Bible clearly says that "the god of this world" is the devil (2 Corinthians 4:4). Today's world is ruled not by God, but *by Satan*.

Ever since successfully turning Adam and deceiving Eve to sin in the Garden of Eden, Satan has used his authority and power to broadcast his evil attitudes, moods and impulses into human minds (Ephesians 2:2). He has deceived the *whole world* (Revelation 12:9). Thus he has effectively "kidnapped" human beings, turning them away from their true Father and to his own evil, selfish way of life. This explains the squalid state of the world, rife with war, oppression and injustice, betrayal, thievery and deceit, poverty and deprivation, ignorance and squalor, and misery rooted in family dysfunction, addiction and sin.

God is allowing mankind to live by their own

definitions of good and evil and to build human civilization as they think best, as Satan deceives them. He is allowing humanity to experience what self-will and sin produces. He is not yet working directly with or judging the vast majority of human beings.

When Jesus Christ returns, however, He will depose Satan and establish the Kingdom of God. The painful, powerful lessons of Satan's rule will ultimately motivate the vast majority of mankind to repent, turn to God, and be born into His Family.

*To learn more about Satan's influence, read Chapter 4, "The Mystery of Civilization," in Mystery of the Ages. Also request "A World Held Captive" reprint article and Human Nature: What Is It?*



## **We Are to Be Separate**

God's Church must remain separate from the ways of Satan's world. God has called a very small number of people to serve Him over the ages. He has commanded these individuals not to isolate themselves physically from those around them (John 17:15-16), but to come out of the world in terms of their thinking and their actions in order to become pure and separate (2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Revelation 18:4-5).

For this reason, God's people do not involve themselves in the politics or religions of the world around them. Mr. Armstrong taught how true Christians, like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, are sojourners in this world and ambassadors of another world (Hebrews 11:13; 2 Corinthians 5:20; John 18:36). They represent the coming Kingdom of God. They submit to the laws of

the nations they live in, unless those laws conflict with obeying God (Romans 13:1-7; Acts 5:29).

To learn more about being separate, request *Mystery of the Ages* (and read Chapter 6) and *Just What Do You Mean ... Conversion?*



## **Second and Third Tithe**

God commands us to devote one tenth of our income to Him (e.g. Leviticus 27:30; Malachi 3:8-10; Matthew 23:23). Everything we own is God's, yet He claims only this small amount—to develop our faith, obedience and character, and to help us invest our hearts into His Work (Matthew 6:21). God uses these tithes to fund His Work of preaching true doctrines to the world as a witness.

However, God also commands that His people save a *second* tenth of their income for their *own use* while observing His annual holy days, so they can truly *rejoice* in them (Deuteronomy 14:22-26). Other churches do not keep these days, so they have no reason to save second tithe. In addition, God commands that in the third and sixth years of every seven-year cycle, His people give a third tithe for the needy, a welfare fund administered by God's ministry in the Church (verses 28-29; Deuteronomy 26:12-15).

These tithing laws are among those that will be restored all over the Earth at Christ's return, but they have already been restored to the Church.

To learn more about tithing, request *The Financial Law You Can't Afford to Ignore* and *Solve Your Money Troubles!*



## **The Authority of the Sacred Calendar**

The sacred calendar preserved by the Jews is the proper calculation of time. Among the “oracles of God” maintained by the Jews through the ages (Romans 3:2) is the understanding of the biblical calendar, with its seventh-day Sabbath and its establishment of the months of the year whereby the holy days can be properly observed as God intends.

“God did not commit His oracles or the preservation of His times, to profane history,” wrote Mr. Armstrong. “They have been preserved by the Jews. After thorough study of the Bible, of the Hebrew calendar, of history and every angle ... we have unanimously agreed that the Hebrew calendar has been preserved correct by the Jews.”

*To learn more about the sacred calendar, request*

**Pagan Holidays—or God's Holy Days—Which?**

Pagan Holidays—or  
God's Holy Days—  
Which?

## Hold Fast

After Herbert W. Armstrong died, the Church turned away from these teachings. Some turned to other denominations or other religions. Many quit religion altogether.

But ONE small group held fast to these restored truths and remembered what they signified, according to Christ's own prophecy. Gerald Flurry, a former minister in the Worldwide Church of God, established the Philadelphia Church of God (PCG) in 1989. The few who remembered these answers to life's greatest questions, the pivotal sign of the end time, and the man God used to restore them, are members of the PCG.

In his booklet *The Epistles of Peter: A Living Hope*, Mr. Flurry wrote about Christ's pivotal Matthew 17 prophecy of an end-time Elijah restoring all things: "The Philadelphia Church of God plays a critical part in [Christ's] prophecy as well, because since Mr. Armstrong's death we have had to SUSTAIN those restored truths and fight to keep that sign visible! The PCG has kept all those restored truths ALIVE. We must ensure that the world REMEMBERS that sign, so it will know Christ is about to return. ... The prophecy of all things being restored just before Christ's return IMPLIES that those restored truths would REMAIN as a sign for the Laodiceans and the world!"

"So we PROPHECY AGAIN for the last time before Christ's return!" he continued, referencing the command to the final era of God's Church to "prophecy again" in Revelation 10:11. "AGAIN we take those ... restored truths to the world after they were CAST DOWN .... After Mr. Armstrong died, the PCG was put on center stage. We have to keep this MAJOR SIGN of Christ's Second Coming ALIVE."

Study these truths. Each one of us must PROVE and KNOW and HOLD FAST to them. We must put a high value

on them. The true gospel that had not been preached for 1,900 years, God's form of government, God's nature, the purpose for human beings, God's inspiring plan for non-Christians, the meaning behind holy day observances, the key to understanding biblical prophecy, the resurrection, and many, many others: These were the truths that the first Church era, founded by Jesus Christ, had—truths that God inspired to be recorded in the Bible. Some of them are traceable through the subsequent eras of the Church before they were lost. But God used Mr. Armstrong to restore *all* of them.

This man restored “ALL THINGS”—ALL THE PILLAR DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE. You can prove *from your own Bible* that Jesus Christ taught every one of these truths. They represent extraordinary understanding and spiritual wealth. And there is still a group of people faithfully living by and proclaiming them.

“This Matthew 17 prophecy is the single-most pivotal prophecy in this end time. It is the major sign to the world that the Second Coming is almost here,” Mr. Flurry writes. “Christ wants that sign visible. He sent an important personality at a critical juncture in history—a man to restore all things. *If you want to get ready for my Second Coming*, Christ is saying, *learn about those truths and go to where they are being taught and disseminated*” (ibid).

God is preparing in a detailed way for Christ's return, the greatest event in history. And the *most pivotal act of preparation* is the restoration of God's truth within the true Church. You can prove beyond doubt that we are living in the time of the end prophesied by Jesus Christ. The end-time Elijah has come. He has restored all things to the Church. The dreadful Day of the Lord is near. And the glorified Jesus Christ is about to return!

## **Literature Offered in This Booklet**

*Mystery of the Ages*

*The United States and Britain in Prophecy*

*The Incredible Human Potential*

*The Wonderful World Tomorrow—What It Will Be Like*

*The True History of God's True Church*

*Who and What Is the Prophetic Beast?*

*The God Family Vision*

*Pagan Holidays—or God's Holy Days—Which?*

*Does God Exist?*

*What Science Can't Discover About the Human Mind*

*God's Family Government*

*Just What Do You Mean ... Conversion?*

*God Is a Family*

*Just What Do You Mean ... Born Again?*

*The Holy Roman Empire in Prophecy*

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