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Articles
(Over 4 Pages Long)

Why Humans?
by B. L. Cocherell (Nevada)

Why did the Sovereign God create anything? And especially why did he create humans which are uniquely different in many ways from all other life forms on earth?

Before beginning our search for the biblical answers to these two questions, imagine you are a sentient, all knowing, all powerful immortal being alone in a timeless and empty dimension without other beings like yourself to interact with. Would you be happy, or would your life be lonely and without purpose? Would you be content with this existence, or would you find your life tiresome and meaningless? Would you decide to terminate your existence, or would you formulate a plan to change your situation?

If this imaginary scenario is in any way similar to the situation in which the Sovereign God found himself, then the biblical record tells us what he did to remedy his lonely existence.

To answer all of these questions, we begin in the Book of Genesis where we must first prove that in the beginning, before anything else existed, only one being existed and that this extremely intelligent and powerful being (i.e., the Sovereign God) created the Creator God and instructed him to create everything else for him.

In the Beginning

Most Bible scholars and linguists agree that the word *God* in Genesis, chapter one is the Hebrew word *Elohiym*, which can mean *Mighty One* or *Mighty Ones* and therefore can describe two different individuals.

Although the word *Elohim* does allow for a plural meaning, understanding who God is does not entirely depend on this one descriptive word, because there are many scriptures showing that before this physical dimension of space-time, there were two God-beings—the Sovereign God who became God the Father and the Creator God who became Christ. See Jn.17:5; Eph.3:13-15.

Genesis chapter 1, verse 1 tells us the following about how this physical dimension of space-time came into existence: "*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*" (Gen.1:1 KJV).

The English phrase *In the beginning* is translated from the Hebrew word *re'shiyth*, which basically means *the first*, in place, time, order, or rank.

Therefore, it would seem more logical to translate verse 1 as, *God first created the heaven and the earth*. Because the spirit realm already existed and verse 1 is introducing the creation of this physical dimension and everything in it.

The English word *created* is translated from the Hebrew word *bara'*; which means *to create*.

Verse 1 also reveals that, before the existence of this physical dimension of space-time, an extremely intelligent and powerful being planned and executed the creation of heaven and earth. But it neither tells us when these were created nor anything about them before the existence of humans.

However, the biblical record does tell us much about what was happening on earth before the creation of humans.

Genesis, chapter one reveals the following important information without which the reason for heaven and Earth's existence and the existence of humans cannot begin to be understood.

Verses 2 through 19 show that many things were done to make the earth habitable. Verses 20 through 25 recount the

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creation of many different life forms. In verses 26, and 30, the first two humans are created and given dominion over the earth and everything in it.

Earth Created to Be Inhabited

The prophet Isaiah was inspired to record the following about the purpose for Earth's creation:

"For this says the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he has established it, he did not create it in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else" (Isa.45:18 KJV Para.).

Isaiah records the reason for creating the earth was for it to be inhabited. By what and for what purpose it is inhabited is answered throughout the biblical record.

In the context of verse 18, the English words *Lord* and *God* are translated respectively from the Hebrew words *Yehovah* and *Elohiym*, which mean *Self-Existent*, or *Eternal*, and *Mighty One* or *Supreme God*.

A casual reading of verse 18 seems to be speaking of the Sovereign God as the one who formed the earth, but is this the God who told Isaiah to record his prophetic message?

John records Christ saying the following to a group of Jews about the Father who is the Sovereign God: *"And the Father himself, which has sent me, has borne witness of me. You have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape" (Jn.5:37 KJV Para.).*

If no human has ever heard or seen the Sovereign God, who is the God who personally spoke to Isaiah and other prophets? The God who spoke to Isaiah must have been the Creator God because the biblical record documents many times that the Creator God personally spoke with and appeared to Moses and many others.

The Creator telling Isaiah he is the only God is true in the sense that most Israelites had no knowledge of the Sovereign God; they only knew and interacted with the Creator to whom the Sovereign God delegated power and authority over the earth. The God who spoke to Isaiah was the Creator, not the Sovereign God.

The Creator Created

The Creator God said the following to the prophet Isaiah about himself and his origin: *"You are my witnesses, says the Lord [i.e., the Creator God], and my servant whom I have chosen that you may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no savior" (Isa.43:10-11 KJV Para.).*

In verse 10, the English word *Lord* is translated from the Hebrew word *Yehovah*, which means the *Self-Existent*, which tells us that the Creator God is an immortal being.

The word *God* is translated from the Hebrew word *'el*, which basically means *mighty*; especially *the Almighty*, but also describes any deity.

The word *formed* is translated from the Hebrew word *yatsar* which basically means *to form or shape*. *Yatsar* is synonymous with the Hebrew word's *bara* (i.e., *to create*) and *asa* (i.e., *to make*).

And the phrase *shall there be* is translated from the Hebrew word *hayah*, which basically means to exist, (i.e., *be, become, or come to pass*).

The Creator God said that he was made and that none like him would be made again. If he was made, it is logical to assume that before he was made, he did not exist, and if he was made someone or something made him. The biblical record clearly shows that the Sovereign God created him; therefore, it is logical to assume that only the Sovereign existed before the Creator God.

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In verse 11, the English word *savior* is translated from the Hebrew word *yasha`*; a primitive root; properly, *to be open, wide or free*, (i.e., by implication) *to be safe*; causatively, *to free or succor* (i.e., *help*).

The last half of verse 11 would be more easily understood as: "*I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no freedom.*" Because the Creator God became the Savior of humanity, it follows that he not only told Isaiah he was created but also that he is the only God that will ever be created to free humans from the penalty imposed for violating the Sovereign God's law. See Jn.1:1-34; Matt.16:13-17, Mk.8:27-29, Acts 4:10-12.

The Book of Revelation

The first verse of the Book of Revelation tells us that the Sovereign God gave Christ information to convey to his earthly children. Within this prophetic information are many warnings and instructions, some of which Christ directs to individuals identified as the Laodiceans: "*And to the messenger of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things says the So Be It, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God*" (Rev.3:14 KJV Para).

In order for there to be no confusion as to who is giving this warning and instruction, Christ identifies himself as the *So Be It*, (i.e., the Amen, the Creator) *the faithful and true witness* (i.e., Christ), and then he refers to himself as *the beginning of God's creation*.

The English word *beginning* is translated from the Greek word *arche*, which can mean a *commencement*, or *chief* in various applications of order, time, place, or rank.

The word *creation* is translated from the Greek word *ktisis*, which in the context of verse 14 means *an original formation*.

And the word *God* is translated from the Greek word *theos*, which when used alone in a sentence means *a deity*, but when prefaced by the Greek word *ho*, it can mean the *supreme Divinity*.

The Creator told the prophet Isaiah that no God was created before him, none would ever be created like him again, and that he is the only savior (Isa.43:10-11). To the Laodiceans, Christ identifies himself as the Creator, as his heavenly Father's earthly witness, and as the Sovereign God's first creation.

The accounts in Isaiah, chapter 43 and Revelation, chapter 3 document that the Creator God did not exist before the Sovereign God created him.

The Word Was With God

The first chapter of John contains scriptures which are difficult to comprehend without knowing, that John is writing about two separate gods: "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*" (Jn.1:1 KJV).

The English word *beginning* is translated from the Greek word *arche*, which basically means *beginning in order of time, place, or rank*. The word, *Word* is translated from the Greek word *logos*, which can mean *something said*, and by implication *a topic or subject of discourse*.

John writes that in the beginning the Word (i.e., the Logos) existed. In the context of verse one, *logos* does not mean a part of speech or language. John uses *logos* as many of the prophets did when they referred to being given information from the Creator God whom they described as the Word of the Lord. See Isa.38:4; Jer.2:1; Ezk.1:1-3, 7:1.

John documents that before the creation of anything, there were two spirit-beings. One described as the Word (i.e., the Logos), which was with a spirit-being described as God (Theos, i.e., God).

This is further substantiated by John's statements in the rest of chapter one, which show Christ as the Creator God separate from the Sovereign God.

When John writes in chapter 1, verse 2, "*The same* [i.e., this one] *was in the beginning with God*" (Jn. 1:2 KJV), he makes a further distinction between these two god beings—the Logos and the Theos. If only one God existed in the beginning, John would not have emphasized this distinction.

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"All things were made by him [i.e., the Word, the Logos]; and without him was not anything made that was made" (Jn.1:3 KJV). See Gen.1:1, 26-27.

Here, the phrase *were made* and the word *made* are translated from the Greek word *ginomai*, which can mean *to cause to be* or *to become*.

The word *anything* is translated from the Greek word *hice*, which means *the primary numeral one*. By using the word *hice*, John clearly establishes that nothing was made before the Creator who became Christ made it.

John documents that all things that exist, whether spirit or physical, were made by the Logos who was with the Theos. If what John documents is true, then when the Sovereign God said to make man, he was speaking to the Creator God who became the Savior of humanity.

Some might say John was referring to the Theos (i.e., the Sovereign God) in verse 3 as being the creator of everything, but the assertion that he was indeed speaking of the Word (who became Christ) as the Creator is corroborated by the apostle Paul when he documents in his letter to the elect at Colossi that Christ was the Creator God who created everything for the Sovereign God: "*Giving thanks to the Father* [i.e., the Sovereign God], *which enabled us to be partakers of the inheritance of the holy ones in light* [i.e., all those who truly understand and obey the Father's message of salvation]: *Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has brought us into the kingdom of his dear Son* [i.e., Christ]: *In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins: Who is like the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature*" (Col.1:12-15 KJV Para.).

Here, the English word *firstborn* is translated from the Greek word *prototokos*, which is derived from the word *rotos* which means *foremost* (in time, place, order or importance).

The phrase *of every* is translated from the Greek word *pas*; a primary word, meaning *all, any, every, the whole*.

And the word *creature* is translated from the Greek word *ktisis*, which in the context of verse 15 means *an original formation*.

Verse 15 tells us that Christ is like the Sovereign God (i.e., God the Father), he is an original creation (i.e., a unique creation), and he is the prototype for all future immortal spirit-beings who will subsequently be created to become members of the Father's heavenly family.

Verses 16 and 17 also document that the Creator created everything that exists in the spirit and physical realms for the Sovereign God: "*For by him* [i.e., Christ who was the Creator before becoming human], *were all things created in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him* [i.e., created for the Sovereign God]: *And he is before all things, and by him all things consist*" (Col.1:16-17 KJV Para.).

Here, the phrase *all things* is translated from the Greek word *pas*, which basically means *all, any, every, and the whole*, which again documents that the Creator God created everything, including spirit-beings, for the Sovereign God.

In verse 16, the word *heaven* is translated from the Greek word *ouranos*, which can mean (among other things) *the sky* or *heaven as the abode of God* (i.e., the spirit realm). The use of the word *ouranos* seems to include everything above the earth and in the spirit realm.

What are these thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers the apostle Paul says Christ (as the Creator) created?

In his letter to the elect at Ephesus, Paul says there are spirit-beings who inhabit the earth and the spirit realm that are attempting to destroy the elect. This strongly indicates that these are the same thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers he mentioned to the Colossians as being created by Christ: "*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness; therefore, against spiritual wickedness above the sky. Therefore, take yourselves the whole armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having*

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done all, stand" (Eph.6:12-13 KJV Para.).

Delegated Power and Authority

In the beginning of his letter to the Hebrews, the writer documents that the Sovereign God created everything that exists in the heavenly and physical realms through the Creator who became Christ and his first-born physical and spiritual Son: *"God [i.e., the Sovereign God], who at different times and in different ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he has appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds"* (Heb.1:1-2 KJV Para.).

In verse 2, the English word *worlds* is translated from the Greek word *aión*, which in the strictest sense means, *an age*. It does not mean planets, worlds, or any physical object in the heavens.

In our physical realm, an age can mean a division of geologic time or an epoch, which is a period of time marked by particular events or characteristics.

Because the spirit realm is timeless, physical time cannot describe the unique nature or scope of the spirit realm.

If the writer to the Hebrews meant *aión* in a plural sense, it would explain the creation of this physical realm and would not limit the creation of many unique states of timelessness, which several scriptures indicate exist. See Eph.3:20-21; Jude 11-13; Rev.12:12, 20:1-3, 21:1-3.

In the context of verse 2, when the Sovereign God gave his instructions to the Creator to create things for him, nothing existed but the Sovereign God and the Creator God. After the spirit realm, other spirit-beings, and whatever else the spirit realm contains were created, eventually this physical space-time and what it contains were created.

"Who being the brightness of his glory [i.e., the Father's glory], and the essence of his character [speaking of Christ], sustains all things by the word of his power, and purges our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high [i.e., the Sovereign God]; Being made so much better than the angels, as he has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they" (Heb.1:3-4 KJV Para.).

Here, the English word *power* is translated from the Greek word *dunamis*, which basically means *miraculous power* (usually by implication, a miracle itself): It is by this spirit-power and his authority to use this power that Christ as the Creator created and now sustains everything for the Sovereign God.

In Hebrews, chapter 1 the writer tells us the following eight things about Christ:

- He was sent to earth by the Sovereign God to speak to his future immortal children.
- He is the Sovereign God's heir of all that exists.
- As the Creator he made all things for the Sovereign God.
- He is the personification of his heavenly Father.
- He sustains all that exists through his great power.
- He sacrificed his physical life for the forgiveness of our sins.
- He is next in authority to his heavenly Father.
- He is better in every way than the angels.

Of these eight things the following three pertain to this study:

- Christ was the Creator God who made all things for the Sovereign God.
- Christ sustains all that exists through his great power.
- Christ is next in authority to his heavenly Father.

Conclusions

Genesis chapter 1, verse 1 reveals that before the existence of this physical dimension of space-time an extremely intelligent and powerful being planned and executed the creation of this space-time, which includes heaven, earth, and everything in them.

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In Isaiah, chapter 43, the Creator said that before him no God was created to be a savior, and none will be created after him.

In chapter 1 of John's gospel account, he records that at one point in eternity there were only two spirit-beings in existence—the Sovereign God and the Creator God—and that the Creator who was with the Sovereign created everything for the Sovereign.

In chapter 1 of Paul's letter to the Colossians, he wrote that Christ (as the Creator) created everything in heaven and earth, including other spirit-beings.

In chapter 3 of the Book of Revelation, Christ said that he was the beginning of God's creation.

The biblical record documents that the Sovereign God existed before anything else, he was alone in a timeless and empty dimension without other beings like himself with whom to interact, he created the Creator as a companion, and he instructed the Creator to create everything for him.

Why Create Anything?

We now know that the Sovereign God created the Creator God and instructed him to create everything in the spirit and physical realms, but we still need to explore why the Sovereign God created anything, and especially why he created humans? To answer these questions, we first need to answer some questions about the spirit-beings created before humans.

The scriptures document that before the Sovereign God said, "make man in our image," there were (millions, perhaps billions) of spirit-beings created to serve him. These spirit-beings were created with a high degree of intelligence and were authorized to use tremendous spirit-power as noted throughout the scriptures.

REBELLION

The biblical record gives few details about what these spirit-beings were doing in the spirit realm, but we can assume that the Sovereign God and the Creator God expected to have a pleasant harmonious relationship with each of them as they fulfilled their functions and responsibilities. But this did not happen, because one of these high-ranking spirit-beings led others in a rebellion against the Sovereign God in an attempt to remove him from power. This attempt failed and these rebellious beings now await their punishment.

But why would some of these beings' rebel against their Sovereign?

The following seem to be some plausible reasons for their rebellion:

- They were created with extreme intelligence and tremendous spirit-power, which could have resulted in some of them developing an arrogant, egoistical, or vain attitude and character.
- They were created with freedom of choice and could choose whether or not to obey their Sovereign.
- They were created with emotions.
- They were not created with godly character.
- They deceived themselves into thinking they could challenge the Sovereign's authority and power.

Although some of these individuals rebelled, it did not change the underlying reason for their creation, which was for them to have a harmonious relationship with their Sovereign, the Creator, and their fellow servants as they performed their functions and responsibilities within the Sovereign's realm.

The rebellion of these spirit-beings revealed that godly character could not be created in a lesser being than a god-being; therefore, God needed a method through which godly character could become an inherent trait of an individual before their being given life in the spirit realm. Understanding this gives us our first clue to why humans were created.

Pleasures Offered Forever

Within David's dual prophecy about his belief in his and Christ's resurrection after death, he records that in the presence

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of the Sovereign God there is tremendous happiness, joy, and pleasure forever: *"I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore, my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For you will not leave my soul in the grave; neither will you suffer your Holy One to see corruption. You will show me the path of life: in your presence is fulness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forever"* (Psa.16:8-11 KJV Para.).

Here, the English word *fulness* is translated from the Hebrew word *soba*, which can mean, *satisfaction* or *joy*.

The word *joy* is translated from the Hebrew word *simchah*, which basically means, *cheerful* or *gleeful*.

And the word *pleasures* is translated from the Hebrew word *na`iyim*, which basically means *delightful*. (i.e., things that are enjoyable).

There is a promise of eternal happiness, joy, and pleasure to those who follow the path of life the Sovereign God has prescribed for them.

What Christ and Paul said about this promise to those who seize the opportunity of salvation offered to them by the Sovereign God not only explains what the future holds for these individuals but also gives insight into what the Sovereign God wanted to accomplish by creating everything, including humans.

While speaking to his disciples about the things of this life and the things of greater value that one should focus on, Christ said the following: *"But rather you seek the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added to you. Do not fear, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom"* (Lk.12:31-32 KJV Para.).

The English phrase *good pleasure* is translated from the Greek word *eudokeo*, which basically means, *to think well of*, *approve an act*, and especially, *approval of a person or thing*.

In the context of verse 32, *eudokeo* expresses God the Father's desire to share his kingdom with his children of whom he approves.

In Paul's letter to the elect at Corinth he writes the following: *"But as it is written, eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither entered into the heart of people, what God prepared for those who love him"* (1 Cor.2:9 KJV Para.). See also Jms.1:12, 2:5.

Why would sharing his kingdom with us make the Sovereign God happy? And why would he make an effort to prepare anything in his kingdom for us to enjoy?

The answer is that he will get enjoyment out of interacting with individuals who are like him in every way and who enjoy the same things he enjoys.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if you were a member of a very large family who truly love and respect each other, not only as family members but also as friends who always looked forward to being together, enjoying each other's company, and sharing everything together? Would this kind of life make you happy and give you great pleasure? This is exactly what the Sovereign God is offering his human creation, because these and countless other things which give us pleasure also give him pleasure.

This question of why God created humans specifically is easily answered when we understand that humans were created as social beings. The majority of us do not normally want to be alone without other people around us. We choose other people to be friends and companions, we marry, we have families, and we group together in communities and nations, all because we do not want to be alone.

When we choose people to associate with, we try to choose people we have things in common with and who think and behave like us. This is because it is through interaction with these types of individuals that we find great happiness, joy, and pleasure.

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When looking at all the scriptures that have to do with the Sovereign God's reason for creating the Creator, other spirit-beings, humans, and everything else that exists in the physical and spirit realms, it becomes clear that his purpose was to fulfill his desire to have companionship, happiness, enjoyment, and pleasure, which he wants to share with other beings just like himself.

It is clear that this kind of interaction could not be accomplished through the spirit-beings created before humans, as evidenced by the rebellion of some of them. Because they were not like the Sovereign God in every way, they could not relate to him and the Creator as equals in attitude, behavior, and character. But how could this situation be changed?

In order to understand how this change was to come about, we need to review Adam and Eve's creation and the Hebrew meaning of several words in Genesis, chapters 1 and 2.

"And God said let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the fowl of the air, over the cattle, over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth" (Gen.1:26 KJV).

Here, most English translations render the Hebrew word *asah* as *"let us"* before the words *"make man in our image."* However, many Hebrew scholars translate just the word *asah* as *make* or the full word *na`asah, we make*. Regardless of the translation "make" or "we make," it does not change the fact that at that moment there were two individuals with the power to create humans.

If we consider the word *asah* to mean *make*, the translation would be "God said, make man in our image," this makes the translation consistent with other scriptures which show the Creator God being subordinate to the Sovereign God and creating everything for him, including humans.

In verse 26, the English word *image* is translated from the Hebrew word *tselem*, which can mean an *illusion, resemblance*, hence a representative figure.

The English phrase *after our likeness* is translated from the Hebrew word *demuwth*, which can mean *resemblance*; concretely, *model, shape*; adverbially, *like*: Nowhere else in the Bible do we see the two nouns, *image* (*tselem*) and *likeness* (*demuwth*) appear in parallelism, which reveals two different things are to be created—the image (i.e., a physical resemblance) and likeness (i.e., a spiritual quality). These two words describe what is desired to be created physically and what is desired to be created as a spirit-being. See Psa.17:15:1. Cor.15:51-54; Phil.3:21; 2 Pet.1:4; 1 Jn.3:2.

"So, God created man [humans] in his own image [tselem], in the image [tselem] of God he created them; male and female he created them" (Gen.1:27 KJV).

Notice a clarification in verse 27. Adam and Eve were created similar in physical appearance to the Sovereign God and the Creator God, but not like them as an immortal being. Adam and Eve could die and cease to exist. See Gen.2:16-17. But why create humans that can die, if the goal was to create spirit-beings just like themselves in every way? This question will be answered at the conclusion of this study.

A Companion for Adam

Hidden within the record of Adam and Eve's creation is insight into why the Sovereign God created the Creator God and eventually humans.

Genesis, chapter 1, verses 26 through 31 indicate that Adam and Eve were created on the sixth day of the week, with the events in chapter 2 recorded in their order of importance as they relate to Adam and Eve:

- Adam is created (Gen.2:7).
- Adam is placed in the Garden of Eden to care for it (Gen.2:15).
- Adam is warned not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen.2:17).
- God decides to make Adam a mate (Gen.2:18).
- Adam gives names to animals and birds, but he still does not have a mate (Gen.2:20).

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- Eve is created and presented to Adam as his mate (Gen.2:21-22).

So why create Eve? Adam could have fulfilled his function as gardener without a mate, just as each spirit-being in the spirit realm fulfills their functions without a mate. Genesis, chapter 2, verse 18, reveals why Eve was created and also gives insight into why the Creator was created.

Although not a word-for-word translation of verse 18, the Living Bible's translation does capture the essence of the thought being conveyed: *"And the Lord God said, It isn't good for man to be alone; I will make a companion for him, a helper suited to his needs"* (Gen.2:18 TLB).

It is not clear in verse 18 if it is the Sovereign God or the Creator God speaking. But it makes sense that the Sovereign would be the one speaking as he was in a similar situation before creating the Creator.

Adam's Needs

Why would Adam need a companion when all of his basic needs, such as food and shelter were provided for him? How did the Sovereign God know that it was not good for Adam to be alone?

He knew because he remembered how lonely his life was before he created the Creator, and he did not want Adam to suffer this same loneliness. He clearly understood what Adam's life would be like without a suitable companion to interact with and to share his hopes, dreams, goals, and life with. So, he created Eve. Additionally, for his plan for humans to go forward, they would need to procreate, and therefore a female is needed to bear children.

The Mystery of Human Existence

Humans were created as physical beings with a limited lifespan, without godly attitude, behavior, and character, but with the potential to become immortal spirit-beings through an educational and experiential process which is well documented in the biblical record. This process guarantees that when a human is transformed into a spirit-being, that they will be absolutely compatible in every way with God the Father and Christ.

The God Family

The apostle Paul wrote the following about those who seize the opportunity for salvation and successfully live-in compliance with the way of life God requires to be practiced: *"Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory"* (1 Cor.15:51-54 KJV).

The Sovereign God created humans to be transformed into immortal spirit-beings and live with him and Christ forever in a loving, respectful family relationship—this is the purpose for our creation.

The Sovereign God has embarked on the greatest and grandest of all his creations; he is creating beings just like himself in attitude, behavior, and character, and his intent is to share with them all he has created or will create throughout eternity. See 1 Jn.3:2; Rom.8:14-19; Phil.3:21; Eph.3:10-15.

Your Part in the Plan

If you are willing to accept the challenge, your part in this drama of human existence is to be among the very first humans to become a part of the God Family and live an exciting and joyful life for eternity. The process through which this special relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ can be obtained is called Salvation.

The choice is yours to accept or not accept the offer to live forever.

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Letters

Letter from Curtis Dahlgren (July 30, 2022)

Thanks for the reposting of another column. Hope you're feeling better than last week.

Letter from Steven Blackledge (July 30, 2022)

I cannot remember if I had written you to give my condolences for the loss of your dog Bubbles... Losing pets is very difficult... Especially if you have had them for a while as you well know... Hope all went well for Darwin on his trip to bury Bubbles... It is interesting how God only allows for dogs to live on average a decade plus... Depending on the animal's health of course... Yet, some tropical birds can live to be 80 years old... I suppose if a dog lived that long, because of its nature, it would be difficult to adapt to a new owner... Because of their loving, and loyal nature that God has given many breeds of dogs... God bless, and hope sabbath was a refreshing one for you. Take care...

Iron Sharpening Iron

(Agree or Disagree with Something Printed)

New American Standard Bible (Proverbs 27:17)

As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

**In regard to: The Trumpet Blast's
That Will Eventually Usher in the Great Tribulation**

Article by Steven Blackledge

Comments by Steven Blackledge (Sonora, California)

and Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)

Steven Blackledge writes:

To continue in allowing scripture to define our narrative, and not traditions, we have to all conclude at some point in order to grow in grace, and in knowledge, we have to ensure we are allowing for God's Word to define the narrative that our Creator is presenting to us within scripture... What a blessing we have here in the US even still to be able to study, and do so... Remembering that our Savior did not die to save us on a physical level, but on a spiritual one... Which is why HE declared in Luke chapter 17 that we must be careful not to focus our attention on saving the flesh to the point of compromising HIS will, or by mistranslating God's Word...

I have been reading, and watching a great many believers wanting to save the USA... Remember the time frame of the US's prominence on the world stage has already been predetermined by our Creator long ago... The USA was never the answer for our world's ills, and was never meant to be... This nation fulfilled prophecy, and will continue to do so until time is up for us... Our sins are great, and sadly repentance is not sought on God's terms... But this has always been mankind's problem from the beginning... Our own form of righteousness which is in direct opposition to God's definition of what is good... It is God's kingdom on earth upon our Savior's return that will bring forth the change that is necessary that is our hope... So, with this in mind, Jesus reminds us of this in Luke chapter 17 verse 33:

"33 If you cling to your life, you will lose it, and if you let your life go, you will save it."

Laura writes:

I believe that most of us know that God used the United States to fulfill prophecy, especially His promise to Abraham. I believe most of us understand that the United States as we once knew it will not be back. What I want to know is do you understand that you cannot make things up and then pass them off as being scripture?

Steven Blackledge writes:

We need to bear this in mind while remembering we are ambassadors for the kingdom of God, and await our Savior's return... Getting involved with the politics of this world is futile simply because the Word of God has already laid out the

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outcome of events that are to transpire... Our preparation in Christ Jesus in Spirit, and in Truth is so vitally important as we should remain laser focused upon the spiritual battle that has been transpiring since iniquity was found in the fallen cherub Lucifer as Ezekiel chapter 28 reminds of as it concerns the king of Tyre, or merchandising God's material wealth through covert means... Satan believes the very lies he propagates, and God allows for him to be the "god of this world," in order to teach humanity, through experience, why this has always been a bad idea... But the love of sin is great, so, our Father in heaven is allowing for this to continue for a pre-allotted time frame that was planned for from the beginning...

So, with this in mind here is what you wrote concerning the tribulation, and great tribulation period...

Editor's Note:

I am pretty sure there may be a disconnect here somehow between these 1290 days and 1335 days. Perhaps someone else can clear this up? The problem in my opinion is first in thinking that there will be two tribulations, seemingly a small one and a greater one. It is all one tribulation. During the trumpets it appears only a third of everything is affected but when the bowls of wrath are poured out, it affects everything, and everyone left on earth. During the bowls of wrath there will probably be some people that repent but for the most part, it looks like they still do not repent. As far as the elect living through the bowls of wrath the Bible says otherwise.

1. The two witnesses prophesy for 1260 days. Then the beast kills them, and they lay in the street for 3.5 days. Rev 11:3 And I will give *power* unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

2. Shortly after the two witnesses ascend to heaven it says the second woe is past. Rev 11:13 And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven. Rev 11:14 The second woe is past; *and* behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

3. There are four trumpets and three woe trumpets. The first four trumpets happen and then you have woe trumpet five followed by woe trumpet six and then woe trumpet seven sounds and Christ harvests the First Fruits. [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.

4. After this you have the seven bowls of wrath being poured out on the earth. So, tribulation is not yet over at the point where Christ harvests His first fruits. Laura Lee

The setup for what will be the end, or as Revelation chapter 11 declares as such when the 7th, and final trumpet blows is what Jesus declares as the tribulation... A time of great confusion for most of humanity because of what will have transpired after the first 4 trumpets of God's holy angels are blown... Whomever of us that are alive at this yet future time, will be tested as far as how much we have relied upon the Spirit of God, and Jesus as our Teacher, or have squandered the opportunity to draw near to our Father in heaven through His Son by focusing upon physical matters rather than HIS SPIRIT... After Satan is cast down upon attempting to make war with God because of his displeasure of what the devil will believe is his Creator's interference in the "lordship" he has been granted...

Laura writes:

I have no idea what Bible you are reading but it is certainly not the one I use which is the King James version. The word tribulation is not used even once in Revelation Chapter 11. The greater part of Revelation is talking about the tribulation, but it does not divide it into two tribulations as you want to do. The seals, the trumpets, the woe trumpets, and the bowls of wrath are all parts of the same tribulation.

And the only thing being declared in Revelation Chapter 11 is: Rev 11:15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

Steven Blackledge writes:

When cast down, and never allowed to enter the heavenly throne area of God again, the devil will make it a point to stir

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up the peoples of the nations through his cunning, and clever temptations... He will succeed of course because of the mystery of lawlessness, and the practice thereof. Satan is given the key to the bottomless pit when cast down from heaven as well in order to unleash Abaddon as Revelation chapter 9 declares... Remember that Revelation chapter 8 reminds us that after the first 4 trumpet blasts of God's holy angels signaling punishment upon the earth's inhabitants, the final 3 trumpet blasts are going to signal even worse events to take place... As Revelation chapter 8 declares:

"13 Then I looked, and I heard a solitary eagle flying in midheaven [for all to see], saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe [great wrath is coming] to those who dwell on the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpets which the three angels are about to sound [announcing ever greater judgments]!"

And then of course the story continues in Revelation chapter 12 as Satan vainly attempts to thwart God's plans, and is quite upset by what transpired when the first 4 trumpets of God were blown by going to war against his Creator... As Revelation chapter 12 declares:

"7 And war broke out in heaven, Michael [the archangel] and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought, **8** but they were not strong enough *and* did not prevail, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. **9** And the great dragon was thrown down, the age-old serpent who is called the devil and Satan, he who *continually* deceives *and* seduces the entire inhabited world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom (dominion, reign) of our God, and the authority of His Christ have come; for the accuser of our [believing] brothers and sisters has been thrown down [at last], he who accuses them *and* keeps bringing charges [of sinful behavior] against them before our God day and night. **11** And they overcame *and* conquered him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, for they did not love their life *and* renounce their faith even when faced with death. **12** Therefore rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them [in the presence of God]. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you in great wrath, knowing that he has *only* a short time [remaining]!"

Notice the word "woe" is used in verse 12... The first woe is about to begin once the 5th trumpet of God's holy angel is blown... Chapter 9 continues this storyline as follows:

"9 Then the fifth angel sounded [his trumpet], and I saw a star (angelic being) that had fallen from heaven to the earth; and the key of the bottomless pit (abyss) was given to him (the star-angel)."

So, who is this star fallen from heaven? Who is the one who Jesus declared would fall from heaven as a bolt of lightning?... Remember there is only one time in scripture that Satan is cast down, and it is during the time of great trouble's that Jesus mentions within the Mount of Olives sermon in Matthew 24... Which brings us to the next facet of this story that Jesus describes as tribulation once the beginning of sorrows period ends... Again, Satan will be on the warpath as he knows time is but the essence... As Revelation chapter 12 declares his time of setting up the final defense is coming...

Laura writes:

Let's hope people don't believe this false narrative that you keep repeating over and over again. In one place you make it sound like Satan was cast from heaven at least two times and now you say only one time which happens during the tribulation. Which is it? Was Satan cast out once or twice? And who exactly was on the earth for the last 6000 years influencing people to sin?

I covered this before but let's do it again so you can look at the scriptures:

Rev 12:7 And there **was** war in heaven: Michael and his angels **fought** against the dragon; and the dragon **fought** and his angels, **(Michael and his angels fought Satan and his angels. This is past tense language.)**

Rev 12:8 And prevailed not; neither **was** their place found any more in heaven. **(Michael won, Satan lost. Again, this is past tense language.)**

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Rev 12:9 And the great dragon **was** cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he **was** cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. **(God tossed Satan from heaven. Again, past tense language.)**

Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is **cast down**, which accused them before our God day and night. **(Satan has always been the accuser of the brethren. This scripture speaks of the Kingdom of God yet future and of how Satan was cast down to the earth. It does not say Satan stopped accusing the brethren. Cast down is also past tense.)**

Rev 12:11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. **(This is talking about how the Saints overcame Satan by the blood of Christ. Those who are Christ's are always willing to give up their lives for Christ, just as he gave up His life for us.)**

Rev 12:12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. **(6000 years to a spirit being is a short time. And of course, the heavens were glad to be rid of Satan and the earth will also be glad to be rid of Satan when that time comes.)**

Rev 12:13 And when the dragon saw that he **was cast** unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which **brought** forth the man *child*. **(Herein lies your misunderstanding. Satan was cast to the earth. Satan persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. Who is the woman and who is the man child? The man child is Christ, and the woman is the church or collectively the Saints. So, your argument falls flat. Satan did not stop persecuting anyone once he was cast to the earth. He just kept on going like the ever-ready bunny on steroids. Also, this verse uses past tense language.)**

Stevens statement from above: Also remember as it states in Revelation chapter 12 verse 10 that Satan continued to accuse the brethren up until that point that he was finally cast down... So, if that is the case, then that would mean the devil was not ousted from heaven until a yet future time.

Herein lies yet another problem with your argument that Satan was cast out of heaven twice. If you actually believe that, God is not a fool who does not have control over His own creation, because you are saying that Satan was thrown out of heaven once, but then Satan somehow got back into heaven and God then had to cast him out a second time. God is no fool. When God tossed Satan from heaven he was not found there again as this verse states: Rev 12:8 And prevailed not; **neither was their place found any more in heaven.**

Steven Blackledge writes:

In the meantime, Satan is fulfilling scripture, and in reality, is fighting in a futile attempt to ensure God's plan does not come to pass... He is not going to give up the ship so humbly, and will take his animosity out on the children of God... Even fooling spiritually unprepared brethren into actually taking part in this persecution of those who know their Savior... Trying to save one's physical existence, while compromising God's Word, is not what Jesus meant when HE said we are to work out our salvation with fear, and trembling... But during this tribulation (not Great Tribulation period) this will be the case... As Jesus declares in Matthew chapter 24, and the spiritually fully prepared believer in God's Messiah have to endure during this time of tribulation:

"9 "Then they will hand you over to [endure] tribulation, and will put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. **10** At that time many will be offended *and* repelled [by their association with Me] *and* will fall away [from the One whom they should trust] and will betray one another [handing over believers to their persecutors] and will hate one another. **11** Many false prophets will appear and mislead many. **12** Because lawlessness is increased, the love of most people will grow cold. **13** But the one who endures *and* bears up [under suffering] to the end will be saved. **14** This good news of the kingdom [the gospel] will be preached throughout the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end [of the age] will come."

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And Jesus continues to remind us during these final time frames before our Savior's triumphant return on HIS white horse, there will be those who will have known the Truth, but allowed for sin or the pleasures of the flesh to cloud their judgment as Matthew chapter 24 reminds us they will be used by Satan to persecute their own brethren:

"**45** "Who then is the faithful and wise servant whom his master has put in charge of his household to give the others [in the house] their food *and* supplies at the proper time? **46** Blessed is that [faithful] servant when his master returns and finds him doing so. **47** I assure you *and* most solemnly say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions. **48** But if that servant is evil and says in his heart, 'My master is taking his time [he will not return for a long while],' **49** and begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards; **50** the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour of which he is not aware, **51** and will cut him in two and put him with the hypocrites; in that place there will be weeping [over sorrow and pain] and grinding of teeth [over distress and anger]."

Laura writes:

Look around you, this stuff is happening right now and has been for quite some time.

Steven Blackledge writes:

Now we all know that our Father in heaven is longsuffering, and patient, and wants all to come to repentance... Giving us ample opportunity to do so... Even those who have fallen away from what should be priority while in these temporary bodies our spirits reside in... We most certainly cannot overcome the wiles, and strength of the devil on our own... Reliance upon God's Holy Spirit is vital for us mere mortals in this increasingly intense spiritual battle against those principalities that represent darkness...

I was often confused myself about the 1290 days, and 1335 days mentioned in the 12th chapter of Daniel... But if we read what it says about the 1290 days, we realize that it is during this period of time the set up for the final abomination that will usher in complete desolation on a spiritual level will be utilized by Satan after him being cast down from God's heavenly abode... Daniel chapter 12 declares:

"**11** From the time that the regular sacrifice [that is, the daily burnt offering] is taken away and the abomination of desolation is set up [ruining the temple for worship of the true God], *there will be* 1,290 days."

Notice it says set up of the abomination of the beast being worshiped as God, and by his emergence as king of the spiritually fallen world where every tribe, nation, and tongue will worship the man of sin as such, he will be given free reign by God to also refine the saints who were not quite prepared to enter into the marriage supper... As we read in chapter 12 of Daniel of this abominable reign of the beast that will bring forth a complete desolation of God's holy one's:

"**7** And I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as he held up his right hand and his left hand toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and a half a time (three and a half years); and as soon as they finish shattering *and* crushing the power of the holy people, all these things will be finished."

This will occur during the 1335 day period of Great Tribulation that our Savior covers in His Mount of Olives discourse as follows in Matthew chapter 24... Remember that HE declared this time frame as the end, and occurring after the 2 witnesses have proclaimed the true gospel of God worldwide for a 1260 day period of this initial 1290 tribulation period... These 2 will be counteracting the big set up during the 1290 tribulation period of the beast defeating 3 kings, or 3 of the 10 horns of the beast in battle...

Once their 1260-day period of declaring the need to repent through Christ Jesus is over, God allows for the 2 witnesses' to be killed by the beast... The remaining 30 days of this 1290-day tribulation period will be spent by the world gloating over the defeat of the much hated 2 witnesses of God, and completion of ensuring that their false messiah is worshiped as God by those whose names are NOT written in the Lamb's Book of Life...

Laura writes:

I think you are wrong in regard to these time periods. The Bible doesn't say they gloated over the death of the 2

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witnesses for 30 days.

Rev 11:7 And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. Rev 11:8 And their dead bodies *shall lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. Rev 11:9 And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. Rev 11:10 And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. **Rev 11:11 And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.**

The Bible says they only gloated for 3.5 days and not 30 days. Where are you getting this misinformation from?

Steven Blackledge writes:

"Who can make war against the beast, and who is more amazing than he," as Revelation chapter 13 reminds us after this tribulation period ends, the man of sin's reign of 1260 of the 1335-day Great Tribulation period will begin... Those saints that are still alive will be in Satan's crosshairs, and as once the devil gives his authority over to the beast, the war against the remaining children of God who are still in need of refining will occur as Revelation chapter 13 points out:

4 They worshiped the dragon for giving the beast such power, and they also worshiped the beast. "Who is as great as the beast?" they exclaimed. "Who is able to fight against him?" **5** Then the beast was allowed to speak great blasphemies against God. And he was given authority to do whatever he wanted for forty-two months. **6** And he spoke terrible words of blasphemy against God, slandering his name and his dwelling—that is, those who dwell in heaven. **7** And the beast was allowed to wage war against God's holy people and to conquer them. And he was given authority to rule over every tribe and people and language and nation. **8** And all the people who belong to this world worshiped the beast. They are the ones whose names were not written in the Book of Life that belongs to the Lamb who was slaughtered before the world was made. **9** Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand. **10** Anyone who is destined for prison will be taken to prison. Anyone destined to die by the sword will die by the sword.

This means that God's holy people must endure persecution patiently and remain faithful."

This time frame is ushered in by the blowing of the 7th trumpet, and is considered "The End" as our Messiah declared in Matthew chapter 24 once the 1290-day period of tribulation ends within verse 14:

14 This good news of the kingdom [the gospel] will be preached throughout the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end [of the age] will come." Jesus continues in verse 15 of Matthew chapter 24 to then ensure we understand the distinction between the tribulation period, and the great tribulation period:

15 "So when you see the abomination of desolation [the appalling sacrilege that astonishes and makes desolate], spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the Holy Place (let the reader understand), **16** then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains [for refuge]. **17** Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things that are in his house [because there will not be enough time]. **18** Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his coat. **19** And woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! **20** Pray that your flight [from persecution and suffering] will not be in winter, or on a Sabbath [when Jewish laws prohibit travel]. **21** For at that time there will be a GREAT TRIBULATION (pressure, distress, oppression), such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will [again]."

So, verses 9 through 14 of Matthew chapter 24 summarize what will transpire during the 1290-day period of tribulation... The initial persecution of the saints of God, as well as the 1260-day period of the gospel being preached by the 2 witnesses of God will also transpire during this time... These 2 will also be killed during this time in order to make it appear that the beast is "god like." As many peoples from many nations will have tried to put the 2 witnesses to death via various means unsuccessfully as Revelation chapter 11 declares... Once the beast accomplishes' what others tried to by being allowed to put the 2 witness's to death to fulfill God's predetermined outcome, this will serve as a test for the remaining saints of God... Because as Jesus declared in Matthew chapter 24, "if it were possible, even the elect could be deceived:

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"**23** "Then if anyone tells you, 'Look, here is the Messiah,' or 'There he is,' don't believe it. **24** For false messiahs and false prophets will rise up and perform great signs and wonders so as to deceive, if possible, even God's chosen ones. **25** See, I have warned you about this ahead of time."

For those who do not pay homage to the beast, receive his mark, and worship the image that will be set up in his honor, these will be put to death during his 1260-day rule... Again, occurring during the 1335-day period of Great Tribulation... As Daniel chapter 7 declares concerning the little horn... The man of sin with whom Abaddon, the king of the bottomless pit, will possess, and make him to appear more than just a mere man to those whose names are NOT written in the Lamb's Book of Life:

"**25** He will speak words against the Most High [God] and wear down the saints of the Most High, and he will intend to change the times and the law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, [two] times, and half a time [three and one-half years]."

This is the same time that John was later shown as part of the Revelation of these end times within chapter 12 as Satan will in a great fury, and with the allegiance of the beast, and false prophet, vehemently go after those who will not worship the man of sin during this Great Tribulation period:

" **17** So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went off to wage war on the rest of her children (seed), those who keep *and* obey the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus [holding firmly to it and bearing witness to Him]."

Satan is infuriated because of the dead in Christ being resurrected first at this point, and being supernaturally protected by God somewhere while being nourished as they await the refining of their fellow saints who will be allowed to go through the Great Tribulation in order to refine themselves via the Spirit of God, and for their Savior to truly know they will be faithful even unto death... Which is why they will not be caught up together in the air until that 1260-day period of the 1335-day period of Great Tribulation is fulfilled...

Laura writes:

Notice carefully what Steven said here:

"Satan is infuriated because of the dead in Christ being resurrected first at this point, and being supernaturally protected by God somewhere while being nourished as they await the refining of their fellow saints who will be allowed to go through the Great Tribulation in order to refine themselves via the Spirit of God, and for their Savior to truly know they will be faithful even unto death..."

He is saying there are two different resurrections of the saints and yet the Bible only speaks of one resurrection of the saints (first fruits).

Steven Blackledge writes:

As for the 75-day period left during the Great Tribulation, God will pour out His bowls of wrath upon an unrepentant creation, and begin the process of dismantling this kingdom of the beast... While also taking care of spiritual Babylon, and all that represents her in this physical world... Those 75-to-100-pound hailstones that will be used to punish the earth should inflict much damage to this fallen world, as well as structures that Satan has built, or inspired mankind to build in order to honor himself... We all know the climax is the armies of the earth being deceived by the unclean spirits that proceed out of the mouths of the dragon (Satan), the beast (Abaddon), and the false prophet as Revelation chapter 16 declares the gathering in the Valley of Megiddo to wage war against our Savior, and the saints who will be with HIM as HE descends on a white horse from heaven above:

"**12** Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great Euphrates River, and it dried up so that the kings from the east could march their armies toward the west without hindrance. **13** And I saw three evil spirits that looked like frogs leap from the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. **14** They are demonic spirits who work miracles and go out to all the rulers of the world to gather them for battle against the Lord on that great judgment day of God the Almighty. **15** "Look, I will come as unexpectedly as a thief! Blessed are all who are watching for me, who keep their clothing ready

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so they will not have to walk around naked and ashamed." **16** And the demonic spirits gathered all the rulers and their armies to a place with the Hebrew name *Armageddon*. **17** Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air. And a mighty shout came from the throne in the Temple, saying, "It is finished!" **18** Then the thunder crashed and rolled, and lightning flashed. And a great earthquake struck—the worst since people were placed on the earth. **19** The great city of Babylon split into three sections, and the cities of many nations fell into heaps of rubble. So, God remembered all of Babylon's sins, and he made her drink the cup that was filled with the wine of his fierce wrath. **20** And every island disappeared, and all the mountains were leveled. **21** There was a terrible hailstorm, and hailstones weighing as much as seventy-five pounds fell from the sky onto the people below. They cursed God because of the terrible plague of the hailstorm."

Our Savior comes as a thief to those who are ill prepared from a spiritual perspective, and have drunk of the wine of Babylon's cup of fornications...

So, it is important to understand that our Savior does distinguish 2 different times of tribulation during the time frame when the final 3 trumpets are blown... The final 7th trumpet ushering in the final 1335-day period of the reign of the beast through Satan's delusional influence through the mystery of lawlessness, and the practice thereof... As well as the dismantling of this 7th empire, symbolized by the 7th head of the beast of Revelation, and the beast altogether as a whole in the lake of fire as declared in Revelation chapter 19:

"**19** Then I saw the beast and the kings *and* political leaders of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against Him who is mounted on the [white] horse and against His army. **20** And the beast (Antichrist) was seized *and* overpowered, and with him the false prophet who, in his presence, had performed [amazing] signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were hurled alive into the lake of fire which blazes with brimstone. **21** And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds fed ravenously *and* gorged themselves with their flesh."

Distinguishing these 2-time frames as well helps one to prepare for what is coming... Which is why Jesus insured we would be instructed beforehand, and have advantage to prepare in HIMSELF on a Spiritual level in order to endure whatever our Father in heaven has in store for us as individual believers... God our Father, and Savior wants us to be with HIM, and will ensure we are given the help via HIS SPIRIT to endure... But again, and as it has always been, it must be in accordance to HIS WORD, and how one is led by the very TRUTH our SAVIOR defines in order to ensure that individual is growing in the true knowledge, and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ...

So, for a quick recap:

1290-day period:

Tribulation, the setup for the abomination (the beast to be accepted as God by the fallen world via great exploits) that will cause spiritual desolation) which the blowing of the 5th, and 6th trumpets ushers in this time frame...

Saints being persecuted to death (the dead in Christ), ...

2 witnesses' declaring the gospel of repentance, and God's true, and coming kingdom for 1260 days... 2 witnesses' being put to death by the beast when the man of sin wages war against God's prophets...

God allows for this to test the saints, and to fulfill HIS prophetic WORD as the world will declare, "who can make with the beast."... The beast will also defeat, and subdue 3 kings (3 of the 10 kings who will be given authority by Satan to rule over this 7th empire) ... Symbolized by the little horn which emerges after the 10 horns have ruled this 7th kingdom for a particular time frame... (see Daniel chapter 7) ...

The final 30 days of the 1290-day tribulation period will be used for the final stages of the abomination of desolation being set up...

1335-day period:

Great tribulation, and the end of this age begins as the 7th trumpet is blown...

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The dead in Christ Jesus are raised first... After arising, these saints will be taken to a place of divine protection... Satan will try to destroy them as Revelation chapter 12 declares the devil will "pour out a flood," but to no avail... These individuals were proven true to God by dying in Christ Jesus... Even to the point of giving their physical lives for eternity's sake... The remaining saints of God who, for some reason, were not prepared to enter into the initial phase of being resurrected, are still alive physically, and will be the primary target of Satan, the beast, and the false prophet... They will be persecuted, and as Revelation chapter 20 declares, "will be beheaded," for their faith in Christ Jesus, and refusing to worship the beast, and his image...

For 1260 days of this 1335-day period the beast will rule the world, and demand submission, and be granted it either through adoration, or fear of death by every tribe, nation, and tongue... Those whose names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life... Receiving his mark, while showing one's allegiance by bowing down to the image that will be in place to honor the beast as Revelation chapter 13 reminds us. It will be a new economic system as one who does not receive the mark symbolizing who the beast is will not be able to buy, nor sell... After this 1260-day period of rule, and all of God's saints have been resurrected to life eternal, all whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life, will meet their Savior in the air together as 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 reminds us...

17 Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus, we shall always be with the Lord. **18** Therefore comfort one another with these words."

The marriage ceremony of the Lamb, our Savior will take place in heaven at this point as all of the guests, and the bride herself, will be in attendance... In the meantime, during the remaining 75 days, the destruction of the beast's kingdom (remember he received authority from Satan over every tribe, nations, and tongue... Revelation chapter 13) will transpire as the final 7 bowls of God's wrath which symbolize the 7 last plagues of Revelation chapter 16...

Again, culminating with the battle that takes place in the plains of Megiddo where all of the armies will gather to make war with the WORD of GOD, and HIS saints... Losing this futile effort of course, as their god Abaddon, and his false prophet are destroyed in the lake of fire before their very eyes... After witnessing their leader's destruction, they too will meet their doom... But not in the lake of fire which is the 2nd death... You see, as scripture points out, the whole world was deceived because the creation's damnable will was sought. Rather than the will of their Creator...

Therefore, being defined by sin blinded these folks to the reality of their fallen spiritual state, and the fact that separation from God's righteousness, rather than being defined by HIM, always leads to death... It will be a day they will never forget, once these individuals are awoken from their dead state of being after the 1,000-year reign of the ONE WHO will have defeated them with the sword that will have proceeded from our Savior's mouth...

God bless you Laura, and His peace be with you...

Laura writes:

My overall assessment of Steven's response to me is that if you start on a false premise the end result will be a false doctrine and this is a false narrative of end time events. The reason I know his narrative of end time events is false is not because I understand all end time events, because I do not. What is wrong with this narrative is how he adds things into scripture and changes scripture to suit his purpose and to protect his false doctrine. If you do not look up the scriptures, you can be deceived by people like Steven and there is no possible way we can catch every false narrative out there. I have one last point to cover here. Steven is promoting two resurrections of the first fruits which is not in scripture. Read the following verses:

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.

1Th 4:13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. **1Th 4:14** For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. **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

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first: 1Th 4:17 Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 1Th 4:18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Here is the problem with Steven’s narrative. Steven believes all of God’s elect must die in order to be refined but these scriptures prove that is not true. There is a timeline to the first fruits resurrection and that is that Christ will raise and change the dead in Christ to Spirit first and then He will change those who are yet alive into spirit, and they all go to the marriage supper of the lamb at the same time.

The word “remain” in verse 17 is Strong’s G4035 and all it means is those who remained alive during tribulation. So, some people are yet alive when Christ returns to harvest the first fruits. You do not have to die in order to be refined. God is refining the first fruits now.

G4035

περιλείπω

perileipō

per-ee-li'-po

From G4012 and G3007; to leave all around, that is, (passively) survive: - remain.

Total KJV occurrences: 2

In regard to: The Trumpet Blast’s That Will Eventually Usher in the Great Tribulation

Article by Steven Blackledge
Comments by Steven Blackledge (Sonora, California)
and Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)

Steven Blackledge writes:

Hello Laura Lee, and Happy Sabbath:

My wife, and I were reading your rebuttal to my writings, and maybe you need to look at the Amplified Version because that is the translation, I have been using... NOT my own words... You could have asked me what translation I was using rather than falsely accusing me of placing my own words within it...

Laura Lee writes:

It is not my responsibility to go to you and ask you what Bible you are using. If you are going to write, then you need to state what Bible you are using especially if it is so far off from what most Bibles say. As a general rule most people put brackets behind verses when they want to make their particular meaning more clear. I have never seen a Bible version do this and I have a lot of different Bibles here.

Going through your writings, many times I looked at more than one Bible version and could not find what you wrote in any of them. That should be a red flag for anyone reading your stuff as it was for me.

Since I do not use the Amplified Bible myself, I wanted to find out what exactly it was, and this is what I found:

The Amplified Bible (AMP) is an English language translation of the Bible produced jointly by Zondervan and The Lockman Foundation. The first edition was published in 1965. It is largely a revision of the American Standard Version of 1901, with reference made to various texts in the original languages. It is designed to "amplify" the text by using additional

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wording and a system of punctuation and other typographical features to attempt to bring out a clearer meaning to the original texts.

Michael D. Marlowe considers this Bible is at times more paraphrase than translation, saying: "In general, the expanded renderings found in this chapter are helpful. But as we have noted, in a few places they are paraphrastic and rather questionable."^[4]

The Amplified Bible has been viewed as being guilty of "illegitimate totality transfer" by giving multiple potential meanings of a word in a particular passage. Readers may incorrectly conclude that multiple meanings of a word may apply regardless of the one which context would suggest.^[5]

Theologian [Gordon Fee](#) stated that the Amplified Bible:

[...] had a run of popularity far beyond its worth. It is far better to use several translations, note where they differ, and then check out these differences in another source than to be led to believe that a word can mean one of several things in any given sentence, with the reader left to choose whatever best strikes his or her fancy.^[6]

From Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amplified_Bible

If I were you, I would get a new Bible as this one is skewed and not what scripture actually says. Many religious sects write their own Bibles just so they can push their own doctrines. The Mormons and the Jehovah's Witnesses have both written their own Bibles and I am sure there are others. I would not use the Amplified Bible as my main source of study because it sometimes paraphrases scripture, and it adds words to scripture that change the meaning of the verse instead of making it more clear.

Steven Blackledge writes:

The sons of God who stood before the throne of God within Job chapter 1... Individual's I have listened to, or have read their material have always understood that to be angels of God... They are His creation, so it stands to reason... The difference is that they are not created in HIS image... Everyone I know understands that... Remember that the true sons of God are those who listen, and obey the Word of God on a spiritual, and physical level... Satan was definitely not considered in that category which is why in the Amplified Version it states him separately from the rest of the angels...

I would like to know what your definition of the sons of God within this scripture is simply because at that point Christ Jesus had not been resurrected from His physically dead state, and HE is the First Born among many brethren... There could not be any other sons of God because no one else has been resurrected until the 7th, and last trumpet of God blows, and the process of resurrection begins to take place... As the Amplified Version states:

"6 Now there was a day when the sons of God (angels) came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan (adversary, accuser) also came among them. **7** The Lord said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Then Satan answered the Lord, "From roaming around on the earth and from walking around on it."

So, Satan came from somewhere to go before the very throne of God... As the serpent answered God stating he came from the earth... So, if Satan came from the earth, where was he now when God asked him the question?...

Laura Lee writes:

Again, there is no mention in Job of Satan being in heaven or anywhere near the throne of God. In order to get Satan in heaven near God's Throne in the above verses you have to be adding words to scripture which is indeed making it up. God can speak to Satan from any place just as he spoke to Moses from the burning bush and just as he gave the law from Mount Sinai.

From scripture we are told that the angels are never called the sons of God, see Hebrews 1:5 So all we are left with is people who are the sons of God or some other created beings that God created that are part of the God family. In Psalm 82:1 what gods is God judging? God here is speaking of other gods, which would be lesser gods but would still be part of the God family which could make them sons of God.

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Heb 1:5 For unto which of the **angels** said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

Psa 82:1 A Psalm of Asaph. God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the **gods**.

Job 38:7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the **sons of God** shouted for joy?

In Job 38:7 two separate groups are being spoken of: Morning Stars which are angels and sons of God which would be people or a different type of creation which God created such as lesser gods as spoken of in Psalm 82:1.

Steven Blackledge writes:

Secondly, Satan can still go before the throne of God as scripture makes abundantly clear our adversary does still go before his throne accusing us day, and night as Revelation chapter 12 verse 10 declares... If he is falsely accusing the brethren before the throne, and your understanding is that Satan was cast down to the Garden of Eden before there were any brethren to accuse, well, either scripture is flawed, or your understanding of it is... We all understand that Revelation is written mainly for these end times we are now living in... So as the Amplified Version of Revelation chapter 12 states:

7 And war broke out in heaven, Michael [the archangel] and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought, **8** but they were not strong enough *and* did not prevail, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. **9** And the great dragon was thrown down, the age-old serpent who is called the devil and Satan, he who *continually* deceives *and* seduces the entire inhabited world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. **10** Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom (dominion, reign) of our God, and the authority of His Christ have come; for the accuser of our [believing] brothers and sisters has been thrown down [at last], he who accuses them *and* keeps bringing charges [of sinful behavior] against them before our God day and night.

This has not occurred yet because brethren are still being accused before the throne of God by Satan... This could not have transpired before there were any brethren on the earth to accuse...

Laura Lee writes:

First of all, these verses in Revelation 12:7-13 all use past tense language when speaking of Satan and you keep dismissing that as if it is not there. Also, it says nothing in any of these verses about Satan accusing the brethren from heaven or from anywhere near the throne of God. You are assuming that it says that, but it does not say that.

Satan has been on earth since the Garden of Eden when he was thrown out of heaven. You are the first and only person I have ever heard say that Satan is still in heaven unto this day. Satan started his accusing with Adam and Eve. So, there were people on earth at the time he was thrown down for him to accuse day and night and if you believe God can't hear Satan unless he is in heaven at His throne then you have a very limited God who does not know what is going on with His own creation.

Steven Blackledge writes:

Let's look at Ezekiel chapter 28 as this gives us detail about Satan, and how he was given the responsibility to be guardian of the Garden of Eden... God's Word describes him of still being perfect while being decorated in jewels within this beautiful setting called Eden... But at some point, something went wrong within himself, and he began to covet the creation to the point of wanting to be as God... Which of course prompted that serpent of old to deceive Eve, and cause her to sin... As Ezekiel chapter 28 states concerning the king of Tyre (one of Satan's many titles as he is the one who utilizes God's creation for merchandising by coveting that which is not in reality his to do so):

"**11** Again the word of the Lord came to me, saying, **12** "Son of man, take up a dirge (funeral poem to be sung) for the king of Tyre and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord God, "You had the full measure of perfection *and* the finishing touch [of completeness], Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. **13** "You were in [a]Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The ruby, the topaz, and the diamond; The beryl, the onyx, and the jasper; The lapis lazuli, the

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turquoise, and the emerald; And the gold, the workmanship of your [b]settings and your sockets, Was in you. They were prepared On the day that you were created. **14** “You were the anointed cherub who covers *and* protects, And I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire [sparkling jewels]. **15** “You were blameless in your ways From the day you were created Until unrighteousness *and* evil were found in you. **16** “Through the abundance of your commerce You were internally filled with lawlessness *and* violence, And you sinned; Therefore I have cast you out as a profane *and* unholy thing From the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the stones of fire.

Laura Lee writes:

I want you to look at this very closely because your Amplified Bible changed the wording completely which in turn changes the meaning completely. King James version in black and the Amplified version in yellow highlight.

Eze 28:13 Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God;

Eze 28:13 “You were in [a]Eden, the garden of God;

every precious stone *was* thy covering,

Every precious stone was your covering:

the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold:

The ruby, the topaz, and the diamond; The beryl, the onyx, and the jasper; The lapis lazuli, the turquoise, and the emerald; And the gold,

the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

the workmanship of your [b]settings and your sockets, Was in you. They were prepared On the day that you were created.

Eze 28:14 Thou *art* the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so:

Eze 28:14 “You were the anointed cherub who covers *and* protects, And I placed you there.

thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.

You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire [sparkling jewels].

In verse 14 it makes it sound like God placed Satan in the Garden of Eden in the Amplified Version when it says, “And I placed you there.” I know of no other Bible that places Satan in the Garden of Eden to be a Guardian of the Garden of Eden.

The King James Bible and other versions make it clear that God placed Satan on the Mountain of God after he was created. The Mountain of God is in Heaven along with the stones of fire.

Steven Blackledge writes:

Again, notice all is well with Satan until iniquity is found in him within the Garden... In fact, there is nowhere in God's Word that states he was cast down to Eden... As a covering cherub, one of his responsibilities was to ensure that all was well within the Garden as Adam, and Eve dwelled with him within it... But we know the story... Satan being cast out from heaven is not mentioned until Revelation chapter 12 verse 10 as stated above, and not until he attempts to overcome God, and his angels in a war that as of yet has not transpired... Simply because the dragon continues to accuse brethren day, and night before the throne of God...

Laura Lee writes:

Satan was cast down to the earth and the Garden of Eden was on earth. Satan had no responsibilities in the Garden of Eden. Satan was not dwelling as you say like some nice guy in the Garden of Eden. The first time Satan is mentioned as being in the Garden of Eden is in Genesis Chapter 3 when he is tempting Eve to sin.

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Steven Blackledge writes:

Notice that he no longer had the title of covering cherub upon the mountain of God, and was cast out, not down... Being cast down would occur at a later time as Revelation chapter 12 verse 10 states... This is when the devil will no longer be welcome before the throne of God after trying to make war against his Creator... Simply because Satan, in a fit of rage because of the first 4 trumpets being blown (see Revelation chapter 8) having destroyed much of what he had built upon God's planet in direct defiance against his Creator, attempts to overthrow the Eternal ONE...

As we know Satan is not destroyed completely yet either... But from a spiritual standpoint, by willfully separating himself from God through sinful rebellion, he is destroyed... Yet is being used by God to fulfill our Father in heaven's purposes... Just as us human beings really do not have life until we repent through the Son of God and accept our Creator's terms of salvation. Until then we are conceived in sin (Psalm chapter 51), and just exist... Life is within the Spirit of God, and therefore we have life once granted God's Spirit through His Son...

Satan's complete, and utter destruction will occur at some point after the millennial reign of Christ Jesus, and the saints... After the devil is let loose to once again deceive the nations, and after convincing the people's to once again fight against the Lamb of God while Zion is established on earth, this great multitude will be destroyed as Jesus stands on the Mount of Olives as Zechariah chapter 14 declares concerning this Gog, and Magog war... The very last war that will ever be fought, nor need to be according to God's Word... Satan will meet experience his Waterloo moment, and go on to his final destruction, and thus fulfilling what Ezekiel chapter 28 prophecies concerning him as well as Revelation chapter 20 as follows in the Amplified Version:

"7 And when the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison (the abyss), 8 and will come out to deceive *and* mislead the nations which are in the four corners of the earth—[including] Gog and Magog—to gather them together for the war; their number is like the sand of the seashore. 9 And they swarmed up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints (God's people) and the beloved city [Jerusalem]; but fire came down from heaven and consumed them. 10 And the devil who had deceived them was hurled into the lake of fire and burning brimstone (sulfur), where the beast (Antichrist) and false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night, forever and ever.

Anyway, that is all I have to say about this as we have already gone back, and forth...

Laura Lee writes:

Yes, we have been over much of this before.

Steven Blackledge writes:

Laura, you really need to use more tact as it pertains to those you do not agree with... You can be rather rude, as well as falsely accusative as I stated above.... Judging by reading your rebuttals of other's writings as well...

Laura Lee writes:

I am pretty sure I have proven my point that you are adding words into scripture which are not there. It does not help your case that you are using a Bible that also changes the wording of scripture or in some cases paraphrases scripture. Most people do not use the Living Bible for true study as it is a paraphrase so why would you use a Bible that clearly changes the meaning of many scriptures either by wording or by paraphrase?

I was a nice person until I disagreed with you and told you that you were adding words to the scripture then I became rude to you and one who doesn't use tact. Did you want me to agree with your every word even when I knew that scripture did not back up your false scenario in many places. If I did that, I would be a liar and useless as a newsletter editor.

I never said you had all scripture wrong. I said you should not teach prophecy because you clearly do not understand it.

There may be a very good reason why I am the editor of a church newsletter, and you are not. For one thing I can take the heat and not be offended. You clearly can't take the heat and are easily offended. I don't care one

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way or the other whether you agree with me or not. I cannot change any of your belief system but if I can keep other people from following your false doctrine it is worth it to be called rude and without tact by you.

I care about each and every person who gets, reads, and contributes to this newsletter. I want all of them including you to make it into that first fruits resurrection and I don't want them to be sidelined by yours or anyone else's false doctrine.

Being the editor of this newsletter is a thankless job. I am up sometimes in the middle of the night working on this newsletter in hopes that someone somewhere starts to love the truth so much that they will keep God's Law. I can think of a million things I would rather do than listen to a person wine because they believe that everything that proceeds from their mouth is true and what everyone else says is false. I can tell by the way you keep repeating yourself over and over that you didn't look or consider anything that I said to you the first time.

Do you also want to call Christ rude when he called the Pharisees vipers, or should Christ have used more tact when he tipped over the money changers table? What about Paul when he reprimanded Peter in public or when Steven told people about their sin, and he was stoned to death. As far as I am concerned you can take this as a public rebuke.

Steven Blackledge writes:

I hope you print this letter on your forum.... A vital part of growing in grace, and in knowledge of our Savior, the Word of God, is to ensure we can be open to furthering our understanding of His will... Even when something is presented us that is different from what we had thought was right, but may not have been if proven scripturally... We should have all experienced such moments as it pertains to our growth in the grace, and knowledge of our Loving Savior... God bless, and take care...

In regard to: The Trumpet Blast's That Will Eventually Usher in the Great Tribulation

Article by Steven Blackledge
Comments by Steven Blackledge (Sonora, California)
and Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)

Steven Blackledge writes:

On further reflection, and prayer, please do not post my writings on your forum... I was led to believe that it was a format where one could utilize scripture as a guide to help one another understand, or look at His Word from a different viewpoint... It was not the fact we were in disagreement with how God's prophetic Word was understood... It was your standing that you were emphatically right, and I had no right to be giving my viewpoint because of your disagreement with what was written...

Laura Lee writes:

First of all, if you don't want it printed then please do not send it here. No one led you to believe that if I or anyone else disagreed with what you wrote we would quietly let your word stand as truth. I always speak up when I disagree with anyone who sends stuff to us. When you sent your stuff to us it was your standing that you were emphatically right, all I did was disagree and told you why I disagreed with you.

Steven Blackledge writes:

That is not what Jesus meant for us when discussing His Word... Especially as it pertains to the subject of prophesy... There were those believers during the 1st century AD who truly believed that Jesus was going to return at any moment... But of course, that was not, nor is going to occur until God's prophetic Word is completely fulfilled in accordance to what has been inspired by God for His prophets to write of, and for us to glean, learn, and discuss in a respectful fashion...

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Laura Lee writes:

I do not believe I was disrespectful to you in regard to the answers I gave you. The problem was that you expected me to agree with you and I did not, and I said so.

Steven Blackledge writes:

There are many viewpoints out there, but many are not biblically based. I read, and hear prophetic utterances that have no biblical standing at all... I made sure that God's Word was used to back up what was being written... If you do not agree with my writings that is fine... But demagoguing me for your forum is not very kind... While falsely accusing me of adding to the Word of God... That is very wrong, and lacking in our Savior's type behavior... I have been kind, and respectful to your responses despite your false accusations, and belittling critical responses... You could have wrote me personally, and refused to post the writings you were in disagreement with...

Laura Lee writes:

I believe you have an unkindness problem because you are now accusing me of demagoguing you?

Demagogue

1. a political leader who seeks support by appealing to the desires and prejudices of ordinary people rather than by using rational argument.
2. rhetorically exploit (an issue) for political purposes in a way calculated to appeal to the desires and prejudices of ordinary people.

I print a newsletter, if you don't want something printed then please do not send it here. You knew you were sending things to a newsletter. I do not discuss scripture with people on private email because I do not have time to do the research it would take to do that and still print a newsletter. Do you even have a clue what a thankless job this is especially when I run into someone like you that later pretends as if they did not know that if they send their things to a newsletter at some point I or someone else will disagree with them.

Why would I write you personally if I don't agree with you and then not print it? We print a newsletter here. Even Darwin read some of your prophecy stuff and he said that none of it made any sense, so it is your opinion that it was based on scripture which in and of itself was also faulty do to the Bible you are using and the fact that you added words to some scriptures which are clearly not there.

Steven Blackledge writes:

Please try to be kinder to those who you do not agree with, and try not to falsely accuse them of things that you do not even know they have done... We can have predetermined beliefs that are clearly wrong, and from God's Word be proven wrong... What is our responsibility is to ensure we are not being biased in a fashion that hinders our growth because of something we refuse not to believe is right. Even if it can be from God's Word while being led by His Spirit... Our Teacher is our Savior, and as HE emphatically made clear to His disciples, as well as to us are believers in HIM as it pertains to understanding HIS WORD in Matthew chapter 23:

"**6** They love the place of distinction *and* honor at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues [those on the platform near the scrolls of the Law, facing the congregation], **7** and to be greeted [with respect] in the marketplaces *and* public forums, and to have people call them Rabbi. **8** But do not be called Rabbi (Teacher); for One is your Teacher, and you are all [equally] brothers. **9** Do not call *anyone* on earth [who guides you spiritually] your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. **10** Do not *let yourselves* be called leaders *or* teachers; for One is your Leader (Teacher), the Christ. **11** But the greatest among you will be your servant."

Laura Lee writes:

I believe that the things you are now accusing me of are most disgusting and I see no respect in any of this from your mouth. I do not believe that you even know what respect for other people is. Not when you can accuse them of demagoguing you or seeking to have some preeminence over others. Everyone reading this newsletter has the same rights that you do or that I do. Everyone can write up an Iron Sharpening Iron stating agreement or

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non-agreement with others. You say nothing of the scriptures I pointed out to you but instead attack me personally by telling me I am unkind, untactful and Hitler himself in the way I print and edit a church newsletter.

Steven Blackledge writes:

May we all (including myself) continue to rely upon our Savior for guidance in understanding God's perfect will, and as HE defines it to be as the Word of God... Take care, and God bless...

PS... Remember Laura, there are many areas in God's Word when our Creator speaks as if something has already occurred, when it has not... But the reality is once God declares something is going to transpire, count on it happening... Just as I used the example in Ezekiel chapter 28 concerning Satan... As Ezekiel was prophesied to declare:

“Through the abundance of your commerce You were internally filled with lawlessness *and* violence, And you sinned; Therefore I have cast you out as a profane *and* unholy thing From the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the stones of fire. **17** “Your heart was proud *and* arrogant because of your beauty; You destroyed your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I lay you before kings, That they might look at you. **18** “You profaned your sanctuaries By the great quantity of your sins *and* the enormity of your guilt, By the unrighteousness of your trade. Therefore I have brought forth a fire from your midst; It has consumed you, And I have reduced you to ashes on the earth In the sight of all who look at you. **19** “All the peoples (nations) who knew you Are appalled at you; You have come to a horrible *and* terrifying end And will forever cease to be.””

Satan has not been destroyed in the lake of fire as of yet... But will be after Jesus Christ's millennial reign... The same applies with what Jesus said when saying HE saw Satan falling from heaven like lightning... God foresees all with much clarity... HE literally sees the end from the beginning as Isaiah chapter 46 points out... As if it has already occurred, but in reality, has not... That is the benefit of coming from eternity, and not being bound by time as we are... We await for much of God's prophetic Word to be fulfilled... But from God's perspective, it already has been because HE has already determined it will occur... Take care, and His peace be with you... Sorry we could not work together in harmony, and the peace of Christ Jesus...

Laura Lee writes:

I strongly suspect you cannot work with anyone who disagrees with you. As I said I did not say that I disagree with everything you have sent but I certainly will state when I do disagree with you so that all may learn. That is why this is going public. If people do not like this newsletter and do not understand how it works, they should not be receiving it. I for one will not put up with your personal attacks of me because you believe you are totally right and correct in all you say, and everyone should just believe you. Which by the way Ezekiel 28 is not totally about Satan it is also about the King of Tyre who actually existed at one time.

Eze 28:16 By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will **cast** thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I **will** destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

The word “cast” is past tense, meaning it already happened. The word “will” is present or future tense.

I am not going to apologize for not agreeing with you. I used scripture and far less of it to prove my points the first time I answered you.

I along with others can also see when the word “throne” or “heaven” is not in a scripture, and you try to tell us it is there when it is not there.

I have no problem working with you as you seem to have with me. I work with people all the time through this newsletter that I do not agree with and those who do not agree with me. So, it is not a problem for me.

As the editor of this newsletter, I am responsible for what other people teach through this newsletter, so I can't promote it if it is not in scripture.

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Anytime any writer writes an article and submits it for print, they are teaching whatever is in that article, so they better make sure it squares with scripture. Writers need to take responsibility for what they write and send to be printed.

Just to clear something up, this is a church newsletter, it is not a forum. Either way, do not send it if you do not want it printed. So, with all that said Steven, I hope you and your wife have a really great Sabbath and that you will both find some time to look at my points as I have looked at yours.

In regard to: Why Humans?

Article by B. L. Cocherell
Comments by Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)

In this article “Why Humans?” he is using Isaiah 43:10-11 to prove that Christ was created by God for the purpose of companionship and as a savior to us. In other words, God couldn’t really save us, so He created another God Being to do His dirty work in saving us from our sin. Does that seem right to you?

We have so many Bible helps we can use that there should never be a false doctrine in the Church of God of this magnitude. No created being has the power to save us from sin, let alone forgive our sins. (ESword is a free online Bible Program found at: [e-Sword: Free Bible Study for the PC | Downloads](https://www.esword.com/) and The Codex Sinaiticus is on line at: <https://codexsinaiticus.org/en/> (I will also link these on our links page)

Below are some Bibles that clear up this scripture for us:

In the Old King James Version, it says:

10- Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen that ye may know and believe me and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. 11-I even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no savior.

This is a literal statement made by Christ and nowhere in the statement does it say Christ was formed or created. It is a statement saying there was no God before Christ nor will there be after Him.

In the Contemporary English Version, it says:

10-My people, you are my witnesses and my chosen servant. I want you to know me, to trust me, and understand that I alone am God. I have always been God; there can be no others. 11-I alone am the Lord; only I can rescue you.

From the Brenton Bible, it says:

10-Be my witnesses, and I too am a witness, saith the Lord God, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know, and believe, and understand that I am he: before me there was no other God, and after me there shall be none.

From the Septuagint with Apocrypha, it says:

10-Be ye my witnesses, and I too am a witness, saith the Lord God, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know, and believe, and understand that I am he: before me there was no other God, and after me there shall be none. 11-I am God; and beside me there is no Saviour.

From the 1611 Edition of the King James Bible, it says:

10-Yee are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me and understand that I am he; before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. 11-I even I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour.

In the foot note of that Bible just before “no God formed” it says “Or, nothing formed of God.”

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In one part of his article, B. L. Cocherell alludes to Christ being made from a part of God. In the footnote of the 1611 Edition of the King James Bible it says “Or, nothing formed of God.” Whether you want to take that as God formed nothing (including Christ) or that Christ was not formed from a part of God, it doesn’t matter as both ways clearly show Christ was not created by God or from a part of God.

*TSK Cross References also says the same thing:
No God Formed: or “nothing formed of God”*

From the Albert Barnes Commentary:

Isaiah 43:10

Ye are my witnesses - They were his witnesses, because, first, he had given in them predictions of future events which had been literally fulfilled: secondly, by his power of delivering them so often manifested, he had shown that he was a God able to save. Neither of these had been done by the idol-gods (compare [Isa 44:8](#)).

And believe me - Or rather, confide in me.

Before me there was no God formed - I am the only true, the eternal God. In this expression, Yahweh says that he was the first being. He derived his existence from no one. Perhaps the Hebrew will bear a little more emphasis than is conveyed by our translation. ‘Before me, God was not formed,’ implying that he was God, and that he existed anterior to all other beings. It was an opinion among the Greeks, that the same gods had not always reigned, but that the more ancient divinities had been expelled by the more modern. It is possible that some such opinion may have prevailed in the oriental idolatry, and that God here means to say, in opposition to that, that he had not succeeded any other God in his kingdom. His dominion was original, underived, and independent.

Neither shall there be after me - He would never cease to live; he would never vacate his throne for another. This expression is equivalent to that which occurs in the Book of Revelation, ‘I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last’ [Rev 1:11](#); and it is remarkable that this language, which obviously implies eternity, and which in Isaiah is used expressly to prove the divinity of Yahweh, is, in the passage referred to in the Book of Revelation, applied no less unequivocally to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Col 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

Col 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

Col 1:17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Col 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.

Col 1:19 For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fulness dwell;

Col 1:20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven.

Col 1:21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled

Col 1:22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:

Col 1:23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and *be* not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

From the Adam Clark Commentary in regard to Col. 16 & 17:

For by him were all things created, etc - These two verses contain parts of the same subject. I shall endeavor to distinguish the statements of the apostle, and reason from them in such a way as the premises shall appear to justify, without appealing to any other scripture in proof of the doctrine which I suppose these verses to vindicate.

Four things are here asserted:

1. That Jesus Christ is the Creator of the universe; of all things visible and invisible; of all things that had a beginning, whether they exist in time or in eternity.
2. That whatsoever was created was created For himself; that he was the sole end of his own work.
3. That he was prior to all creation, to all beings, whether in the visible or invisible world.

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4. That he is the preserver and governor of all things; for by him all things consist.

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Was Jesus Created?

The Bible teaches that Jesus was not created but was rather the Creator. “In [Jesus Christ] all things were created: ... all things have been created through him and for him” (Colossians 1:16). The doctrine of the eternity of Christ is one of the distinguishing marks of biblical Christianity.

While Jesus is held in high esteem by Muslims, Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and others of various theological beliefs, those groups teach that Jesus was a created being. It is orthodox Christianity’s affirmation of the full deity of Christ and His uncreated nature that makes Christianity unique from all other religions and philosophies. Various world religions may agree on some important issues such as the existence of a transcendent, objective morality and the value of a strong family life, but the answer to the question “who is Jesus Christ?” quickly separates those who adhere to biblical Christianity from those who do not.

The early creeds of the church unequivocally teach that Jesus was not created but that He is an eternally divine Person, the Son of God. Muslims teach that Jesus was a virgin-born human prophet but came into existence just like everyone else. Mormons, who adhere to a modern-day form of Arianism, believe that Jesus had a beginning, just as God the Father had a beginning. Jehovah’s Witnesses say that Jesus was the first creation of Jehovah and was originally called Michael the archangel. So, on which side of the creator/creature divide does Jesus actually fall? Is Jesus a creature, and thus part of the created order, or is He, along with the Father and the Holy Spirit, the Creator of all created things? Is Jesus *heteroousios* (“of a different substance”) than the Father, as the 4th-century heretic Arius held; or are Christ and the Father *homoousios* (“of the same substance”), as Athanasius maintained, and the Council of Nicaea decreed?

When attempting to answer the question of “was Jesus created?” there is no better person to look to than Jesus Himself. During His public ministry, Jesus continually assumed for Himself divine prerogatives. He continually exercised rights that would never be appropriate for a created being. He said that He was “Lord of the Sabbath” (Mark 2:28), and, since the Sabbath was instituted by God, Jesus’ claim to be “Lord” of the Sabbath was an assertion of deity. Jesus spoke of His unique, intimate knowledge of the Father (Matthew 11:27) and of the glory He shared with the Father “before the world began” (John 17:5). Jesus accepted the worship of others (Matthew 14:32–33) and described a future time when He will sit in judgment over all nations (Matthew 25:31–44). Luke tells us that Jesus went so far as to personally forgive a woman’s sins—something only God can do—and attributed her forgiveness to her faith in Him (Luke 7:48–50)!

Jesus’ disciples were equally clear in their belief in Jesus’ deity and uncreated nature. John tells us that “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word [Jesus] was God” (John 1:1). After having encountered the risen Jesus, the apostle Thomas exclaimed to Him, “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28). The apostle Paul referred to Christ as “God over all” (Romans 9:5) and stated that “in [Christ] the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily” (Colossians 2:9). In the early days of the church, Jesus was both the object of prayer (Acts 7:59) and the One in whose name the forgiveness of sins was proclaimed (Acts 2:38; 10:43). After having interrogated Christians under the threat of death, the Roman administrator Pliny the Younger wrote in his letter to the Emperor Trajan (c. AD 110) that “[the Christians] were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light when they sang in alternative verses a hymn to Christ, as to a god” (*Letters* 10.96).

Jesus, God the Son, was not created. He has always existed; He has no beginning or end. The Son took on human flesh at a particular point in human history (John 1:14). Christians refer to this event as the Incarnation (“the act of being made flesh”). This act was integral to our salvation (Galatians 4:4–5; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 9:22). From the Incarnation onward, the eternal, uncreated Son is both truly God and truly man. But there was never a time when the Son did not exist. He was never created. Jesus always was and will forever remain “our great God and Savior” (Titus 2:13).

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Was Jesus the First Created Being? by Tim Barnett (Copyright)
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Scripture is clear that Jesus is the eternal, uncreated One.

When Christians try to argue for the deity of Christ, Jehovah’s Witnesses are quick to bring up [Colossians 1:15](#). Paul writes, “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation” ([Col. 1:15](#)). The modern English translations and the New World Translation agree on the translation of the text. However, the Christian and Jehovah’s Witness differ with their interpretation of the text.

Jehovah’s Witnesses understand the word firstborn to mean the “first created.” This fits their Arian presupposition that Jesus is a created being. However, firstborn does not have to be taken in a literal, physical sense. Firstborn can mean first in preeminence or rank. For instance, God calls David the firstborn even though he was the youngest son of Jesse. The psalmist writes, “And I will make him the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth” ([Psa. 89:27](#)). David was the last one born in his family, yet he is called the firstborn.

The question remains, how should we interpret this text? There are a number of reasons why the Jehovah’s Witnesses have the wrong interpretation. First, they must assume Jesus was created to make their interpretation work. However, Scripture is clear that Jesus is the eternal, uncreated One. In John’s Gospel, he writes, “All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made” ([John 1:3](#)). Think about that for a minute. John is not merely saying that Jesus made all things. He is saying much more than that. Without Jesus, nothing was made that was made. So, there are only two categories: things made, and things not made. If it was made, then Jesus made it. Do you see what this means? Jesus cannot be one of the made things, because He made all of the made things. This would mean that Jesus made Himself, which is logically impossible. John goes out of his way to communicate that Jesus is the uncreated Creator, who created all things that were created.

Second, the context of Colossians demands that Jesus is the uncreated God. Verse 15 cannot be read in isolation. Right after Paul says that Jesus is preeminent over all creation, he says, “For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell...” ([Col. 16–19](#)). This is not the description of a finite, created being. In fact, in the very next chapter, Paul writes, “For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily...” ([Col. 2:9](#)).

Given the overall context, Jehovah’s Witnesses are forced to do hermeneutical gymnastics to make [Colossians 1:15](#) say what they need it to say. However, an honest evaluation of the text demonstrates that Jesus is the Creator God.

Several members of my immediate family are Jehovah’s Witnesses so this doctrine of Christ being a created being is not new to me. In fact, one of my sisters delegated me to death forever because she showed me a scripture that said Christ was Michael the Archangel and I read the scripture and told her, “It doesn’t say that.” I wish I could remember what scripture she used, but it was many years ago.

Christ volunteered to be the Passover Lamb from the foundation of the world.

Heb 7:27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

Heb 9:14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

1Pe 1:19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

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1Pe 1:20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

In conclusion Christ is not a created being. Christ has existed from the start. Christ is the one who created everything proving he is not created as He would be unable to create himself.

I do agree that we were created or begotten in order to be companions and family members with God, Christ and each other.

Can others add further detail to this? If so, I welcome it.

In regard to: Why Humans?
Article by B. L. Cocherell
Comments by Ray Daly (Lincoln, North Dakota)

In regard to was Christ created Scripture as I find it, tells us no. Though he is "planned on" ahead of time. I find Scripture to say he was "Enoch".

First it says of Enoch in the OT that Enoch "was not, for God TOOK him." No "death" related to. Then in Heb. 11:5 we are told. "By faith Enoch was translated that he should NOT SEE DEATH." The word "Translated" means to be: "Taken into heaven without seeing death". Thus, Jesus would have been a "living soul" up until the "spirit within him", was placed into an egg in Mary. Note also, that there are Scriptures showing that he was also "born to a virgin" in the Old Testament. Being given the name "Immanuel".

Editor's Note: I don't quite know what to say. I also believe that Christ was not created, however I see no connection between Enoch and Christ and have no idea what in scripture makes you believe that Christ is Enoch. I would have to label most of this as a false teaching. If anyone has something to add to this, we would welcome the input. Laura Lee