

**The "New" Church of God Messenger**  
A Newsletter for the People of God  
July 31, 2021 --- Issue No. 26

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**Contributors:** Brenda Branson, Nathaniel Burson, B. L. Cocherell, Ray Daly, Laura Lee, James McBride

**Website:** Church of God, Bismarck <https://www.church-of-god-bismarck.org>

## Articles

### Does it Matter Where You Worship?

by B. L. Cocherell (Nevada)

Does the physical location where congregations of the elect assemble to worship God the Father have any positive or negative impact on one's relationship with him or his Son? Does it displease the Father for his children to assemble to worship him in places dedicated to false religious systems or to other gods?

In order to come to an understanding of the Father's will about where one should and should not assemble to worship him, one must understand the instructions that the Creator God gave to the nation of Israel concerning how to deal with false religions and the places where false gods were worshiped.

#### **A COMMAND AND WARNING FROM GOD**

*"Obey what I command you this day. Behold, I am about to remove the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite from before you. Consider what you do, lest you make an agreement with the inhabitants of the land where you are going, and it becomes a snare in your midst" (Ex.34:11-12 Para.).*

The Creator commanded the nation of Israel not to make treaties or agreements with the nations in Canaan, and he warned them that such agreements would only cause them trouble.

*"But instead, you shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves [places of worship]. You shall not worship another god: for the Lord, whose name is jealous, is a jealous God: Lest you make an agreement with the inhabitants of the land, and then go whoring after their gods, and sacrifice to their gods, and one of them [the idol worshiper] call to you, and you eat of his sacrifice; And you allow their daughters to be taken by your sons, and their daughters go whoring after their gods, and cause your sons to do the same" (Ex.34:13-16 Para.).*

The Creator told the Israelites to destroy the places where false gods were worshiped and warned against making agreements with the people of the land. The phrase "eat of his sacrifice" implies participating in their form of worship. The Creator made it very clear that he did not want the Israelites to have anything whatsoever to do with these idolatrous religions.

In the Book of Deuteronomy, the Creator commands the Israelites to totally eliminate the people and their religious systems of worship from the land he was giving them.

*"When the Lord your God brings you into the land to possess it, and has cast out these nations stronger than you, and God has made you victorious over them you shall strike them and totally destroy them; you shall not make an agreement with them, nor show mercy to them. Neither shall you marry them; do not give your daughters to their sons, nor allow your sons to marry their daughters, nor their daughters to marry your sons. Because they will cause your sons to stop following me, so that they may serve other gods: if you allow this, the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you, and suddenly destroy you" (Deut.7:1-4 Para.).*

*"This is how you will deal with them; You shall destroy their altars, break down their images, cut down their groves, and burn their carved images with fire. For you are a holy people to the Lord your God: The Lord your God has chosen you to be a special people to himself above all people on the face of the earth" (Deut.7:5-6 KJV Para.).*

The Creator God commanded the Israelites to totally destroy these people, their places of worship, and the symbols of their religion. The Israelites were to completely separate themselves from other religions and from the things pertaining to their evil religious practices. God the Father is a righteous God, and his people must be righteous; he will not tolerate anything evil among his people. See also Deut.12:1-3; 2 Cor.6: 14-18.

The history of Israel is full of examples which show that, when Israel followed God's instructions to remove all vestiges of false religion, they prospered nationally and individually. However, when they refused to obey God's instructions regarding false religions and its practitioners, they always suffered for their rebellion.

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**THE ARK IN THE TEMPLE OF DAGON**

The Israelites did not follow God's instructions to totally destroy the people and remove all of their religious systems from the land; instead, the Israelites entered into agreements with some of them. Therefore, God allowed the Israelites to be in a constant state of conflict with these people and other nations. In one of their many battles with the Philistines, God allowed the capture of the Ark of the Covenant as a lesson of what their disobedience had caused:

*"And the Philistines took the ark of God . . . and brought it into the house of Dagon and set it by Dagon. And when the people of Ashdod arose early on the next day, behold, the statue of Dagon had fallen upon its face on the ground before the ark of the Lord. And the people put Dagon back in its place. And when they arose early the next day, behold, Dagon was on its face again before the ark of the Lord; but this time the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off; leaving only the stump of Dagon on its platform. . . . And the Lord's hand was heavy on the people of Ashdod, and he destroyed them, and plagued them with hemorrhoids, even Ashdod and the coasts thereof. And when the men of Ashdod saw what had happened, they said, the ark of the God of Israel shall not remain with us: for his hand is greatly against us, and Dagon our God" (1 Sam.5:1-7 Para.).*

Here is an example of how the Creator viewed the mixing of holy objects set aside for his use with things dedicated to false religious systems. What the Creator God said was an abomination during the days of ancient Israel, is still an abomination in the Father's sight today (Mal.3:6).

The elect are sacred vessels within which his holy spirit resides. That which is holy should not reside with the unholy. The Father does not want anything holy and dedicated to his service to be placed alongside that which is unholy.

**THE ELECT ARE TEMPLES OF GOD**

*"Don't you know you are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God shall destroy them; for the temple of God is holy, and you are his temple" (1 Cor.3:16-17 Para.).*

The temple of God is not only the physical body; the mind is also a temple because this is where the Father's holy spirit resides. Should the Father's children bring their body and mind within a temple of Satan? Those who serve the Father should find the surroundings of a place dedicated to a false god as repugnant as he does. The scriptures clearly show that the Father and Christ hate these places and what they represent. The scriptures also show the consequence of mingling with this world's false religious systems. See Amos 3:3.

**SPIRITUAL FORNICATION**

Although the text below speaks to physical fornication, its principle also applies to spiritual fornication with false religious systems.

*"Don't you know that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I take the members of Christ, and make them the members of a whore? God forbid. Don't you know that he that is joined to a whore is of one body? For two, he says, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication Don't you know that your body is the temple of the holy spirit that is in you, which you have of God, and you are not your own? For you are bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, that belong to God" (1 Cor.6:15-20 Para.).*

Do the Father's elect glorify him when they bring the temple of his holy spirit into a temple of a false religious system and attempt to worship him in a place dedicated to beliefs and practices which are in opposition to him and his worship system?

**An Idol is Nothing**

Some of the elect believe that, because their reason for assembling in a place dedicated to the practice of a false religious system is to worship and serve the Father, their worship of him in that place is acceptable to him. They base this belief on the following text:

*"But about sacrifices to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. Concerning the eating of things sacrificed, we know that an idol of this world is nothing, and that there is no other god except one. For even if some are called gods in heaven or on earth; even as there are many gods and many lords but to us one God, the Father of whom are all things; and one lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we by him. However,*

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*everyone does not have this knowledge: but some being aware of the idol eat an idolatrous sacrifice at this present time; and their conscience being weak is defiled" (1 Cor.8:1-7 NIV Para.).*

Some of the elect at Corinth would knowingly eat things sacrificed to idols, but they did not have a clear conscience in doing it; therefore, it was sin for them to do this, because they were compromising their conscience in this matter.

*"But meat [food] commends us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse. But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak. For if any man see you which has knowledge sit at meat [at a meal] in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; And through your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when you sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ" (1 Cor.8:8-12 KJV).*

This text seems to say that the Father's elect may eat a meal prepared from the things sacrificed to idols, which is exactly what it says. However, the subject being addressed in this text is that of eating food which has been offered to an idol; it is not one of worshipping the true God in a place dedicated to other religions and gods. The subject is whether or not it is circumspect for one of the Father's elect to eat things sacrificed to idols in a place which is dedicated to other religions and gods.

There is an indication that some of the members of the church at Corinth understood that the food sacrificed to idols did not become pure or impure by the act of sacrificing, which was believed by those who sacrificed to these idols and false gods.

#### **Associating with Evil**

Paul wrote the following to the Corinthians and warned them not to have a close association with false religions which are devised by evil spirits:

*"What say I then? That the idol is anything, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is anything? But I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that you should have fellowship with devils. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils: you cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils" (1 Cor.10: 19-21 KJV).*

The English word *fellowship* in verse 20 is translated from the Greek word *koinonos*, which does not mean *fellowship*, it means *to have a close association*. A large part of the question being discussed in chapter 10 pertains to how close an association the Father's elect can have with false religions and their practices and still maintain a righteous attitude and a good relationship with the Father. Paul answers this question in verse 23:

*"I can do all things that are lawful, however, doing these things is not always expedient: Although I can do all the things that are lawful, doing all these things is not always constructive" (1.Cor.10: 23 Para.).*

#### **WISE USE OF LIBERTY**

Just because a person has a good understanding of a subject does not mean that person has the liberty to exercise that understanding in front of others, because each person is in a different stage of spiritual growth. Some will have reached a high degree of spiritual maturity, but others will still be babes in the truth. The scriptures show that we must be careful how we treat the spiritual babe and how we should set an example for those still young in the faith.

The overriding theme of Paul's discourse in 1 Corinthians, chapters 8 and 10, is that of setting a righteous example for the young in the faith and taking care not to cause them to fail because of one's superior knowledge or understanding, which someone new in the faith may not be mature enough to accept.

#### **PROPHECIES FOR THE FUTURE**

*"And it shall come to pass in that day, says Jehovah, I will remove your horses out of your midst, and I will destroy your chariots. And I will remove the cities of your land and pull down your fortifications. And I will remove witchcraft out of your hand, and you shall have no fortune-tellers. I will also remove your carved images, and your pillars from your midst. And you shall no more worship the work of your hands. And I shall pluck your shrines out of your midst; and I will destroy your*

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*cities. And I will execute vengeance in anger and in fury on the nations, such as they have not heard" (Mic.5:10-15 Para.). See also Isa.17:7-8; Jer.17:1-4.*

There is no doubt that Christ will totally eliminate all traces of false religious systems when he returns to rule the earth. Therefore, it seems inappropriate for the ambassadors of Christ to willfully sit in the camp of the enemy, which represent a way of life opposed to the Father and his way of life. It seems that it would be especially disappointing to the Father that his children would attempt to worship him in a place he finds repugnant and will eventually destroy.

#### **PAUL ON MARS' HILL**

Some believe that, when the apostle Paul spoke to the men of Athens on Mars' Hill (Acts 17:22-25), he was meeting with them in their place of worship; therefore, they believe this shows that it is acceptable to worship the Father in a place dedicated to other religions and gods. However, the following analysis shows this belief to be without merit.

Mars' Hill was a Greek Areopague, which was a place of public meetings where the council of Athens would often meet to discuss official matters. It was not a place of continual pagan worship, as some might believe. Paul did not conduct a formal worship service for the Father's elect at this place; he was merely revealing the true God to a group of people who happened to be there when he was.

Throughout the scriptures, there are many references to acceptable places for the Father's elect to worship him. However, within these references, there is not one scripture which sanctions the worship of the Father within the confines of a place dedicated to another religion or god.

Some of the elect reason that, because people of false religious systems do not know they are worshiping false gods and are just deceived, it is acceptable to worship the Father in their place of worship. And some reason that, because some people of false religious systems have dedicated their property or place of worship to the God of Israel even though they do not know who he is, it is not wrong to worship the Father in that place.

Whether or not people know they are worshiping a false god or state that they have dedicated the use of the property to the God of Israel, it does not remove the fact that the place is where false religion is practiced, and a false god is worshiped. The apostle Paul wrote, *"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold [suppress] the truth in unrighteousness"* (Rom.1:18 KJV).

When choosing a place to worship God the Father, a person should carefully consider how he feels about false religious systems and carefully note the instructions to ancient Israel and the early church about being separate from this evil world and its false religious practices.

*"Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion has light with darkness? And what agreement has Christ with Belial? Or what part has he that believes with an infidel? And what agreement has the temple of God [the Father's elect] with idols [false religion]? For you are the temple of the living God; as God has said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore come out from among them, and be separate, says the Lord, do not touch the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2 Cor.6:14-17 Para.).*

The English word *unclean* in verse 17 is translated from the Greek word *akathartace*, which means *impure, demonic, or foul*. The unclean thing Paul speaks of is the false religious systems of this world from which the Father's children should totally separate themselves.

#### **ABHOR EVIL**

*"Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." (Rom.12:9 KJV)*

The English words *abhor*, and *evil* are translated from the Greek words *apostgeo*, which means *to detest*, and *poneros*, which means *evil in effect or influence*.

*"Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thes.5:22)* is one of the things Paul lists that the Father's elect should be doing. This short phrase is extremely powerful; the Father's elect should not only be righteous but also shun all things that even

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appear to be evil.

*"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep yourself unspotted from the world" (Jms.1:27 KJV Para.).*

Keeping oneself from being corrupted by this world includes separating oneself from this world's false religious systems and false gods.

#### **SUMMARY**

The Israelites were instructed to destroy and eliminate everything connected with the practice of false religion from the land God was giving them. They were instructed not to be complacent and tolerant of false religious systems or their practices. The scriptures show that, when the Kingdom of God is established on the earth, all false religious systems along with all of their places of worship will be completely purged from the earth.

A survey of the biblical record shows that God the Father and Jesus Christ are not in the least bit ecumenical in their view toward this world's religions and gods. The Father has only one worship system and condemns all others as being false. Those who advocate unity of all religions should read the Book of Revelation, which reveals that there are only two religious' systems in the world: Satan's various false religions and the Sovereign God's true worship system.

#### **Affordable and Convenient Places to Meet**

Affordable, convenient, comfortable, and safe places to formally worship the Father are very difficult to find. However, the practice of the Father's true religion is not convenient, comfortable, or safe in this age. The Father's elect are limited in almost every endeavor they attempt in this evil world. To use monetary justification, convenience, and comfort as the foremost criteria or as an excuse to use the facilities of this world's religions seems to be missing the point of the many instructions in the Bible which require the Father's elect to separate themselves from false religious systems and false gods.

#### **Questions to Consider**

- Why would one who claims to worship and serve God the Father want to meet in a place dedicated to the worship of a false religion or a false god?
- Does it please the Father for his children to worship him surrounded by idols, paintings, and symbols which violate the first two of his Ten Commandments?

If false worship systems and false gods are thought of in the same way God the Father and Jesus Christ view them, it is easily understood that the Father's elect should assemble in a place pleasing to him.

## **How To Spot a Batterer Before the Relationship Begins**

**by Brenda Branson (Hanson, Kentucky) Copyright © 2004**

The following red flags are characteristics of an abuser. This does *not* mean that everyone who demonstrates one or two of these qualities will end up abusing or battering their partners.

However, these red flags should be taken seriously. If someone you know demonstrates one or two of these patterns on a consistent basis, he has the potential to become a batterer.

- **Superior attitude toward women.** Does he think men are superior to women? Does he feel he "owns" you and has the right to control your thoughts and actions? Does he talk about women in a demeaning way?
- **Does not take responsibility for his own actions.** Does he justify, minimize, or deny his actions? Does he blame you or someone else for his failures or lack of achievement? Does he deny his actions and try to make you think you are crazy?

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- **Jekyll/Hyde personality.** Does he change from a loving, caring person into a hateful, sarcastic jerk with little or no warning? Do you walk on eggshells because you never know what might set him off? Does he fly into a rage for no apparent reason? Are you constantly afraid that he will become violent? Does he blame you for his violent behavior? Does he act charming and compassionate in public, but changes into a controlling bully when you're alone?
- **Emotionally unhealthy or immature.** Is he able to express and discuss his emotions? How does he deal with stress and frustration? Can he discuss problems calmly or does he fly into a rage verbally (swearing, demeaning, accusing) and physically (throwing things, kicking furniture, punching his fist through walls or doors).
- **Childhood trauma.** Did he grow up in an abusive home? Did he see and hear his father verbally or physically batter his mother? Was he battered as a child? Was he sexually abused as a child? Does he have low self-esteem? Does he demean his mother and have an irrational desire to please his father?
- **Critical attitude.** Is he constantly critical of you and others? Does he enjoy making fun of other people? Does he belittle the things you say and do? Does he try to make you feel stupid or incompetent? Does he make you think you cannot survive without him? Does he tell you no one else would have you? Does he make jokes about you in front of others? Does he make fun of your hopes and dreams? Does he try to keep you from furthering your education or improving yourself? Does he say negative things about your family and friends?
- **Isolation technique.** Does he insist that you do everything together? When you spend time with family or friends, does he become moody or irritable? Does he forbid you from spending time with others? Does he make you feel guilty when you leave him home alone? Does he want to know every detail of your phone calls and personal conversations? Does he read your personal mail?
- **Jealousy.** Is he suspicious of everyone you talk to? Does he accuse you of cheating on him every time you look at or talk to another man? Does he accuse you of trying to attract other men by the choice of your clothing or makeup? Does he pick out your clothes and dictate your every move? Is he jealous of the time you spend with family or friends?
- **Need for control.** Do you have to ask his permission before you can visit your family or friends? Does he have to approve of your appearance before you leave home? Do you have to account for every second of your time while he is away? Does he call several times a day to see what you are doing? Do you have to ask permission to take a nap or read a book? Do you have to do everything he says, or fear being punished later? Does he always have to be right?
- **Threats and physical abuse.** Does he threaten you with a beating if you do not do what he says? Does he threaten to harm family or friends if they try to help you? Has he threatened you with a weapon or said he will kill you? Has he grabbed you around the neck or tried to choke you? Has he pushed you into a wall and held you against your will? Has he left bruises on your arms or other parts of your body? Has he grabbed your face and demanded that you look at him when he is talking to you? Has he driven the car recklessly in an attempt to scare you? Has he used his voice or other body language to intimidate you? Has he raped you or attacked you sexually?
- **Spiritual superiority.** Does he feel superior to you spiritually and use the scriptures as justification for his actions? Does he feel he has the God-given right to exert control over you and punish you if you fail to meet his standards? When he hits you, does he tell you it is for your own good, so you will become a better person? Does he make fun of your relationship to God? Does he constantly compare himself to other Christians to criticize them and make himself look better?

You can't always spot these red flags until much later in the relationship, but if you do see these characteristics early on, ***run like the wind and don't look back.***

## A Blast from the Past

### Delight in the Sabbath by James McBride (United Kingdom)

#### The weekly Sabbath is for Christians a day in which to delight in God's presence

"Sabbath rest" is a concept far removed from the hurly-burly of modern life. The day is, for most, consumed with a round of strenuous (or couch-potato) leisure activity or shopping or visiting - leaving no time for recovery from the weekly grind. Besides, the notion of a day set apart for religious purpose is simply old hat.

But what if you consider Sabbath observance important to your Christian walk? Is it a day to hibernate in gloomy solitude? A day crammed with restriction? What is a Sabbath rest?

The manner of observance of a weekly "holy day" varies from, Bible in hand, staying in bed all day - through to minor adjustments to the normal daily routine. What is a godly balance?

#### Brief History of Time

Health experts praise the benefits of a weekly time of rest. It's approximately twenty-four hours of physical recuperation. And certainly, Sabbath observance provides that - a charging of our depleted batteries. But there's more to it. For, apart from the physical benefit, Sabbath has no eternal value unless we are in a personal relationship with the Lord of the Sabbath.

Jesus Christ is that Lord: "The Son of man is also Lord of the Sabbath" (Luke 6:5). As the Father's representative and executive, it was he, who was instrumental in creating the material universe and the creation of time itself. Writing of Jesus, the apostle Paul told the Colossian Christians: "...by him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible...and he is before all things and by him all things consist."

#### A Day of Joy

Certainly, such a memorial must encourage a joyful response. Yet many believers dread the approach of the Day! It's traditionally dourly viewed as merely a time of boring inactivity punctuated by a church visit followed by the long-awaited end of the day. Others will invest the day with an endless round of "don'ts" to the extent of suppressing the joy of the Sabbath.

Whatever way observed it is a personal matter between each of us and our Creator. What guidance has He given us in the Scriptures as to its observance?

Sabbath is a day of God's appointment - a day He has set aside to meet with His people. It will be useful to note what God has said about this day. To Moses He said: "...the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation (Heb miqra)" (Leviticus 23:3). That is, a separated day for assembling in His presence. And as the Almighty Creator, He determines the time and the day! He tells us, too, the attitude we ought to have on the Sabbath. Following their seventy years of serfdom in Babylon (imposed by God for Sabbath neglect!) the Jews returned chastened to the land of Israel. They protected the Sabbath by numerous regulations (included in their Oral Law), many of which went contrary to the divine intent of Sabbath observance. Joy was largely emptied from this special Day!

God set the Sabbath aside for rest: "...in it you shall do no work" (Exodus 20:10). To fulfill this, the Pharisees minutely defined "work". It was forbidden to pluck a head of grain, for example (Matthew 12:1ff) - that's harvesting. But it was permitted on the Sabbath to circumcise, which is work for someone (John 7:22). Permitted also to attend to distressed animals (Luke 13:15, 14:5) - a logical exception. For the Pharisees the day of joy had become a burdensome ball and chain - eased only by the addition of humanly devised circumventions.

#### Made For Man

By contrast, how does the Creator of the Sabbath expect us to spend this precious twenty-four hours? Through the prophet Isaiah God makes it crystal clear: "If you refrain from doing your own business on the Sabbath, on my sacred day, and hold the Sabbath a delight, and the Eternal's sacred day [the true "Lord's Day"!] an honor, not following your own wonted round, not doing business and not talking idly, then you shall have delight in the Eternal's favor" (Ch. 58:13-14, Moffatt). God wants us to enjoy His Day!

Jesus picked up on the same theme. He saw no conflict when the disciples plucked some grain on the Sabbath. (This wasn't theft but was permitted in the Law, though the Pharisees said, 'not on the Sabbath!' That would be work.) He accepted the Pharisees right to circumcise and to attend to the needs of livestock. In essence, Jesus made it clear that "the Sabbath was made [created] for man" - i.e., for our benefit (Mark 2:27). He cited the fact that the divine Law permitted

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the priestly work to proceed on the Sabbath. He cites also the example of the starving David and his men. [NB This was a one-off emergency situation!] They ate the shewbread - forbidden to all but the priests. Jesus refers here to the Jewish oral tradition (based on Leviticus 24:8) that the loaves were baked on the Sabbath, and that it was on this day David ate it.

From this incident, Jesus draws the conclusion that "the son of man is lord of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:28). Sabbath is our servant - for physical re-creation, and above all to provide spiritual nourishment through our contact with its Creator. In a special sense, Jesus Christ is with each of his brethren on that appointed day. *Clear the decks*, Adam was created in the dying hours of the sixth day, and although he didn't need a physical rest, he stepped right into joyful Sabbath communion with his Creator. That's the fundamental purpose of Sabbath. Sabbath, then, is indeed a time for physical rest. It's a day for joyful celebration. It's a day to spend extra time with the Savior in prayer and in perusing God's Word. It's a time for fellowship, where possible, with brethren. It's even a time, following the example of Jesus, to "stroll through the corn-field". And to enjoy these benefits to the full we should "clear the decks" by preparing for it on the day before.

The vast majority of mankind, of course, treads all over God's holy day without a thought for their Creator. They will work in restaurants and power stations. They will serve in shops and deliver the milk and the newspapers. The Sabbath means nothing to them. In a sense that doesn't matter so long as they don't have a personal relationship with their Creator and Savior. Are we not glad we can on the Sabbath switch on the power for heat and light and a cuppa! And if away from home can benefit from the services of transport and restaurants and service stations? That we can rest assured the emergency services are at the other end of the 'phone link?

#### **Balanced Choice**

Wise King Solomon made a helpful statement which applies well to our keeping of the Sabbath. He wrote: "Do not be overly righteous, nor overly wise. Why should you destroy yourself [i.e., be desolate, miserable]?" (Eccles. 7:16). As with life in general, our observance of the Sabbath is a matter of balanced choice. Each Christian must decide how he or she can in their situation best fulfill their weekly appointment with their Creator - in the liberated spirit of the example of Jesus.

The Colossian Christians had a thing about how to observe the weekly and annual Sabbaths. They had taken on board the then prevalent austere practices. Paul told them to lighten up! He wrote: "So let no one judge you in food or in drink or regarding a festival or new moon or sabbaths... Therefore, if you died, with Christ, from the basic principles of the world why as living in the world do you subject yourselves to regulations - 'do not touch, do not taste, do not handle' - which all concern things which perish with the using, according to the commandments and doctrines of men? These indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh" (Ch. 2:16-23).

The apostle continues by focusing their minds (Ch 3) on the important issue - through the risen Christ conquering our base human nature. It's largely through our Sabbath contact with the Savior that we can so overcome!

Sabbath, then, is a day for the people of God to rejoice before Him, and a day in which to delight.

**(This article has been updated and re-printed from "The Church of God Messenger" November/December 2001— Issue No. 6.)**

### **Iron Sharpening Iron**

**New American Standard Bible (Proverbs 27:17)**  
**As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.**

## **In regard to: 5 Reasons Genesis 3:16 is Not a Model for Christian Marriage**

**Article by Eddie Hyatt**  
**Comments by Nathaniel Burson (Big Sandy, Texas)**

I read with great amusement Eddie Hyatt's article on Genesis 3:16. It's a relief to know that we do not have to obey our elders (1 Peter 5:5); for Adam, though elder than Eve (1 Timothy 2:13), was apparently never in charge of her (Colossians 1:17-18). It is good to know that, although Eve was made *from* the Man, and *FOR* the Man, that in no way makes her inferior to him (1 Corinthians 11:7). The fact that Adam was made larger and stronger than Eve by God clearly does not

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mean that He made them a weaker vessel to ensure that man had the ability to win arguments (1 Peter 3:7); for nature itself does not, apparently, teach us these things (1 Corinthians 11:14).

Sarah called Abraham her lord, but fortunately, that sinful practice was nailed to the cross (1 Peter 3:5-6). As that verse plainly says, no holy woman would do such a thing, for under the New Covenant we are equal in every way, and if anything, these days men should call their wives their lord (Isaiah 3:12). So, although Sarah, the symbol of the church of the firstborn in heaven (Galatians 4:22-26), obeyed her husband, it is a relief to know that *in our perfect pattern of New Covenant Marriage, that of the Lamb and His Bride, the wife will do no such thing* (Revelation 22:3-5).

Best of all, this means that when we are married to Christ, He will not be our head, for we will be his equal partner in every way (1 Corinthians 11:3). We will share half of the head with him, and He will be half of the body, equal to His wife in every way - for this is what Paul teaches in Ephesians 5:23, that as the head and the body are equal, so is a man and his wife. And that as Jesus and His bride are equal, so is the New Covenant man and his wife. And who can argue with that?

This, in short, is the good news I learned in that article - that no woman, now or at any point in eternity, should *ever* have to obey her husband. For in no way will He, our Husband, ever be superior to us, nor will we ever need to bow our knees before Him (Philippians 2:22-26), all differences between a man and woman having been caused by the fall and thus erased by His salvation. Which means that as His equal partner, we are now, and always will be, just as good as He is.

Maybe better, since anything a Man can do, a woman could do better.

## **In regard to: 5 Reasons Genesis 3:16 is Not a Model for Christian Marriage**

**Article by Eddie Hyatt**

**Comments by Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)**

First, I would like to say, everyone reading what you wrote should pray especially for your wife and also for you. If you don't have marriage problems now you certainly will have in the future.

The article by Eddie Hyatt was spot on and I am very sorry you did not understand it. You can know many scriptures and you can spew them out like they fit together and like they back up what you believe. Thinking you are wise but without understanding you will end up making your wife very depressed. I certainly hope you aren't demanding that she call you lord and making lists of all the things she must do daily in order to show that she is obeying you. Acting like a "Little Caesar" will not get you a happy wife or a happy marriage.

### **Colossians 1:17-18**

No Place in Eddie Hyatt's article did he say that women were above Christ or Equal to Christ. He was talking about husbands and wives being partners and working together for the good of the marriage. If you want to act like "Little Caesar" it creates an imbalance of power within the marriage, with you lording it over your wife. If both people in a marriage work together for the good of the marriage, then everyone works harder to make it work.

### **1 Peter 3:5-6 & 1 Peter 3:7**

To let your wife be a mutual partner within the marriage relationship does not mean she does not obey you. Most women believe it or not, are easy going and willing to go along with what a husband says as long as it does not go against God's Law.

If you want to take a trip and you want to go to Florida and she wants to go to Alaska, most couples will compromise by going to Florida one year and Alaska the next if the money is there to do it. If not, the husband is usually the one to decide and the wife is usually okay with it.

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Most every Sunday we go out to eat. We take turns choosing where we want to eat and there is nothing wrong with that. Our house is bigger than I can handle, so Darwin cleans the upstairs and I clean the downstairs. Darwin takes care of the dishwasher and I take care of the laundry. When things are agreed on it is a mutual agreement, and no one is lording anything over the other person.

**1 Peter 5:5**

In verse 3 it says, “Neither as being lords over *God’s* heritage but being ensamples to the flock.” Whether you consider yourself as a real elder or you are older than your wife, it doesn’t matter. If your wife is a part of God’s Church, you are not to lord it over her. Your responsibility to God is to be a good example to your wife.

Then take a look at verse 5 where it says, “... be subject one to another...” which is just another way of saying obey but it is a mutual obedience.

**1 Timothy 2:13**

No one disagrees with you that Adam was formed first and then Eve, however this does not give you a license to lord it over anyone. Eve was in no way a lesser person than was Adam.

**1 Corinthians 11:3, 7 & 14**

These are the scriptures in regard to head coverings. God is first, then Christ, Man and Woman. There is another scripture that says God and Christ are one. And there is this one: **Gen 2:24** Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. This last verse isn’t just talking about sex, it is talking about the man and his wife becoming one as in mind, being on the same page, going for the same goal. A mutual and equal relationship.

**Isaiah 3:12**

I believe one of your biggest problems here is that you can’t distinguish between things which occur because of sin and things that happen when you have God’s Holy Spirit. In [Isa 3:12](#) As *for* my people, children *are* their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause *thee* to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.

If your wife lets you lead her with your current attitude towards women she will err. Look in the world around you, the sin filled world is where children are the oppressors (for example what is currently coming out of universities) and women will rule over them (look in your current government, Pelosi and we all know Biden isn’t running the show so it must be Harris). This stuff is not to happen among God’s Spirit filled people. None of us are to be oppressors or rulers over each other.

**Galatians 4:22-26 & Revelation 22:3-5**

You are mixing one thing with another here. Obeying God’s law is way different than a wife obeying everything that proceeds from a husband’s mouth. You aren’t God Nathaniel, so your wife should only obey you as you obey God. With the attitude you have displayed against women in what you wrote, I would clearly be surprised if you are not abusing your wife in other ways than to demand she call you lord and obey your every word.

**Ephesians 5:23**

Christ has given us all free moral agency. Christ does not tell us or make any of us do anything. We keep God’s law because we want to and not because he is standing over us with a club. Your headship over a woman is the same as Christ’s headship over the Church. Your wife will obey you as you are an example of keeping God’s law. However, that obedience is to each other as this verse states: [Eph 5:21](#) Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

**Philippians 2:22-26**

You are very good at twisting scripture and with that you have done a great job.

There is a very big difference between a man who is converted and a man who is not. A man who is converted would understand what scripture says about marriage. I was married to an unconverted man before I came into God’s Church, and he had the same attitude about women that you have. So let me tell you a true story.

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My mother and dad hardly ever went to church, so they were not filled with God's Holy Spirit. One night my dad came home from work and my mother put supper in front of him. She had put everything on his plate for him. My dad took that plate of food, and he threw it across the kitchen, and it hit the wall. He then told my mother to clean it up and make him some supper. I watched my mother clean that mess up and make a second supper. She sat it in front of my dad once more and again my dad took that whole plate of food and threw it across the kitchen. He told my mother to clean it up and get yet another plate of supper for him. My mother was a really good cook and there was nothing wrong with any of the three different meals she made for my dad that night, but like you Nathaniel he thought he would play "Little Caesar" and prove his role of ruling over my mother. My dad did eat the third meal she made that night. And I told myself no man would ever do that to me.

My chance came when I married my own "Little Caesar" and one night at supper we are eating and for no reason, he threw the catsup bottle full blast at the wall and told me to clean it up. I said "No" "You threw it, now you clean it up." No one ever cleaned that catsup off the wall as long as I lived there, and I was severely beaten that night for my disobedience. "There is nothing Godly about any man who believes he can rule over his wife in that manner. All "Little Caesars" have the same attitude as you do about women. It took me four years to get away from my ex-husband simply because they keep coming after you because they believe they own you.

I sincerely hope you are not treating your own wife as your written response indicates, but if you are I hope someone in the church takes you under their wing and tries to show you how God wants you to treat your wife and if you are hitting her, she needs to leave you immediately because it will only get worse.

## **In regard to: Atlantis – what they don't tell you**

**Article by Jonathon Gray**

**Comments by Ray Daly (Lincoln, North Dakota)**

In the article by Jonathon Gray, he discusses the story surrounding Atlantis. A very interesting topic, and one in which many books have been written. In my studies, I find it to have been located in the Atlantic Ocean, off of the Strait of Gibraltar. One can look at the several islands of the Azores, and all of them at one time were of the island itself. Which was likely as large as Australia, or close to it. They say it was actually divided into 4 or 5 parts, with waterways between them. It was also the spot of the "city of gold". Where all of the riches of the owners of the trade center of Tyre, stored their treasures. (One can read the prophetic Scriptures on "Tyrus" and have a good idea of Atlantis.) The point is, that the peoples to the east of Atlantis, along the Mediterranean knew of this city of gold, and this is what Columbus (and others before him) were looking for, when they came to the western lands. The "city of gold". And, it is still there, awaiting its "return to its original position in the Atlantic". A number of prophetic Scriptures show that, in the future, "wealth will be a common thing". Or the wealth now beneath the ocean where the islands are now.

But consider Scripture, when wondering when it was that caused Atlantis to sink in the first place. It has to do with the "earthquakes in the days of king Uzziah". When the earth tilted 10 degrees on its axis. It was at the same time, that the land of Lemuria sank into the emerging waters of the Pacific as well. Lemuria was a land mass lying in the western Pacific from Japan all the way down to the areas off of New Zealand. Easter Island was the southeastern border. Hawaii was likely the eastern border. Many have written about this, but few can separate themselves from those that do not look to Scripture for the time period of present mankind was upon the earth. Yes, the earth itself is/could be a million or so years old. But "our earth cover" is only just over 7000 years. 6000 since Adam.

**Editor's Note:** Are we sure that Atlantis did not sink at the time of the flood? (Noah's Flood) Laura Lee

### **Holy Days 2021**

**Trumpets - September 7, 2021**

**Atonement - September 16, 2021**

**Tabernacles - September 21 to 27, 2021**

**Last Great Day - September 28, 2021**