

Israel's Killing Fields
(Copyright 2024) by Richard Markland
(London, Ohio)

PAGE 3 **Article**

Did Enoch and Elijah Die?
(Copyright 1993) by Ernest L. Martin
(Portland, Oregon)

PAGE 7 **Article**

A Nation at Risk
(Copyright 2013) by Rod Reynolds
(Wentzville, Missouri)

PAGE 9 **Article**

Can You Be Deceived
(Copyright) by Wayne Schatzle
(West Chester, Ohio)

PAGE 11 **Article**

**Light On the
Enemy's Schemes**
(Copyright 2023) by Zac Poonen
(Bangalore, India)

PAGE 12 **Article**

**What the Rapture Cult
Refuses to See**

(Copyright 2024) by James Lloyd
(Medford, Oregon)

PAGE 13 **Short Article**

**Does Earth's Fate Rest
on a Giant Turtle's Back?**

(Copyright 2022) by David Rives
(Lewisburg, Tennessee)

PAGE 14 **Short Article**

**In regard to:
Did Enoch and Elijah Die?**

Article by Ernest L. Martin
Comments by Laura Lee
(Bismarck, North Dakota)

PAGE 14 **Iron Sharpening Iron**

**In regard to:
Is Yayshua God?**

Article by James & Patt Steinle
Comments by James Steinle
(Swanville, Minnesota)

PAGE 15 **Iron Sharpening Iron**

**In regard to:
Is Yayshua God?**

Article by James & Patt Steinle
Comments by Laura Lee
(Bismarck, North Dakota)

PAGE 16 **Iron Sharpening Iron**

Prayer Requests

16 --- From James Steinle for Patt Steinle

16 --- From William P. Goff for the Brethren in Kenya

Letters

18 --- From William P. Goff in regard to: Brethren in Kenya

To Unsubscribe from this newsletter:

Send a blank email to church-of-god-bismarck@hotmail.com with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line.

To Subscribe to this newsletter, Go to:

[Newcogmessenger Info Page](http://Newcogmessenger.com) (church-of-god-messenger.org)

To Submit Items for Print, Send to:

the-church-of-god-messenger@hotmail.com

church-of-god-bismarck@hotmail.com

Mail to Darwin & Laura Lee, 320 N. Griffin St., Bismarck, ND 58501

The "New" Church of God Messenger is an independent publication. All newsletters may be copied and given to others if they are copied and sent in their entirety.

Publisher: Church of God, Bismarck, Darwin & Laura Lee, **Editor:** Laura Lee, **Assistant Editor:** Darwin Lee We do not necessarily agree with all contributors, or their works submitted and printed in this newsletter. It is up to you to get out your Bible and see whether these things are true. Iron sharpens Iron

Contributors: William P. Goff, Laura Lee, James Lloyd, Richard Markland, Ernest L. Martin, Zac Poonen, Rod Reynolds, David Rives, Wayne Schatzle, James Steinle

Websites:

<https://darwin-laura.com/> **Links**

<https://www.church-of-god-bismarck.org> **Current Newsletters**

<https://shopping-mall-online.biz/> **Church Books and Free Classified Ads**

1Co 14:26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

Israel's Killing Fields (Copyright 2024) by Richard Markland (London, Ohio)

October 7, 2023, will be indelibly etched in the minds of those who lost loved ones from the brutal and demonically driven slaughter of innocent Israelis. What took place has been called "Israel's 9/11." A loathing hatred carried out by Hamas butchers upon innocent Israeli men, women, and children shocked the world.

Since the Bible is God's mind in print, Ezekiel 9:4 says he wants people to "sigh" and "weep" for what took place. The attack has been tragically justified by those who feel Palestinians have been oppressed by the state of Israel for decades. There is the tragic erroneous belief that the Jewish people deserved what happened because of its "oppression" of the Palestinian people.

How people have reacted to the horrors of October 7 has been noted by God. How many people felt the emotions described in Ezekiel 9:4?

Ezekiel 9:4 – "And the Lord said Go ... through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and **set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and cry** for all the abominations (loathing hatred) that be done in the midst thereof."

Sigh: To express deep heartfelt grief. A deep yearning for people to live by what God says, so others don't have to experience a similar horror.

Weeping: To shed heartfelt tears for what happened. To express deep sorrow and grief for the victims.

How many people were deeply moved and at a loss for words on October 7? How many people were angered by the blatant butchery of innocent Israeli men, women, children? Sighing and weeping can also mean that the human spirit is weighed down heavily, accompanied by deep sorrow because of a feeling of total helplessness. Anyone who simply listened briefly, and quickly moved on is suffering from an emotionally hardened condition, which is far too common in America today.

Matthew 24:12 – "Because wickedness shall abound (be pervasive), the love of many shall wax cold."

Death Camps During World War II Never Existed

Even though there were six million Jews murdered in German concentration camps during World War II, it is ridiculed as a hoax by holocaust deniers. Because skeptics didn't witness the holocaust with their own eyes, it is considered a lie. Even though there is actual video footage that proves the holocaust did take place, deniers with demented mindsets refuse to believe it took place. It is equivalent to stating the Twin Towers were never brought down by an act of terrorism because most people never witnessed it for themselves. Video footage of people jumping to their deaths were simply mannequins that were used in display windows. The reasoning can be that it was an elaborate hoax in order for the United States to have a reason to invade Iraq. If stating this is considered ridiculous, is it any more outrageous than stating the Jews weren't slaughtered by the millions in German death camps during World War Two? Holocaust deniers will find a way to deny the horror due to hatred towards the Jewish people, regardless of what proof is offered.

A loathing hatred for the Jewish people today is the reason why their enemies do not believe what happened on October 7. It was simply staged and a hoax. After all, who witnessed it personally? Pro-Hamas protesters are now making the claim that over 1,200 Jewish men, women and children were not brutally murdered by demon possessed terrorists. Regardless of the eyewitness testimony, reports by journalists, and unedited photographs that have been released to the public, it isn't believed. Unbridled hatred towards the Jewish people is being screamed worldwide, regardless of what is shown or said.

Unspeakable Butchery Carried Out Upon Young and Old Alike

Israel's killing fields are soaked in blood. Hamas terrorists are Satan's foot soldiers. They dutifully carried out the butchery

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 23, 2024 --- Issue No. 164

of men, women, and children, when the commander of the 1,500 drug deranged Hamas butchers were instructed to slaughter at will.

College students with minds made of mush have been mentally poisoned by godless college professors, and if given the opportunity they would kill every Jewish person in sight. Shouts of “Gass the Jews,” “Drive them into the Sea,” and “Glory To The Martyrs,” have been heard in rallies across the country. America has become a stranger unto itself, and anyone who dares to stand up to such hatred is considered a “Jew lover,” and an enemy of those who spout such poison idiocy. Unbridled demonically driven hatred has been unleashed. The rancid cancerous mentally deranged attitude is openly shouted and will not be put back in its cage until catastrophic lessons are learned by those who spout such lies.

It hasn't been reported by America's lamestream media that Hamas rapes Palestinian women in Gaza and murders them at will. They maim and kill without a conscious, extort businesses and individuals, and imprisons anyone who violates **their laws**. The butchery that was carried out upon the Israelis also occurs in Gaza, yet the godless and anti-Jewish media is glaringly silent. Gaza was handed over to the Palestinians by Israel. The Palestinian people voted for Hamas to rule over them. The election was rigged, however, and any candidate challenging Hamas was thrown from high rise buildings to their deaths or brutally murdered. Because there are no reports of how Hamas treats the Palestinians living in Gaza, the savages have been given a clean bill of health. Nothing could be further from the horrifying reality that the Palestinian people are experiencing every day. The Palestinian people live in fear of Hamas because all members of the terrorist group are driven by a demonic hatred under the direction of Satan himself. Those who protest on America's College campuses are woefully ignorant of the fact that they would be victims of Hamas's butchery as well and are putty in the hands of ignorant Hamas sympathizers teaching at America's universities. Deadly poison is infecting the minds of students in campuses across the country.

Demonic Hatred Doesn't Cherry Pick Its Victims

1 Peter 5:8 – “... your adversary the devil as a roaring lion, walks about seeking whom he may devour (kill and butcher).”

We are living in a time in which the Bible can't be used to counter anyone who doesn't have moral boundaries based upon what it says. It is a book rejected by a generation that reasons, “The way I see it, is the way it is.” It is liberal and godless reasoning, and a state of mind that is spiritually bankrupt. Such thinking is angry, frustrated, stubborn, and confused. People who feel Israel deserves whatever is coming its way does not read the Bible that plainly states Israel does belong to the Jewish people. Anyone holding such a view, by using the Bible as the ultimate authority, is erroneously considered biased and racist. In other words, God is biased and a racist since the Bible is his mind in print. God is rejected because people do not want to be told what to do.

1 Samuel 8:7 – “... they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.”

Human nature doesn't change. Just as ancient Israel rejected God thousands of years ago, America has also rejected Him today, and is on Satan's wavelength, which is very very powerful. Because America is a nation divided on almost every issue, the division now seen around the country is going to lead to the collapse of the nation. The Bible explains what is going to happen to America because of the violent clashes and verbal shrills on the streets of the country. America should be ashamed, but what is to be expected when the churches preach a watered-down version of true Christianity?

Mark 3:24-25 – “And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom **cannot stand**. And if a house be divided against itself, **that house cannot stand**.”

Because far too many Americans are smug and self-assured, there is the delusional belief that the nation can survive any crisis. America is a nation without moral boundaries in the way life is being lived, yet few people recognize the condition they are suffering from.

Proverbs 14:12 – “There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”

It's tragic to see what is happening to the Palestinian people. Not all Palestinians are radically anti-Semitic but are victimized by a terrorist regime that will not allow them to leave Gaza. The Israelis are falsely accused of not letting Palestinian men, women, and children leave Gaza., but Hamas has stated no one is to leave. Egypt also will not accept

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 23, 2024 --- Issue No. 164

Palestinians into its country. Jordan has also rejected their presence. The people are completely trapped, and it has prompted an outcry against Israel's ground invasion. So, what is Israel to do? Anyone who insists there should be a ceasefire should know that Hamas would continue to lob rockets into Israel. Would any other nation simply shrug off the barbaric butchery of its citizens? What if the United States would have responded to 9/11 by resigning itself to the attacks? America's enemies stated the U.S. deserved what happened. The condemnation of Israel's response to the butchery of October 7 is widespread, yet how many people were killed when the U.S. decided to invade Iraq and Afghanistan after almost 3000 innocent Americans were slaughtered on 9/11?

Horrifying Slaughter from a Kibbutz (Time Magazine, Letter to the editor, January 12, 2024)

Flies will feast on human remnants long after the bodies have been removed. They hover like vultures, the last witnesses to death.

I never get used to seeing them. Or the distinct smell of death. It conjures up an image of a crematorium – or a slaughterhouse.

I saw – and smelled the burnt taste of death – the aftermath of Bucha, where Russians slaughtered Ukrainian civilians on the outskirts of Kyiv. I witnessed the aftermath of massacres of civilians carried out by al-Qaeda forces in Baghdad.

But nothing quite prepared me for Kfar Aza, a kibbutz in southern Israel that had the beauty of the most imaginable – palm trees, colorful flowers and plants, a flowing breeze. The dichotomy of seeing that beautiful and familiar visuals, carnage, smells, flies of massacre site were overwhelming.

Even several months after October 7, the smell of death lingers, especially inside the squat and otherwise plain looking houses where civilians were slow, many of them sleeping.

Strolling through the kibbutz, I noticed markings on all the homes familiar to anyone who has fought in a war zone. These were signs notifying a house has been cleared.

But I also spied a circle with a dot in it – like the Target logo. I was told it is the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) sign for a civilian body still present in the house.

I saw circles with a dot almost everywhere I looked.

Kfar Aza was the site of a preplanned, premeditated slaughter of an entire village. It was not, as I had seen in the dumpsters of social media, civilians accidentally caught in Hamas' crossfire as they attacked military sites.

At the U.S. Army's elite Ranger School, I taught soldiers how to conduct sophisticated raids and pull off ambushes with a clock-like precision. What I saw at Kfar Aza was a highly planned and executed attack.

The first Hamas terrorists arrived by paraglider. A few dozen at first, then more, quickly moved to seal the village's perimeter. Snipers moved to support fire positions on key high ground to cut the armory in the village from the men in the village.

Another platoon of Hamas fighters edged their way deeper into Israel to establish ambushes along key roads to Kfar Aza where any outside military support would come.

They acted methodically and with a level of care that would make any commander envious. They planted anti-tank and anti-personnel mines to establish a deliberate defense of the village's perimeter. They brought pint-size medical kits to care for their wounded, including morphine. They packed their own food – dates and figs, mostly.

Once isolated, they went house to house, methodically killing, mutilating, and kidnapping. Their tools were the familiar stuff of asymmetric warzones: AK-47s, rocket-propelled grenades (RPGS), a variety of grenades, kidnapping kits of flex cuffs. They even had specially designed incendiary grenades (to burn houses). Less familiar to modern warzones was the large butcher knives they left behind.

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 23, 2024 --- Issue No. 164

Many of the terrorists were reportedly high on the drug captagon, an amphetamine like speed with hallucinogenic features. Each of the death squads had its own guidebook including instructions like – take the tires from the Israelis’ vehicles, light the tires on fire and throw them into the houses. It will kill and burn them at the same time. There was little thought given on which house to burn first. The randomness of evil is part of its sickness.

As I walked through the village, I saw scene after scene of this evil sickness – children’s rooms riddled with bullets, blood spattered LEGOs. Entire families slaughtered and the bodies burned clutching each other. The most awful were the safe rooms.

Every house in the kibbutz has what, in effect, resembles a bomb shelter. Many turned into nurseries or kids rooms. They had windows and doors that could not lock. When the alarms sounded, most civilians entered those underground bunkers thinking they were safe. Yet they became the scenes of some of the most horrific acts.

I heard stories of parents clutching the door shut by hand, as bullets strayed by. A terrorist appeared suddenly at the window – like something out of a bad horror film. A father or mother full of bullet holes holding the door closed with their last breaths as the terrorist yanked it open.

They sprayed the bunkers with bullets or tossed in a grenade, smoke from burning tires filled the room. All life was soon exterminated.

The Killing continued for hours. Over time what appeared to be non-Hamas Gazans arrived and scavenged the houses for loot, stepping over dead women, children, elderly. Some spirited Israelis back into Gaza.

The last house I entered was a house of a slain couple that were due to be married very soon. Instead, flies, a splattering of blood, and the smell of death. The ceiling was riddled with holes from a terrorist grenade.

When I left the house, I was confronted by the parents of a young man who died in the house. I was not ready for that. As a parent, what do you say to a parent who’s lost a piece of themselves in this way? I froze up.

“I am sorry for your loss,” I said, peering into both the father and mother’s eyes to see their eternal pain. I put my hand over my heart and tried to express my condolences. I then walked away.

A moment later, talking to my IDF escort, the father approached me.

He said “please, please don’t let people forget.”

It was a refrain those of us of my generation, who lived through 9/11 and fought in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, heard often. But it has gone out of style. Most of us barely even pause to reflect on 9/11 anymore. We’ve moved on.

When something like this is so horrific, the initial shock gives way to outrage, but after those emotions burn out, a kind of apathy sets in.

I’ll never forget what I saw in Kfar Aza – the smell, the hovering flies. I hope others should not either.

See Richard Markland’s other articles at:

[Markland, Richard – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://church-of-god-bismarck.org)

Thank You Everyone!

Did Enoch and Elijah Die?

(Copyright 1993) by Ernest L. Martin (Portland, Oregon)

Most Christians commonly assume that the Bible shows the prophets Enoch and Elijah as having been translated to heaven back in their times and that they are now living in an immortal state with Christ and God the Father (II Kings 2:1,11; Hebrews 11:5). The fact is, however, nothing could be farther from the truth. In no way do the Holy Scriptures teach that these two prophets are now immortal and in heaven.

It is the simplest thing in the world to show where the dead are at the present (both the righteous dead and the unrighteous dead) if one wants to rely solely on the teachings of the Holy Scriptures. They are presently in their graves (thoroughly unconscious in every way) and they are awaiting the resurrection from the dead (see Ecclesiastes 9:5; Psalm 6:5; 146:4; John 3:13). The inspired revelation as to the state of the dead shows that they **"sleep in the dust of the earth"** (Daniel 12:2) and that none of them will "awake" from his or her death state until after the great tribulation at the end of the age (Daniel 12:1,2). For those who are **"in Christ,"** they will be resurrected back to life when Christ Jesus returns with his saints (the angels) at his second advent (I Corinthians 15:50-55; I Thessalonians 4:15-16). This is called **"the first resurrection"** (Revelation 20:5), and it is the plain teaching of Scripture. It solves so many problems to understand it.

Indeed, the only one who has ever lived in the flesh and has become an immortal being is Jesus Christ once he was resurrected from the dead. In fact, the apostle Paul in A.D. 63, over thirty years after Christ was resurrected from the dead, stated that Christ was the one **"who only hath immortality"** (I Timothy 6:16). To state otherwise, as so many people are prone to do today, is to be totally inconsistent with scriptural truth and is a patent absurdity. Immortality for Christians will only arrive when Christ returns. It is only then that **"this mortal must put on immortality"** (I Corinthians 15:53). The false teaching of the "present immortality" in Christ (which is the belief that the soul is immortal or that there is a continual living existence of the human personality which transcends the physical consequences of death) is a teaching which makes a mockery out of the inspired revelation of God that the dead remain dead (and will continue to remain in their graves) until their resurrections from the dead.

And let's face it, if mankind were created by God with an inherent immortality, then the **"tree of life"** in the midst of the Garden of Eden would have been a redundant item in the Garden. The first lie of the serpent was to tell Eve and Adam that God was a liar and that they would never die (Genesis 3:4). The serpent was trying to convince Eve that it was not necessary to take of the **"tree of life"** to attain an immortality because, according to the serpent, they had immortality already. He said: **"Ye shall not surely die."** Satan has been a liar from the very beginning (John 8:44) and he and his ministers (II Corinthians 11:14,15) are constantly perpetuating the same lie to human beings that **"ye shall not surely die."** At the present, however, some preachers are slightly modifying the serpent's teaching by saying that if you are **"in Christ"** then you are presently immortal and that you don't have to wait for salvation which is in accord with the scriptural teaching concerning the resurrection from the dead which will occur at Christ's advent. Its erroneous to say that Christians are immortal already. Nothing could be more wrong.

But what about Enoch and Elijah? Do we not read in the Scripture that Enoch did not die and

The "New" Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 23, 2024 --- Issue No. 164

that Elijah was transported into heaven? Let us first look at the matter of Elijah. The verse that makes some people think that Elijah was taken into heaven where God lives is II Kings 2:11. This describes the scene when Elijah departed from his successor Elisha. It says: **"And it came to pass, as they still went on and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven."** From this, it has been surmised by many people that Elijah was taken to God's throne in heaven and has remained there alive ever since. In no way is this true.

The fact is, there are three usages of the word "heaven" in the Bible. One is where the birds fly and the clouds exist (that is, our atmosphere) (Genesis 1:20). The second is where all the heavenly bodies are (Genesis 1:14-17). And the third is, indeed, the very region where God himself resides. This is even called **"the third heaven"** by apostle Paul (II Corinthians 12:1,2). Was it **"the third heaven"** into which Elijah was taken? The answer is clearly NO. We even have the express teaching of Christ himself that no one (man or woman) has ever ascended into the heaven where God resides. **"And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven"** (John 3:13). This means that Elijah (who lived almost 900 years before the birth of Christ) could not have gone into the heaven in which God has his residence. He simply went upwards into the heavens where the birds fly and the clouds exist and was transferred to another location on earth.

Such a circumstance concerning Elijah was even anticipated by those who lived in Elijah's time and knew him personally. A righteous man by the name of Obadiah told Elijah that he believed God would cause **"the Spirit of YHVH to carry thee whither I know not where"** (I Kings 18:12). This shows that the power of Elijah to be transported by the Spirit from one place on earth to another was already recognized as possible by the people who lived at the time. And when Elijah handed over power to his successor, Elisha, he was indeed transported through the air out of the central area of Palestine into the kingdom of Judah in the south (II Kings 2:11). Elijah only went into the "first heaven" (the atmosphere of the earth), and not into outer space or the heaven of God's throne. This is made clear in the scripture because about seven years later we find Elijah still on earth (but this time living in Judah) writing a letter to the King of Judah (II Chronicles 21:12). So Elijah continued to live on earth.

Elijah was simply taken miraculously through the air to a location in southern Judah. The prophet Ezekiel experienced the same phenomenon in his day (Ezekiel 3:12-14) and even the evangelist Philip was similarly transported bodily through the air from a spot near Gaza to the city of Azotus a few miles away (Acts 8:39,40). Thus, Elijah was not taken to the heaven where God lived. The prophet died a few years after his "transfer" and is awaiting his resurrection from the dead (like all the saints of old). Of all who have lived in the flesh, Christ **"only hath immortality"** (I Timothy 6:16).

Now what about Enoch? The answer is much the same. The apostle Paul in the Book of Hebrews says this about Enoch: **"By faith Enoch was translated [Greek: transferred] that he should not see death; and was not found because God had translated [transferred] him: for before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased God"** (Hebrews 11:5). Notice that Paul did not say Enoch did not die. He simply said he was transferred by God to a place where no death could be seen. Where was that place? The answer is plain but it may be a surprise to some people. Enoch was transferred into the Garden of Eden which remained on earth until the Flood. This was the place where God had His presence (Genesis 3:8; 4:16). This was a place where anyone taken into the Garden could talk to God face to face as the word "presence" signifies.

The "New" Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 23, 2024 --- Issue No. 164

It was in the Garden that God was accustomed to walk in the cool of the day (Genesis 3:8). Now note this point. This Scripture says that two men were able to **"walk WITH GOD"** and these were Enoch and Noah (Genesis 5:22-24; 6:9), while later men such as Abraham were able to **"walk BEFORE GOD"** (Genesis 17:1). It was only **"in the midst of the Garden"** that God walked, and to **"walk with God"** meant that Enoch was *transferred* into the Garden where he stayed in a permanent way in God's presence until his death. Noah was also permitted to **"walk with God"** in the Garden in Eden, but he was also allowed to leave in order to build the ark.

Thus, Enoch at the age of 365 was not found in human society any longer. As the Scripture says: **"He was not; for God took him [transferred him in the Garden]."** Where, as Paul said, **"he should not see death"** (Hebrews 11:5). Paul was not saying that Enoch would not die. He simply meant that Enoch was taken to a place where no death could be seen. And while in the Garden no death was seen. The same occurs in the New Jerusalem where it says **"there shall be no more death"** (Revelation 21:4). But Enoch did die (maybe near the time when the Garden ceased at the Flood) because Paul said **"these ALL DIED"** (Hebrews 11:13) and this obviously (as the context shows) included Enoch. This means that both Enoch and Elijah are like all other men. Both are dead and awaiting the resurrection at the second advent of Christ.

[Click here to order the print version of: 101 Bible Secrets That Christians Do Not Know](#)

Reprinted with permission from: Associates for Scriptural Knowledge
<https://www.askelm.com/>

A Nation at Risk

(Copyright 2013) by Rod Reynolds (Wentzville, Missouri)

As I write I'm spending a few days with my youngest son, who just finished college.

He's extremely blessed to have been granted a job offer upon finishing his degree program, as many college graduates are having a difficult time finding any employment, much less employment in their fields of interest and at salaries they might have expected as graduates.

We're in Northern Arizona, hiking some of the many trails in the area. Thursday afternoon and night, it snowed about seven inches where we are. But on Friday we managed to find a snow covered trail we could hike up a mountain, and view other majestic peaks in the distance, across a snow covered landscape of Ponderosa Pine forest.

Like many others his age, or any age, my son wants to explore and sample the good things of life. Trying new restaurants, new varieties of foods and beverages, and in general experience life to the full. Nothing wrong with that, as long as it's done in the proper balance. Though we're separated by a generation, I haven't lost many of the interests we share in common.

As we were traveling across the country, I couldn't help but think of the incredible blessings we in the U.S.A. have been granted as our heritage. We saw huge stores of grain piled high on the ground at a number of grain elevators we passed on the road (cf. "Bumper Grain Harvest Overwhelms Ships, Trains," December 9, 2013, Reuters.com; "Finally, Kansas wheat is a cash crop again," theolathenews.com, July 12, 2013).

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 23, 2024 --- Issue No. 164

Besides abundant agricultural productive capacity, the United States continues to enjoy great abundance in other natural resources. Currently the U.S.A. has the largest coal reserves among the world's nations (“[Coal Facts](#),” [www.americaspower.org](#)). Proven reserves of natural gas and oil in the U.S.A. have risen dramatically in recent years (“[U.S. Crude Oil and Natural Gas Proved Reserves](#),” [eia.gov](#), August 1, 2013). And the country has the potential to become the biggest producer of oil and gas in the world by 2017, according to a report by the International Energy Agency (“[U.S. to overtake Saudi as top oil producer: IEA](#),” [reuters.com](#), November 12, 2012). In terms of tapping nuclear energy, the U.S.A. has been stagnant for more than 20 years due to government policy, while other nations are moving ahead (“[Googling World Energy Reserves](#),” Bill Walker, [lewrockwell.com](#)). Nonetheless, the country has vast renewable resources, such as forests, and is moving ahead in developing other renewable sources of energy.

Another aspect of our heritage is the incredibly diverse and abundant natural beauty of our country, despite the all too common scenes of cast-off trash, junk cars, and ramshackle, dilapidated shacks and similar spectacles marring the landscape. From anywhere in the country, one doesn't have to travel far to behold the wonders of God's creation, in the form of prairies, mountains, forests, lakes, beaches, streams, you name it. As we've traveled by automobile and on foot, we've been able to enjoy a continuous panorama of such beauty.

Despite our blessings, we are a nation at risk. Already the nation's fiscal and monetary policies forebode disaster (cf. “[It's Time to Be a Real Christian](#),” [cogmessenger.org](#), November 16, 2013). But even more ominous are other putrefying sores afflicting our nation's character.

I've not given a lot of time to keeping up with the news in the last several days. But a couple of items did not escape my notice. One was the massive theft of credit card data from a major retail chain. And another was one of the “Duck Dynasty” personalities being pilloried in the media and suspended from the popular television program in reaction to expressing his view that homosexuality is a sin.

The latter is a particularly poignant portrait of how far our nation as a whole has departed from Biblical morality. Public nudity or near nudity, the most egregious obscenities, adulterous liaisons, and so forth, hardly raise an eyebrow, or produce a blush, and are common fare in our media. But to mention the name of “Jesus,” except as profanity, in a television show aimed at a general audience, or for a performer in such a show to label homosexual behavior a sin, produces consternation, condemnation and censure. We have reached the point in our culture where evil is considered good, and good evil ([Isaiah 5:20-21](#)).

Those who censure or condemn homosexual behavior as sin are disdainfully labeled “homophobic” by those who would shape the nation's behavior according to their lawless inclinations. Who came up with such a term? Is anyone, as the term implies, really “fearful” of homosexuals? A sense of revulsion and disgust at a particular type of behavior does not necessarily translate into a “fear” of those who practice it. What we ought to fear, but too frequently don't, is the wrath of God toward any and all our sins, whatever they might be.

The blessings we've inherited are God given. But God can also take them away. And unless our people, along with others similarly blessed elsewhere, repent of our wholesale rebellion against God's laws, our blessings will be taken away from us.

God promised ancient Israel, as descendants of Abraham, abundant blessings ([Genesis 26:4-5](#)), contingent on continuing obedience to his commandments ([Deuteronomy 28:1-13](#)). But he warned them that if they departed from his commandments, curses would replace the blessings they had been given ([Deuteronomy 28:14-68](#)).

These same warnings apply no less to us today, as recipients of the greatest blessings any peoples anywhere have enjoyed. The Bible warns of a “great tribulation” to befall our people if we do not repent of our sins and rebellion ([Jeremiah 8:5-12](#); [25:5-7](#); [30:7](#); [Hosea 12:1-2](#); [Daniel 12:1](#); [Matthew 24:21](#); [Revelation 7:14](#)).

The revolting sin of homosexuality, and other sexual sins, may not be the worst of sins. But from top leaders of the government to many levels of society, even in our schools, the homosexual agenda is being promoted. For a nation to give itself over to approving and promoting such conduct is symptomatic of deep spiritual decay and depravity.

Instead of homosexuality and licentious sex, what ought to be honored and encouraged in our society is the concept of

The "New" Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 23, 2024 --- Issue No. 164

being faithful to one mate of the opposite sex, the two sharing their lives together in genuine love, harmony, honor, and peace, becoming "one flesh" as God designed ([Mark 10:1-9](#)). All sin, including lying, stealing, idolatry, murder and any other transgression, is destructive to its perpetrators, its victims, and ultimately, to society at large.

It's very troubling to consider what will happen to our beloved people if we don't wake up before it's too late to avoid the calamities pronounced against us if we don't repent. Is indulging in sin worth the risk, indeed the promise, of losing everything?

Unless otherwise noted Scripture taken from the New King James Version™ Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission.

Reprinted with permission from: Messenger Church of God
<https://www.cogmessenger.org/>

Can You Be Deceived
(Copyright) by Wayne Schatzle (West Chester, Ohio)

The apostle Paul warned that Satan has transformed himself into an angel of light and that he also has ministers who appear righteous (2 Cor. 11). He is trying to pawn himself off as Christ, the Messiah. He and his ministers appear to be God's servants! He won't look like the traditional devil, with the horns, tail, red body stocking, spade, beard and evil grin—that wouldn't fool anyone into thinking he was Jesus. No, if he wanted to fool people, he would have to appear like the traditional Bible story picture we have come to accept as what Jesus looks like. And what would his ministers look like? Well, they would have to appear friendly, polite, knowledgeable of the Bible, be called reverend or father, be trustworthy, and good respectable citizens. A good counterfeit is hard to detect. What are we to do, and how can we be sure our church, minister, and the one we follow is the true Savior? The simple answer is given by Isaiah (8:20), "To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." It's as simple as that, preachers must speak according to the Bible and, people must hold them to that standard. The people of Berea were commended for receiving Paul's message and also for searching the scriptures daily to prove his words (Acts 17).

We study for school and work. We read all we can about sports. We watch our favorite stars on TV for hours. We listen all we can to the great names of the singing profession. We spend so many hours in vain pursuits, and so little time searching for God and salvation. The most important things of life are put on the "back burner" and we trust our minister to lead us to the promised land, without really knowing if he is on the right path. Jesus spoke of just this situation (Luke 6), "Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch?" He also said narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life and there are few who find it. "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves" (Matt. 7). When you trust a man more than the Word of God, you are in effect following a man instead of God, which is the very foundation of a cult.

The good news for Americans is, we are a land flooded with Bibles and Bible helps. A good start would be a new King James Version with marginal references, a Strong's concordance, and maybe a good Bible dictionary, and you can be skilled in the Word in just a short time. All this and more is also available on computer disks at very low prices.

All we need now is the determination to put forth the effort to study to show ourselves approved unto God. And we also need to ask God to lead us in His truth, and the willingness to make the necessary changes in our lives. Jesus promised that if we seek God with all our hearts, we will find Him.

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (psalm 119:105).

(This article has been updated and re-printed from "The Church of God Messenger" March/April 2002—Issue No. 8)

See Wayne Schatzle's other articles at:

[Schatzle, Wayne – The "New" Church of God Messenger \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://church-of-god-bismarck.org)

Light On the Enemy's Schemes (Copyright 2023) by Zac Poonen (Bangalore, India)

One of Satan's chief weapons is "fear". He uses it constantly. When believers try to frighten others or threaten others, they are (albeit unconsciously) in fellowship with Satan, because they are using a weapon from Satan's armory. "God does not give us the spirit of fear" (2Tim.1:7). Fear is *always* a weapon of Satan. So, we should not be afraid of the threats and intimidatory tactics that men use against us. Such men are all agents of Satan, even if they call themselves "believers". This is a lesson for us to learn for our whole life.

"Holy Spirit wants to make us so sensitive as to what pleases the Lord, that at any junction, where we hear many voices, we will know which is the path that glorifies God."

We should not even preach in such a way as to "frighten" people. There is a difference between warning people about hell and trying to frighten them. Jesus never tried to frighten anyone. We also must never be intimidated by preachers who try to bring us under guilt and condemnation by quoting various verses. Preachers threaten believers with God's judgment if they leave their church or if they do not pay their tithes to them, etc. These are all Satan's tactics.

It is important to be "quick of scent in the fear of the Lord" (Isaiah 11:3 literal rendering). Like a police-dog can pick up the scent of a criminal, even at a junction of many roads, the Holy Spirit wants to make us so sensitive as to what pleases the Lord, that at any junction, where we hear many voices, we will know which is the path that glorifies God. May you all become quick of scent in this area. You are living in an evil land with sin and corruption all around. Keep yourselves *pure*.

Another of Satan's primary weapons is discouragement. Discouragement is always from Satan - yes, *always* - and never from God. So, do not ever let anything discourage you - nothing physical, material, academic or spiritual or whatever.

Satan's purpose is to lead you into sin by getting you discouraged first. Loneliness and homesickness can also become sources of discouragement - if you are not careful. You must battle them and overcome. God will give you grace.

May the Lord warn you in advance of dangers that He sees ahead of you, that you cannot see, and of factors that you have not considered. May the Lord give you wisdom and protect you.

God has promised wisdom to those who ask Him *in faith* (James 1:5). You will not get it *if you do not ask or if you ask but do not believe that God will definitely give you the wisdom you need*.

Remember however that God's aim is not to help you to make more money but to make you more like Christ. Whatever earthly prosperity God sees fit to give you, He will give you. But that won't be primary - because the task of accumulating money has been given by God to worldly people - and not to us (See *Eccl.2:26b*).

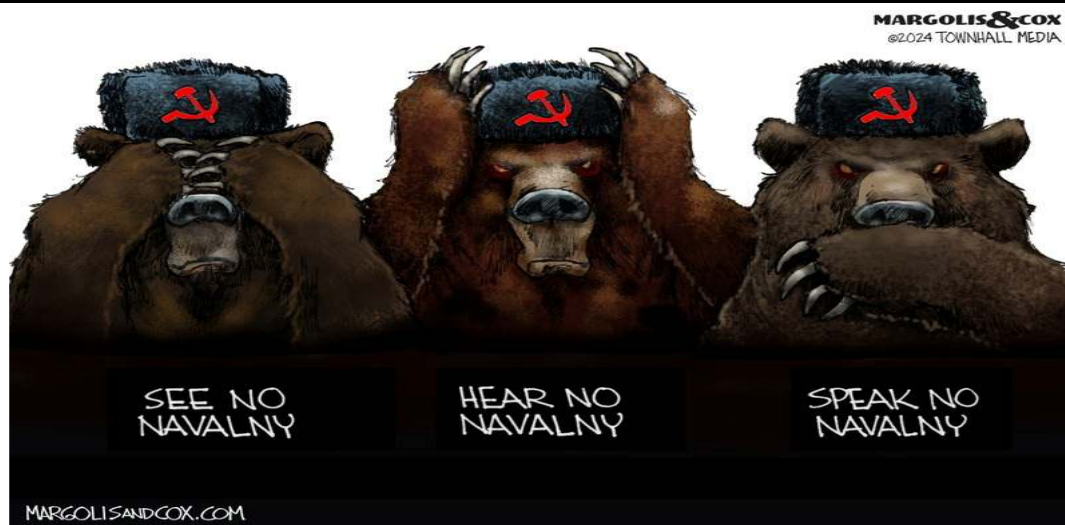
See Zac Poonens other articles at:

[Poonen, Zac – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://church-of-god-bismarck.org)

Reprinted with permission from: Christian Fellowship Church

<https://www.cfcindia.com/>

What the Rapture Cult Refuses to See (Copyright 2024) by James Lloyd (Medford, Oregon)



The recent criticism of Russia, as the government continues their silence over the suspicious death of Putin opponent *Alexei Navalny*, exhibits the same glaring principle that the **Rapture Cult** manifests, as they continue to deny the “bear” in prophecy is obviously Russia. As the attached humorous cartoon shows, even though the “bear” emblem is widely known to represent Russia in the **Bible** (just as the lion is seen as England), because Rapture Cult doctrine states there is no prophecy of the Christian era in the Old Testament, the many False Prophets in the church cling to a lie.

“*[I saw] the first beast was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings, I beheld thereof until the eagle’s wings [the emblem of America] were plucked ... and behold another beast a second, like to a bear” (Daniel 7:4,5).*

Furthermore, although **Rapture Cult** doctrine recognizes “ten kings” shall rise (*Revelation 17:12*), those same False Prophets refuse to acknowledge a global cartel comprised of “ten kings” has already come to power. In effect, the fraud of the Cult that Kidnapped Christianity has proven they are under “Strong Delusion” and “love not the truth” (*II Thessalonians 2:11,10*), “so that they are without excuse” (*Romans 1:20*).

The fact is the Christian infrastructure inadvertently suppresses prophecy information – and this in itself was predicted in the Bible. For its entire 30 years of existence, the *Christian Media* ministry has remained unincorporated, and regularly harassed by the **IRS** as “not qualifying” as a legitimate church, even finding themselves repeatedly kicked off of broadcast stations, having bank accounts closed, and consistently blacklisted and censored. Yet using the Bible, **James Lloyd**, the leader of the **Christian Media Network** ministry has successfully predicted, *in writing*, events including political elections, military clashes, monetary events, and even the length of the tragic British Petroleum (BP) oil spill in **2010** (before it ended, he called it at 5 months to the very *day*) that polluted the gulf coast. As far back as **1992**, he published a written prediction of the assassination of **Yitzhak Rabin** of Israel – an important prophetic event in an important place, which was fulfilled in **1995**. There are also many more current prophecies concerning America and Israel’s current military activity.

See James Lloyd’s other articles at:

[Lloyd, James – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://church-of-god-bismarck.org)

Reprinted with permission from: Christian Media Network

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

Does Earth's Fate Rest on a Giant Turtle's Back?

(Copyright 2022) by David Rives (Lewisburg, Tennessee)

Many of the ancients believed that the Earth was a flat disk or plane, sitting on a giant turtle's back who floated in a giant pool of water.

Quite a fanciful story. It sounds like a fairy tale... But still quite a complex and detailed idea!

There's another fanciful story, a complex and detailed theory, that starts with a lot of time, a lot of matter that came into existence from nothing, a violent event—best described to the lay-person—as an explosion in space, and the coalescing of that explosion into complex systems, structure, physics, and laws. Simply put, order out of chaos by random chance—a direct contradiction to the very laws of nature.

Job is often regarded as the oldest book in our Bible, yet many claim that the Bible is only a fairy tale, containing no real science. We read in Job 26 that God hangs the Earth upon nothing... Not a turtle... not a flat disk... But a globe with space all around it!

Long before it was shown that the Earth is a spherical mass in the vacuum of space, we could have predicted it—if only we had paid attention to the Biblical account.

Does Earth's Fate Rest on a Giant Turtle's Back? Chance design? Or a Creator who hung the Earth in space and commanded the stars of heaven to shine.

I'm David Rives...

Truly, the heavens declare the glory of God.

See David Rives other articles at:

[Rives, David – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://church-of-god-bismarck.org)

Reprinted with permission from: David Rives Ministries

To learn more, visit: <https://davidrivesministries.org/>

Iron Sharpening Iron

New American Standard Bible (Proverbs 27:17)

As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

In regard to: Did Enoch and Elijah Die?

Article by Ernest L. Martin

Comments by Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)

From the article:

For those who are "in Christ," they will be resurrected back to life when Christ Jesus returns with his saints (the angels) at his second advent (I Corinthians 15:50-55; I Thessalonians 4:15-16). This is called "the first resurrection" (Revelation 20:5), and it is the plain teaching of Scripture.

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 23, 2024 --- Issue No. 164

The above is found in the second paragraph of the article.

1Co 15:50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. **1Co 15:51** Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, **1Co 15:52** In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. **1Co 15:53** For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. **1Co 15:54** So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. **1Co 15:55** O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory?

1Th 4:15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. **1Th 4:16** For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

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

In the article it says that Christ returns with his saints (the angels). This is not correct. See Rev. 14:1-3.

Rev 14:1 And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. **Rev 14:2** And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: **Rev 14:3** And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

There are four trumpets and three woe trumpets, in other words, Seven trumpets in all. We believe that after the last trumpet, right around the same time or at the same time the two witnesses are resurrected the first fruits resurrection will occur. Christ will come to harvest the first fruits just before the bowls of wrath are poured out. We believe the first fruits resurrection will occur on a future Pentecost. Verse three above shows that 144,000 were before the throne and redeemed from the earth.

We believe that the 144,000 first fruits will be in heaven for the wedding supper of the lamb and for training for the roles they will fill during the millennium on earth. This training will last until the Feast of Trumpets that year, at which time the 144,000 first fruits will return to earth with Christ as Verse one above shows.

So, what I am saying is the “saints” are the “first fruits” they are not “angels” as this article states.

In regard to: Is Yayshua God?
Article by James & Patt Steinle
Comments by James Steinle (Swanville, Minnesota)

I just wanted to mention I seem to have created a firestorm with my article “Is Yayshua God?” The biggest point for me regarding some people’s belief in a female/mother trinity, is that in the greetings from the apostles in their epistles to the brethren, not a one of the apostles mentioned any member of our Heavenly Family giving a greeting to us except from the Father and His Son.

We are cautioned to not fight over words. (2 Tim. 2:14) The big point and command from our Savior to us is this, “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.” (ESV) (John 15:12) Of course Yayshua had to correct his disciples once in a while also. We all need to be willing to stand corrected if *proven* by Scripture.

In regard to: Is Yayshua God?

Article by James & Patt Steinle
Comments by Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)

Don't worry about it, all discussions are good if someone learns from it.

Very good statement at the end of your "Iron Sharpening Iron" where you said, "We all need to be willing to stand corrected if proven by Scripture."

Now I am going to make a few comments in regard to "love". Remember we are to show love to God by keeping His commandments (Law). So, love is something you do and not just say the words. If one of the brethren were driving toward a cliff and you could warn him/her before they actually went over the cliff, would you warn them or would you just stand there and watch? Hopefully you would do everything in your power to warn them that they were about to go over a cliff. That is the way it is with scripture.

Avram was going over the spiritual cliff. The trinity doctrine is not in scripture as you know. Granted Avram quit and left the discussion because he apparently had his mind made up and he did not even want to hear what anyone had to say to him. We tried to prevent Avram from going over the spiritual cliff, but we were unable to do that because you have to be willing to listen to all sides of any given problem and study it. Even though Avram left the discussion we continued to print what transpired so that others may learn from it, if not right now, perhaps at a future time.

Having discussions about things that people do not understand is not striving over words or fighting as you seem to believe here. There was no fight over words. I did define a few words so everyone would know what was being talked about, but I don't think anyone was fighting over words or even a doctrine.

As God's elect, part of our job now is to teach people the right thing if we know it. Or in other words we always need to have an answer. It doesn't mean everyone is going to like the answer. Some people will get mad and leave the discussion. Not everyone always agreed with Christ either and He is God.

Prayer Requests

Prayer Request from James Steinle (March 12, 2024)

Patt Steinle returned home last week after only 2 1/2 weeks in the hospital. She has weakness in her right leg and arm but is doing better than expected. The staff and doctors were really excited about how fast she was responding (including myself). I still have to help her and Patt uses her walker, usually with me walking with her. Many thanks for all the prayers! Jim Steinle

Prayer Request from William P. Goff (March 15, 2024)

Greetings,

Hope all of you are well, both physically, and more importantly Spiritually, as we patiently await the return of our Savior.

I wanted to update you on the conditions of the orphans and widows that we are caring for. Last week I reported that we had lost one widow and one orphan to starvation. They have now been buried.

Picture one below is of Daniel's four before Brian died. The second picture was taken today of the three of Daniel's that are left. (That's Ann sitting on Brian's grave.)

The "New" Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 23, 2024 --- Issue No. 164

As for funds, they are once again totally depleted. If you can help, please do so. We are hoping and praying that we don't lose more to starvation in the next day or two. The need continues to be great, but the donors continue to be few.

Bill Goff



Brian's Grave

Letters

Letter from William P. Goff (March 8, 2024)

Greetings Brethren,

The orphans are now back in school, thanks to your support (Both financial and prayers). We reached the school fundraiser goal and thank those of you who contributed. The orphans who are in school are progressing quite well. So, we closed the "school fee" fundraiser.

But we also started a new fundraiser. Sad to say, we lost two more members to starvation. (A widow, and an 11-year-old boy of Daniel's group.) Times continue to be tough amongst our impoverished brethren, and we need a little help to bury the two deceased.

The link is:

[In Their Afflictions., organized by William P Goff](#)

I titled it "In Their Affliction" from (James 1:27) Our widows and orphans have many afflictions and continue to need our help.

Thank You.
Bill Goff

Holy Days 2024

Passover – April 23, 2024 (Observed at Sunset the Evening Before)

Passover/Unleavened Bread – April 23-29, 2024

Pentecost – June 12, 2024

Trumpets - October 3, 2024

Atonement – October 12, 2024

Tabernacles –October 17, 2024, to October 23, 2024

Last Great Day – October 24, 2024

Notes