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

## All in All

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Branded on our minds is the idea that I Corinthians 15 is the Resurrection Chapter, and indeed, resurrection is its major

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theme. However, the apostle Paul inserts other important ideas into this inspiring chapter. As important as it is to us and God's purpose, the resurrection is just another step within a concept suggested in the phrase, "that God may be all in all" (verse 28).

"All in all" has much to do with oneness. It alludes to a time when all human beings will not only be reconciled to God, but everything in His awesome creation will be in total agreement and harmony with Him—as well as with each other!

This time is the complete restitution of all things, the conclusion of the work of Jesus Christ, the culmination of the new creation, the spiritual one begun in Christ. In the center, as the focus and cause of the oneness, is God the Father. Verse 28, picturing Jesus turning over all things to His Father, is the exclamation point that draws our attention to the Father.

Christ's reign will and must continue until every enemy has been conquered, and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For the rule and authority over all things has been given to Christ by His Father. But in that quotation, "All things are put under Him," it is self-evident that God, who reduced everything to subjection, is not included. When Christ has finally won the battle against all His enemies, then shall the Son acknowledge Himself subject to God the Father, who gave the Son power over all things, that God may be utterly supreme, that He may be everything to everyone. (I Corinthians 15:25-28)

If this quotation does not square with what appears in your Bible, do not be alarmed. It is an amplification of these verses pieced together from the *Phillips, King James, Taylor, Moffatt, and Norlie* translations. The Father is drawing the entire creation into a state where everybody and everything acknowledge Him as God. When this occurs, division, confusion, and warfare will not exist because all—everything—is at one with our Creator.

Our acceptance of Christ's sacrifice, repentance from dead works, and receiving of God's Holy Spirit are the first major steps for each of us seeking to become one with the Father. The next major step is Christ's return, when we will inherit the Kingdom of God after the resurrection from the dead. The "all in all" of verse 28 is the very end point of the gospel.

Though I Corinthians 15:28 may appear to be something that happens in the distant future, the process has already begun in us. Understanding this as a reality is vital to our spiritual well-being. If we do not consider it real, we may be lured into neglecting our summons to this glorious destiny by letting ourselves follow distractions or grow irresponsible.

### **Heavenly Citizenship**

Philippians 3:20-21 remains in the present tense, but the teaching is essentially the same as I Corinthians 15:25-28:

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

Verse 20 begins by asserting that we are now a colony of people whose real citizenship is in heaven. "Citizenship" indicates a fellowship or society all living under the same administration, but in this case, not living in the land of their citizenship. When we see this in context with His purpose, God is already drawing the church as a body into oneness with Him. Paul then goes on to assure us that by His power Christ will complete the process—even transforming our bodies to be like His! What an awesome oneness to anticipate!

Paul began the section in verses 17-19 by contrasting two groups, and the difference between the two lies in the way each lives. Those who are citizens of heaven are one, and they have a fellowship whose characteristics are opposite to "the enemies of the cross of Christ" (verse 18). They will end in destruction because they have "set their mind on earthly things" (verse 19). As a people living by sight, they are not in control of their flesh, their carnal nature.

The apostle must have used "heaven" in verse 20 to emphasize the vast difference between the two groups. Heaven represents the unreachable to those whose minds are fixed on goals limited to the earthly, carnal gratification of their senses. Though satisfying the self may be much easier at the moment, God says living that way will end in destruction.

Because we are reaching for something we cannot see, hear, smell, touch, or taste, the carnal mind perceives living by faith as wasting life on the unreachable or as living a daydream or fantasy. Why pursue something that never gives

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any immediate gratification? God, however, hastens to reassure us that He has the will and power to bring us into this oneness with Him (verse 21).

**Unsearchable Riches**

Paul repeats this assurance in Ephesians 3:20-21: "Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." His capacity to meet our spiritual needs far exceeds anything we can either request in prayer or even dream! These verses climax Paul's insistent teaching, beginning in the epistle's first chapter, that the culmination of our redemption is the very glory of God!

These verses look beyond the grave to our resurrection and change when we will have a life of unending and limitless success and fulfillment. Within the relationship of a wonderful, loving family, we will surmount challenges, pursue adventures, and make astounding progress throughout eternity. We could ask for no more rewarding life!

Notice how Paul has, from the beginning of Ephesians, repeatedly mentioned the abundance of God's gifts and power supplied to us:

» . . . having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace . . . (Ephesians 1:5-7)

» In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. (Ephesians 1:11-12)

» . . . [which] is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory. (Ephesians 1:14)

» . . . that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 2:7)

» To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ . . . (Ephesians 3:8)

» . . . that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man . . . (Ephesians 3:16)

Now notice Ephesians 1:17-19:

. . . that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power . . .

And Ephesians 3:17-19:

. . . that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

And finally Ephesians 1:22-23:

And He put all things under His feet and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

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The phrase "all in all" that ends verse 23 summarizes Christ's relationship with the church. Between Christ and the church exists an indissoluble link through which the riches and glory of God flow because Christ and His church are complementary parts of one organism. The process to bring us to the oneness that I Corinthians 15:28 looks forward to has already begun! As Head and Body together, we form the organism in which God's glory is manifested.

### **Glorifying the Father**

In Jesus' prayer in John 17:4, He says He had glorified the Father. Since the Son has returned to the Father in heaven, and the church is formed and joined to the Son as one organism, the church now has the responsibility to glorify the Father. How? By becoming one with Him just as the Son was—by the power of God's Spirit given to us.

Christ glorified the Father by successfully completing the work the Father gave Him to do. He qualified to be our Savior, Redeemer, and High Priest, and along the way, He preached the gospel to others. Our responsibility is to yield to Him, allowing Him to form us into His image by growing, overcoming, producing fruit, and carrying out the works of the church as He assigns them.

In Philippians 3:21, the phrase "subdue all things to Himself" adds more detail to this picture of oneness. "Subdue" (*hupotasso*) means "to place in order" or "to place under in an orderly fashion." This word describes someone neatly rearranging scattered, disorganized objects according to a pattern.

In this context, the objects are not merely things, but people whose minds are in disorder, divided, confused, and not wholly subject to God as a result of their actions. Before being subdued, they exercised their own free will, followed the deceptions of Satan, loved the world, and showed enmity toward God. Yet, when Christ puts us in order, rearranges us, and subdues us to bring us into oneness, He goes so far as to change our bodies to conform to the body of the One doing the subduing—God!

Paul says in Philippians 4:1, "Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved." "Therefore" indicates a concluding thought or exhortation. In this case, he exhorts us to take advantage of what has been given to us as expressed in chapter 3. In his word picture, Paul shows us standing at a crossroads. We can look both ways—where we have been and where we are going. In one direction is eternity in the Kingdom of God, and in the other is the time before we began the journey toward oneness with God.

In Philippians 3:3, he affirms that we are the true circumcision; we are the ones with whom God is working at this time. Whatever great, earthly position, power, or wealth we may have is merely rubbish compared to what lies ahead (verses 7-8). Our immediate goal is the resurrection from the dead (verse 11). Therefore, we must strain to reach it (verse 14) and strive to have one mind in the church (verse 16). Even as the process to bring us to oneness with God has begun, the process to unify the church has also begun. Paul urgently exhorts us in chapter 4:1, "Don't let this slip!"

### **Working Out Our Salvation**

I John 3:2 plainly states that "now we are children of God; and . . . we shall be like Him." Since God will be "all in all," and since He already considers us to be part of the same organism as Christ, who is God, and our bodies will be conformed to His glorious body, there is only one thing we can be after the resurrection—God! After all His preparation to mold us into His image, do we suddenly turn into something else, something less than what He is in terms of being a member of His Family?

But there is yet one "fly in the ointment": We are not completely there. Our job is not yet done. Then again, this is not too bad because we are not ready to inherit eternal life! We would be miserable living forever the way we are now. To have eternal life while encompassed with human nature would be a burden to us.

We see so much overcoming yet to be done, and we wonder, how will we do it? God has figured even this out. Who brought the plagues on Egypt? Who got Israel out of Egypt? Who divided the Red Sea? Who supplied the quail, manna, and water? Who divided the Jordan? Who brought down the walls of Jericho? The questions could be virtually endless, but the obvious answer would always be the same.

Philippians 2:12-13 adds an important element to understanding this process:

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Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

It is God who saves! God saved Israel from Egyptian slavery. Israel did not overcome Pharaoh and Egypt by either warfare or by dint of superior intelligence. Jesus Christ is our Savior, and we cannot save ourselves from sin's power. When we accept Him as Savior, it obligates us as His servants to obey Him.

In like manner, when God broke Egypt's power, enabling the Israelites to be free, it obligated them to walk out of Egypt if they wanted their liberty. If the Israelites wanted to save their skins and be completely free of Egypt when God parted the Red Sea, it obligated them to walk the path God made for them between the walls of water. When God said, "I am going to bring you into the land and provide for you along the way," if Israel wanted these things, they were obligated to walk all the way to Canaan. If Israel wanted what God said He would give, she had to cooperate by *working* in the form of *walking* to where God said He would lead or take them. "Walk" is a code word for living.

With this as a background, when Paul says to "work out your own salvation," it cannot possibly mean we will save ourselves. Instead, like what confronted the Israelites when God opened the way to their physical salvation from slavery in Egypt, we should be ready to make God's spiritual salvation practical and operational. Paul does not say we must work *for* salvation, but rather work *out* our salvation to its conclusion. He uses "work out" in the same sense as when a student is told to work out an arithmetic problem—to bring it to its conclusion. For us, the conclusion, the goal, to work toward is Christ-likeness. The salvation here is sanctification, victory over sin toward holiness.

To make it very plain, if we want to be one with Him, we must get moving in the direction He is pointing, and He points toward His standards of conduct and attitude. Each person's walk is not exactly the same because each person's experience and makeup are somewhat different. There is enough similarity among humans, though, to make the Bible always relevant.

### **What God Supplies Us**

One of the beautiful things about this is that each person's walk toward the image of God is exactly right for him. What is more, Philippians 2:13 also says God gives us both the will and power or energy to do it! *The New Testament in Modern Speech* renders it, "For it is God Himself whose power creates within you both the desire and the power to execute His gracious will." This work of God in us is another aspect of His grace, and without it, we could never be one with Him.

God Himself produces in us both the desire to live righteously and the effective energy to do so. He does not demand what we cannot do (1 Corinthians 10:13). We see in Philippians 2:12 our responsibility and in verse 13 help to accomplish it.

We can see this working together with God in simple illustrations from physical life. We may launch a sailboat on the water, but it takes what God supplies, wind, to make it move. We may plant vegetable seeds, but it is the power of God in nature that makes the plant grow and produce food. We may generate gigawatts of electricity in power plants, but God provides the wind, water, sunlight, coal, oil, or gas to turn the turbines. In each case, we add something to what God already supplied.

Our salvation is already given because it is God's will, and He is sovereign. We, though, must do something to make it practical by applying ourselves to salvation's demands. Even in this, God enables us to do it!

We will never know where the dividing line is between what God supplies and what we are responsible for doing because it is different for each according to God's purpose. This proportion must be different because each person is different, and He is preparing us for different responsibilities within His Family. This is sure, however: Our walk toward salvation will always be difficult enough to be challenging and edifying.

Even here the analogy of Israel in the wilderness comes to our aid. Where did Israel get the energy to walk across the wilderness to the Promised Land? Did it not come from the manna and water God supplied, as well as the vision and hope of the inheritance He also provided? Still, Israel walked! They had to work, to cooperate.

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The verb "work" in Philippians 2:12 is in a tense that indicates continuous working. Just as Israel did not leave Egypt and arrive in the Promised Land in one step, neither are our salvation and oneness with God accomplished at once. It, too, is a process; it is our life's work.

**God Is With Us!**

That Israel spent *forty years* in the wilderness before reaching their goal may be intimidating, but God's Word abounds with encouragement. Did the pillar of fire or the cloud ever leave Israel? Did not the manna continue until they were in the Promised Land? Philippians 4:19 says, "And my God shall supply *all your need* according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (emphasis ours throughout). Hebrews 13:5 strengthens us by assuring us that God will *never* leave us nor forsake us. Philippians 1:6 greatly encourages us: ". . . being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you *will complete it* until the day of Jesus Christ."

We have no need to be discouraged! God is so closely involved with us! When we recognize just how closely involved, He is, we need to glorify Him for what He truly is accomplishing as Creator.

His work in us has already begun. John 14:23 helps us to see how close the union already is: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If any one loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.'" Here, Jesus shows the relationship of the Father and the Son with one who loves Them and is obedient to Them. They are all part of the same home! They have a warm and loving family relationship.

**One With God and the Brethren**

We can carry this idea even one step further:

Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge, according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all. (Colossians 3:9-11)

Here is another "all in all" phrase used in addressing the church. Galatians 3:26-29 is a similar passage:

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

These verses pair groupings or concepts that separate people and keep them divided and sometimes at war. Paul shows racial differences (Greek and Jew), religious differences (circumcised and uncircumcised), cultural differences (barbarian and Scythian), social differences (slave and free), and finally, sexual differences (male and female).

These are in no way all the differences that divide humanity, but they provide enough representation for God to make His point. His point is that we cannot be united to Him and separated from our brother simultaneously. To do something for or against a brother is to do it to Christ (Matthew 25:31-46). Because we, as brethren, are "in" Christ and He "in" us, we are one organism. John says if a man does not love his brother, he does not love God (I John 4:20)! This is serious business. We must be one with both.

The genuinely converted person is motivated, guided, inspired, led by, yielding to, and empowered by the radiant energy flowing from Christ, who lives and works in Him. It is as if Christ and His converted brethren are driven in lockstep because they share the same nature. Ephesians 2:13-18 provides an explanation of the legal basis and motivation to make unity, oneness, a practical possibility:

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been made near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of division between us, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were



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afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

When we understand this is God's will, we can consider it a certainty because God does not fail at what He undertakes.

Paul shows us that Christ, through His crucifixion, has created the condition needed for peace. The crucifixion made possible the forgiveness of our sins, access to the Father, and the granting of the Holy Spirit. These empower us to make peace and be unified by enabling us to live God's way. In this way, we are actively creating peace.

We sometimes see or experience division in the church for two reasons, but both are expressions of the same reason: *Not everyone attending services is of the same spirit*. This difference of spirit does not imply demon possession, but simply that, with God's permission, Satan has sown some unconverted tares within the congregation (Matthew 13:24-30). Paul writes in I Corinthians 3:3 that some of us having God's Spirit are still carnal! That is, some are very weak in the faith. As he points out in that same verse, the result is "envy, strife, and divisions," each sufficient to produce anything but oneness. Oneness will occur when each person chooses to act out of love and loyalty for Christ, and within God's law, to eliminate sins that separate them. This will allow us to achieve a true, family relationship.

Considering Colossians 3:10-11 in context, Paul insists that, due to these people having undergone the radical transformation of receiving the new nature and being renewed, they should work hard at making practical the salvation Christ made possible. They should do this by ceasing to do the things that separate and starting to do the things that bond. From chapter 2, he carries over an underlying assumption that a measure of doctrinal disagreement is exacerbating the unity problem.

God's purpose is drawing us into oneness with Him, and this process has already begun! It is advanced by our yielding to Him through the power of His Spirit. When each of us yields to what He says to do, it will draw those who are doing likewise into unity also.

Christ is our Savior. We love Him for what He has done for us. We are obligated to Him because He has given so much of Himself for us. He lives and works in us, and the combination of our love for and loyalty to Him—the very love and loyalty that originally came from God by His Spirit—motivates or causes the very oneness God is drawing us into.

Christ is our Creator and Redeemer. It is through Him and because of Him that we are justified, sanctified, and receive God's Spirit. He is our High Priest, Mediator, and Head of the church. He lives in us, energizing us to desire and practice His good pleasure, all for our God and the completion of His plan. He will do this until He arranges all in order under the Father. He truly is all in all to us. If each of us turns our attention to yielding to God and emphasizing it instead of the differences that separate us, the unity problem in the church will be solved in God's good time.

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## **A Brief History of Some Women in Ministry**

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During the first century, many women were active in Christian ministry. Acts 21:9 mentions the four virgin daughters of Philip the evangelist as prophetesses who lived in his home at Caesarea, where Paul and his associates visited during his third missionary journey. Priscilla, or Prisca, and her husband Aquilla, were known as fellow-laborers in Christ with the apostle Paul. Their expertise as teachers enabled them to explain the way of God more accurately to Apollos of

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Alexandria, another important leader of the early church (Acts 18:25-26).

Another associate of Paul's, Lydia, a seller of purple dye, opened her home for ministry (Acts 16:40), as did many other Christian women in the Roman empire, including the "elect lady" to whom John addressed his second epistle. Close examination of II John would suggest that she was functioning in a pastoral capacity, as would also have been the case for Lydia (Acts 16:40), Nympha (Col. 4:15), and Chloe (I Cor. 1:11). Phoebe was a leader of the Church at Cenchrea. In Romans 16:1,2, Paul commanded the members of the church at Rome to receive her as such, and to help her in whatever manner she requested. Paul also mentions that Andronicus and Junia were outstanding among the apostles (Romans 16:7), and there is little doubt that Junia was a feminine name. Both John Chrysostom and Jerome made reference to her as a woman apostle, and no commentator referred to her as a man until the late thirteenth century.

In the early fourth century, Catherine of Alexandria defended the faith at Alexandria before philosophers and courtiers, before she was tortured to death by Maxentius, the son of the Roman Emperor Maximian. At about the same time, Dorothy of Caesarea in Cappadocia was martyred (A.D. 313). As she was being led to her execution, Theophilus, a lawyer, taunted her, asking her for a basket of flowers and fruit. Soon afterward, a child came to her with a basket laden with roses and apples. She sent this to Theophilus, who as a result of this incident became a Christian and later gave his own life as a Martyr.

Macrina the Younger (328-380) was founder of a religious community for women in the eastern church. With her brothers, Basil the Great and Gregory of Nyssa, she was a pioneer in the monastic life. She healed, prophesied, and actively spread the faith. John Chrysostom wrote of her that "she was a great organizer, and independent thinker, and as well educated as Basil himself." After the death of her mother, she reared and educated her younger brother Peter, who became Bishop of Sebaste.

Marcella (325-410) was an important teacher in the early church who was highly esteemed by Jerome. She was in the front lines in interacting with heretics and bringing them to a better understanding of Christian truth. Her palace on the Aventine Hill became a center of Christian influence. At one point, when a dispute arose in Rome concerning the meaning of the Scriptures, Jerome asked Marcella to settle it. Her Church of the Household was not only a house of study and prayer, but a center for deeds of Christian charity and sacrifice. It was here that another woman, Fabiola, received inspiration to establish the first hospitals in Rome. Marcella later established on the outskirts of Rome the first religious retreat for women. It was also at Marcella's Church of the Household that Paula (347-404) and her daughter Eustochium first made their decision to assist Jerome in his Latin translation of the Bible. They went to Bethlehem in order to aid him in this work, revising and correcting his translations and making new Latin translations from the Hebrew and Greek texts. In turn, Jerome dedicated some of his books to them. Paula founded three convents and a monastery in Bethlehem, where Biblical manuscripts were copied. This became a model for what soon became the universal practice at monasteries for many centuries.

Genevieve (422-500) lived in Paris when Attila and his Huns invaded France in 451. She assured the inhabitants of Paris that God would protect them if they would pray. While the men prepared for battle, she persuaded the women to pray for hours in the church. Then, after Attila destroyed Orleans, he decided not to touch Paris. At a later time, she was said to have averted a famine in Paris and the surrounding cities by distributing miraculous gifts of bread.

Bridget, also known as Bride (455-523), inspired the convent system that made an indelible impact upon life in Ireland. After settling in Kildare, she built for herself and her female friends a house for refuge and devotion. As other houses were founded through her missionary efforts, she became known as the "mother abess" of all of Ireland.

Theodora I (500-548), wife of the emperor Justinian, was an important and influential Christian. A woman of outstanding intellect and learning, she was a moral reformer. Justinian, as Christian Emperor, was, for all practical purposes, head of the Church of his generation, and his wife, as Empress, shared his power to select church leaders. The inscription "Theodora Episcopa" or "Theodora, Bishop (fem.)" in a mosaic at the Basilica of Sts. Prudentia and Praexedis in Rome, may have been a reference to the Empress.

Hilda (614-680) was appointed by Aidan as abess of the convent at Hartlepool in County Durham in 649. Ten years later, she founded a double monastery for men and women at Whitby in Yorkshire, which became world famous as a school of theology and literature. Five of her disciples became bishops and a sixth, Caedmon, became the earliest known

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English poet.

Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179) was a German abbess, mystic, and writer known throughout all of Europe. Skilled in subjects as diverse as theology, medicine and politics, she did not hesitate to rebuke the sins of the greatest men of her time in both Church and state. She exerted a wide influence among many people, including the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa and various kings, prelates, and saints. Many miracles were attributed to her during her lifetime.

Clare (1193-1253) was co-founder, with Francis of Assisi, of the Poor Clares, a mendicant order which spread rapidly through Italy and into France, Germany, and Spain. In 1249, when she was lame, her convent was attacked by a group of Saracens. She told the sisters to carry her to the door of the monastery, then addressed the Saracens and prayed aloud that God would "deliver the defenseless children whom I have nourished with Thy love." She heard a voice answer, "I will always have them in my keeping," and turning to the sisters, she said, "Fear not." At this moment, the Saracens scrambled down the walls of the cloister, recoiling from her valiant words. Clare's care for the poor was a tremendous inspiration to Elizabeth of Hungary (1207-1231), a princess who, in the last years of her short life, led a life of rigorous self-sacrifice and service to the poor and sick.

Some other significant women of the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries included Hechthild of Magdeburg, Gertrude the Great, Angela of Foligno, Bridget of Sweden, Catherine of Sienna, Catherine of Sweden, Margery Kempe, Julian of Norwich, Joan of Arc, Catherine of Genoa, Isabella of Castile, and Maragaret Beaufort.

During the Reformation, a member of the Bavarian nobility, Argula von Grumbach (1492-1563), challenged the Rector and all of the faculty of the University of Ingolstadt to a debate in which she would defend the principles of the Protestant Reformation. She offered to base this debate upon a translation of the Bible published prior to the outbreak of the Reformation. She was permitted to present her position in 1523 in Nuremberg before the diet of the Empire. Martin Luther wrote of her, "that most noble woman, Argula von Stauffer, is there making a valiant fight with great spirit, boldness of speech and knowledge of Christ." Her extensive education and fine critical abilities enabled her to become a force to be reckoned with. She conducted church meetings in her home and officiated at funerals.

Two other important leaders of the Protestant Reformation were Margaret of Navarre (1492-1549) and her daughter, Jeanne d'Albret (1528-1572), the grandmother and mother of King Henry IV of France, who issued the Edict of Nantes, granting religious toleration to the French Protestants for almost a century. Jeanne d'Albret held services of the new Reformed faith in her palace apartment. A friend of John Calvin, she also used her palace as an institute for Reformation study.

During the Puritan era, Anne Hutchinson (1591-1643), became influential in that as many as eighty overflowed to the doorsteps of her house, at a time when Boston had a population of roughly 1,000 people. These meetings grew rapidly, and soon men, also, began to attend. Among her loyal followers was Henry Vane, who served for a short time as governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Within two years of her arrival from England, she had the strongest consistency of any leader in the entire colony. Her large following, coupled with her strong exegetical and homiletical skills, deep Christian commitment, and insightful understanding of spiritual truths, may have incurred the jealousy of several New England ministers, who became uncomfortable enough with her successes that she was accused of heresy and banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1638.

Margaret Fell (1614-1702), the mother of Quakerism, was an English peeress and wife of Judge Thomas Fell, member of the Long Parliament and Vice-Chancellor of Lancaster. Her home became a place of refuge and renewal for the persecuted Quakers for almost fifty years. She was arrested for holding Quaker meetings in her home, Swarthmoor Hall, and imprisoned for four years. After her release from prison, she visited Quakers in jails and travelled on horseback with her daughters and servants to remote farms and villages as an itinerant preacher. Many people sought wisdom and advice from her, including Thomas Salthouse, and, of course, George Fox, who married her a number of years after the death of her husband. Because she had his blessing in her preaching ministry, she wrote many tracts and letters on the subject of women in ministry.

Madame Guyon (1648-1717) was a French mystic who was imprisoned on several occasions for long periods of time because of her beliefs, but she was never known to complain about this. An author of forty books, including a twenty-volume commentary of the Bible, she had a wide following, particularly in France and Switzerland. Among those

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profoundly influenced by her ministry was Archbishop Francois Fenelon.

The founder of the first Methodist congregation in America was Barbara Heck (1734-1804). In England, Lady Selina Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon (1707-1791), founder of the Calvinistic Methodist denomination during the Evangelical Awakening, functioned as a bishop by virtue of her right as a peeress to appoint Anglican clergymen as household chaplains and assign their duties, and to purchase presentation rights to chapels, enabling her to decide who would conduct services and preach. Among the many chaplains whom she appointed and continued to finance for many decades was George Whitefield. In 1779, after sixty chapels were already functioning under her auspices, this practice was disallowed by a consistory court of London. Therefore, in order to continue to function, she was able, under the Toleration Act, to register her chapels as dissenting places of worship, known as "The Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion." Lady Selina frequently invited members of the aristocracy to her home to hear the preaching of the Wesleys, Whitefield, Isaac Watts, Philip Doddridge, Benjamin Ingham, John Fletcher, John Berridge, William Romaine, Henry Venn, and others. She founded Trevecca House on property adjoining the home of Howel Harris. A seminary for the training of ministers for all denominations, its first president was John Fletcher. Joseph Benson eventually became headmaster on John Wesley's recommendation. George Whitefield preached the inaugural sermon when it opened in 1768.

In America, two important preachers during the first years of the Second Awakening (1800-1808) were Deborah Peirce of Paris, N.Y., and Martha Howell of Utica. Phoebe Palmer (1807-1874), "The Mother of the Holiness Movement" began her ministry in 1835 with her Tuesday Meetings for the Promotion of Holiness, which continued for 39 years in New York City, where she lived with her husband, who was a physician. Hundreds of Methodist preachers, including at least five bishops, were profoundly affected by her ministry. The success of Phoebe Palmer's informal meetings encouraged other women to conduct the same type of ministry, and dozens of them sprang up throughout North America. These meetings brought together Christians of many denominations under the leadership of women, particularly among Methodists, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Baptists, and Quakers.

In 1858, Walter Palmer, Phoebe's husband, purchased the periodical *GUIDE TO HOLINESS*, which under her able editorship, grew in circulation from 13,000 to 30,000 subscribers. She travelled widely with her husband, conducting evangelistic meetings during the summer months. In the fall of 1857, she and her husband travelled to Hamilton, Ontario, where they attracted crowds of several thousand people when an afternoon prayer meeting became a ten-day revival meeting during which four hundred people were converted to Christ. They experienced similar successes in New York City and in England, where they preached for four years to packed houses at Leeds, Sheffield, Manchester, Birmingham, and dozens of other places. It is estimated that within her lifetime, Phoebe Palmer brought over 25,000 people to faith in Christ.

Catherine Booth (1829-1890), with her husband, William Booth, founded the Christian Revival Association in 1865 and the Salvation Army in 1878. The Booths regarded the active participation of women to be vital to Christianity. Before 1865, when they were still Methodists, Catherine began preaching. Soon after her pulpit debut, her husband became ill, and his slow recovery paved the way for her own preaching ministry. For a time, he was so ill that she had to take over his entire preaching circuit. She eventually became one of the most famous female preachers of England, and her last sermon was delivered to an audience of 50,000 people.

Hannah Whitall Smith, author of *THE CHRISTIAN'S SECRET OF A HAPPY LIFE* (1875) catalyzed the development of the Holiness movement in Britain and throughout Europe. Her activities in England led to the Keswick Convention in 1874.

Carrie Judd Montgomery was a healing evangelist of considerable prominence beginning in 1879, and became a founding member, along with A. B. Simpson, of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in 1887. She later became a part of the Pentecostal revival and was ordained a minister by the Assemblies of God in 1917, continuing in ministry until 1946.

Maria B. Woodworth-Etter was also involved in the Holiness movement before she rose to prominence as an early Pentecostal leader. In 1884, she was licensed to preach by the Churches of God general conference, founded by John Winebrenner in 1825. Within a few months of this time her meetings were already beginning to receive national press coverage, and in the late 1880s she started twelve churches, added 1,000 members, erected six church buildings, and

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started several Sunday Schools. Her work at this time resulted in the licensing of twelve preachers. The revivals that she held at this time were accompanied with unusual manifestations of God's power, many healings, and mass conversions. During the early Pentecostal movement, Woodworth- Etter was in continual demand, becoming a featured speaker at the Worldwide Pentecostal Camp Meeting at Arroyo Seco, California, in April 1913. She founded the Woodworth-Etter Tabernacle in western Indianapolis in 1918, which she pastored until her death in 1924.

Beginning in 1906 and 1907, Florence L. Crawford, Mabel Smith, Ivey Campbell, and Rachel A. Sizelove were some of the first women to spread the blessings of the early Pentecostal revival through their separate itinerant ministries. Florence Crawford planted and pastored several churches in the Pacific Northwest, founding and becoming general overseer of the Apostolic Faith Church based in Portland, Oregon, which later became part of the Open Bible Standard Denomination.

Other pioneers of the Pentecostal movement in the U.S. included Mrs. Scott Ladd, who opened a Pentecostal mission in Des Moines in 1907, the Duncan sisters, who had opened the Rochester Bible Training School at Elim Faith Home, "Mother" Barnes of St. Louis, Missouri, who, with her son-in-law, B. F. Lawrence, held tent meetings in southern Illinois in the spring of 1908, and Marie Burgess, who preached in Chicago, Toledo, Detroit, and New York City, where she founded Glad Tidings Hall, which soon became an important center for the spread of the Pentecostal revival. Another early Pentecostal pioneer in New York was Miss Maud Williams (Haycroft).

In Canada, some early pioneers of the Pentecostal movement included Ellen Hebden in Toronto, Ella M. Goff in Winnipeg, Alice B. Garrigus in Newfoundland, the Davis sisters in the Maritime provinces, Mrs. C. E. Baker in Montreal, and Zelma Argue throughout all of the Canadian provinces. Aimee Semple McPherson of Ingersoll, Ontario, began a preaching ministry in 1915 which began in Toronto and took her along the U.S. Eastern Seaboard, and across the United States in 1918. She eventually founded Angelus Temple in 1923, where she continued as senior pastor until her death in 1944.

Kathryn Kuhlman's ministry began in the summer of 1923. After her ordination by the Evangelical Church Alliance in Joliet, Illinois, she established the Denver Revival Tabernacle in 1935, which she pastored for three years. In the mid-1940s, she went to Franklin, Pennsylvania, where she began to thrive as a preacher and radio evangelist. Many people were healed at her meetings beginning in 1947, and she gained a reputation as one of the world's outstanding healing evangelists, carrying on as a leading figure during the charismatic movement until her death in 1976.

A few of the women working as Pentecostal pastors during the charismatic movement of the 1960s and 1970s included Charlotte Baker, Myrtle D. Beall, Helen Beard, Aimee Cortese, Sue Curran, B. Maureen Gaglardi, Anne Giminez, Ione Glaeser, Hattie Hammond, Alpha A. Henson, Marilyn Hickey, Violet Kitley, Janet Kreis, Freda Lindsay, Fuchsia T. Pickett, Iverna Tompkins, and Rachel Titus. A sampling of a few of the other women who were vital during the time of the charismatic movement as speakers, authors, or evangelists, would include Eleanor and Roberta Armstrong, Rita Bennett, Edith Blumhofer, Hazel Bonawitz, Roxanne Brant, Mary Ann Brown, Shirley Carpenter, Jean Darnall, Josephine Massynberde Ford, Katie Fortune, Shirlee Green, Nina Harris, Sue Malachuk, Daisy Osborn, Dorothy Ranaghan, Agnes Sanford, Gwen Shaw, Bernice Smith, Ruth Carter Stapleton, Jean Stone, Joni Eareckson Tada, and Corrie Ten Boom.

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**We appreciate all contributions to this Newsletter.**  
**Thank You!**

## The Fall Holy Days

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The weeks before heading into the fall holy day season are an appropriate time to review what the church has learned over the decades about God's appointed times and how they fit into His plan. Generally, God uses the agricultural harvests to picture His plan for humanity's salvation.

Passover and the spring holy days—the two high days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread and Pentecost—center on Jesus Christ and His work with the elect during this present age. The four fall holy days primarily picture the great harvests of human beings at His return and beyond.

The commands to keep the Sabbath, Passover, and all the holy days appear in Leviticus 23 (and separately elsewhere), along with their dates on the Hebrew calendar. There, in this season, God instructs us to keep:

- » The Feast of Trumpets on the first day of Tishri, the seventh month.
- » The Day of Atonement falls nine days later, on Tishri 10.
- » The Feast of Tabernacles lasts an entire week, from Tishri 15 to Tishri 21.
- » The following day, Tishri 22, is the year's final holy day, traditionally called "the Last Great Day," but more correctly, "the Eighth Day."

### The Feast of Trumpets

God's command to keep the first fall holy day appears in Leviticus 23:24:

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Speak to the children of Israel, saying, “In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a Sabbath rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation.”

These trumpets refer to a shout of joy, alarm, or triumph. Psalm 81:3 also refers to blowing the shofar on the first day of the seventh month. One commentator compared its blast to an air-raid siren, alerting the people to imminent danger and compelling action. Fittingly, the shofar is also blown at a king’s coronation, and Psalm 150:3 commands it to sound in praise of God.

In both Leviticus 23:24 and Numbers 29:1, the phrase “blowing of trumpets” can be translated as “shout of the shofar,” meaning that the Feast of Trumpets could be called “a day of shouting.” Numbers 10:9, in its explanation of Israel’s use of trumpets, speaks of a specific usage during wartime, highlighting salvation by the hand of God:

When you go to war in your land against the enemy who oppresses you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, and you will be remembered before the LORD your God, and you will be saved from your enemies.

In I Corinthians 15:52-53, Paul prophesies that God will resurrect and change the saints to incorruptible and immortal at the last trump. Jesus says in Matthew 24:31, “And [the Son of Man] will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” I Thessalonians 4:16 reads similarly, “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.”

This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with Him for a thousand years. (Revelation 20:5-6)

Finally, Revelation 11:15 describes the blowing of the seventh trumpet: “Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!’” As King of kings, Jesus, with His resurrected saints, will intervene to stop mankind’s self-destructive actions.

Thus, the Feast of Trumpets sounds an alarm of war and a peal of deliverance, salvation, and victory. It pictures the triumphant return of our Savior to defeat His enemies, **resurrect His elect firstfruits**, and establish God’s Kingdom on the earth.

### **Atonement**

God’s instruction on keeping the Day of Atonement appears in Leviticus 23:27-28:

[T]he tenth day of this seventh month shall be the Day of Atonement. It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. And you shall do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God.

Isaiah 58:3 shows that we afflict our souls by fasting. On this holy day, we neither eat nor drink for the entire 24-hour period. The Hebrew word, *‘anah*, means “to afflict, humble, and force ourselves.” We humble ourselves before God to seek His guidance with as little human resistance to His instructions and urgings as possible. In a different but parallel context, the apostle Paul concludes, “For when I am weak [physically], then I am strong [spiritually]” (II Corinthians 12:10).

Another aspect of this day is God’s emphasis on our doing no work at all on this holy day. Not needing to prepare a meal or do other “necessary things” we might normally do on a weekly Sabbath or holy day; we can spend the day in sincere introspection and communion with God. We are to recognize that God accomplished our atonement without our aid. We cannot save ourselves through works; our salvation is by grace (Ephesians 2:8).

Fasting puts us in the right frame of mind and reminds us of the One who provides all things and whom we must obey. Isaiah 66:2 says that God will look favorably “on him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at [His] word.” The Day of Atonement pictures a thoroughly humbled mankind submitting to God and His direction for their lives. Salvation and unity between God and man is God’s doing. Without His revelation and calling, we could do absolutely

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nothing worthwhile spiritually. Jesus' rule on the earth and the humble unity and cooperation of all humanity with God and each other will result in a glorious, prosperous, peaceful world.

### **The Feast of Tabernacles**

The third fall holy day, the Feast of Tabernacles, is a pilgrimage festival held at a place God Himself chooses (Deuteronomy 16:16). God commands in Leviticus 23:34-36:

Speak to the children of Israel, saying: “The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the LORD. On the first day there shall be a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work on it. For seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. It is a sacred assembly, and you shall do no customary work on it.”

God instructs His people to provide for this time away from home by setting aside a full tithe of their income throughout the year to allow them to fulfill His command to rejoice during the Feast (see Deuteronomy 14:22-27). Faithfully saving this tithe provides an amount equal to many times a person's weekly salary to use during these eight days. Such abundance symbolizes the prosperity and abundance of the Millennial reign of Jesus Christ on the earth. Unity, cooperation, and prosperity will expand to all mankind over that thousand years.

In church services every day of the Feast, members learn more about the way of God. A unique feature of the Feast is God's command to Israel to dwell in tents, tabernacles, or temporary dwellings, picturing the transience of this world and God's people's journey through it to the Kingdom of God. This world has its beauties, but God's elect must seek Him and His way of life because the world's glory will not last (I John 2:15-17).

### **The Eighth Day**

As we read, Leviticus 23:36 tells us about the final fall holy day, the eighth day of the Feast, which represents the concluding step in God's plan. After the Millennium, the thousand years of Christ's rule, all who have ever lived will be resurrected to physical life and given God's Spirit and understanding of His Plan. **For a hundred years, they will practice living as God intends.**

This period is a second resurrection, the resurrection of “the rest of the dead” mentioned in Revelation 20:5. Jesus reveals in John 5:25, “Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.” In Revelation 20:11-13, this time centers on the Great White Throne Judgment, when all the dead will rise from their graves to be judged according to their works.

Isaiah 65:20-21, 24-25 describe this time:

“No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; for the child shall die one hundred years old, but the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. . . . It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer, and while they are still speaking, I will hear. . . . They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain,” says the LORD.

This Eighth Day pictures a time of judgment when all of humankind from all of history, both Gentile and Israelite (see Matthew 12:41-42), will have an opportunity to accept salvation through the blood of Jesus Christ. His sacrifice is so effective that it is more than sufficient to save all the billions of humanity from Adam and Eve onward.

Ezekiel 37 speaks of God resurrecting the entire house of Israel to physical life and given new, vigorous, healthy bodies and minds, ready to receive instruction in God's way. Isaiah 35 prophesies that people who were blind, lame, or infirm with any physical or mental impairment will be healed. To these people, God will open access to His Spirit to enable their understanding of His Word and way of life. Over a lifetime, they will learn to live by God's commandments. As Jesus says, those who hear and respond will live—truly live!

Sadly, there will be some who refuse to bow their knees to Christ and reject salvation, unwilling to repent of their sinful lifestyles. They will be cast into the Lake of Fire, suffering the Second Death (Revelation 20:14-15). Some have called



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this event the third resurrection.

### **New Heavens and New Earth**

God says that He desires that all men be saved (I Timothy 2:4; II Peter 3:9). His commanded fall holy days show us the steps He is taking to accomplish His plan of salvation, not leaving anyone out who desires it and is willing to accept the terms of His New Covenant.

#### **In summary:**

- » The Feast of Trumpets symbolizes the victorious return of Jesus Christ to this earth and His installation as King of kings and Lord of lords. **He will resurrect His saints to eternal life and give them incorruptible bodies.**
- » The Day of Atonement pictures Christ's work of atonement for all humanity. His blood pays for human sins, and He removes them “as far as east is from the west” (Psalm 103:12). His finished work allows for unity between God and humble people.
- » The Feast of Tabernacles pictures the thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ on the earth. It depicts what life is supposed to be like under the blessing of God when people faithfully obey His instruction.
- » The Last Great Day shows how God will offer salvation to all of blinded humanity, regardless of era, sex, ethnicity, nationality, or prior religious belief.

Once these steps are complete, God's harvest of souls will end. The effects of 6,000 years of disobedience will be wiped away, and all mankind will either be members of His Family or have been annihilated in the Lake of Fire. The time of the New Heaven and New Earth will come, death and pain will be no more, and God will dwell with humanity (Revelation 21:1-7). May He speed that day!

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## **The Pragmatic Japanese** (Copyright 2021) by Richard T. Ritenbaugh (Charlotte, North Carolina)

Most neighborhoods in suburban America are densely packed affairs with houses standing perhaps as little as twenty feet apart. The contractors who build them try to use the space as efficiently as possible, building as many houses per acre as the home-buying public can bear. A single house in such a subdivision is likely to be closely flanked by two very similar homes, and another house stands just beyond the back fence. In the front, a solid row of houses lines the other side of the street, more distant but contributing to the sense of closeness.

In its own way, the earth has neighborhoods too, and some are more densely packed than others. The nations that inhabit these areas of the planet must spend more time thinking about their borders and their neighbors' reactions than others who have more elbow room. They must either make peace and cooperation treaties with their neighbors or prepare for almost constant border skirmishes or all-out war.

Japan may not seem to be surrounded by competing nations. After all, it lies in the western Pacific Ocean, encompassed by water. But modern technology—particularly jet engines and guided missiles—makes Seoul, South Korea, a close neighbor at just 720 miles away (and their southern extremities lie even closer, less than 100 miles). Pyongyang, North Korea, is just 800 miles from Tokyo. China's capital, Beijing, lies just 1,300 miles to the west, and Taipei, Taiwan, is a similar distance to the southwest. Vladivostok, Russia, is closer than all of them, just 660 miles to the northwest!

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Since the end of World War II, Japan’s staunchest ally has been none of these near nations but the United States on the other side of the Pacific. America’s military strength, especially its deep-water navy, allowed Japan the peace and prosperity to rebuild both its cities and its economy so that by the early 1970s, the Land of the Rising Sun had once again become a major economic power in Asia and the Pacific region. Soon, it was also flexing political muscle worldwide and joining the conferences of the planet’s most significant commercial players.



Yet, Japan did not seek to restore its military might. Instead, it constrained itself constitutionally to defensive armaments only, capping its military spending to around 1% of its gross domestic product. It outsourced its security and a great part of its foreign policy to the U.S. With few ripples, the arrangement worked well for upwards of six decades.

However, the situation has changed. Japan’s near neighbors, particularly China, have not remained static, presenting Tokyo with new economic and political challenges. Beijing’s bellicosity is most concerning, upgrading its naval and air capabilities to overwhelm U.S. allies in the region, threatening Taiwan, and reviving its claims on the Japanese-controlled Senkaku Islands. The rhetoric from Chinese leaders leaves little doubt that they are itching to repay Japan for Imperial Era atrocities.

At the same time, the Japanese leadership grows increasingly uneasy about the reliability of their chief ally and protector, the United States. The last two presidents have done little to assuage their fears. Following his “America First” policy, President Donald Trump played economic hardball by withdrawing from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a move intended to check China’s growing dominance, but which also undermined Japan’s economy.

Joe Biden has done little to improve matters other than to restore a more normal tone to the relationship. His administration has not worked out a new trade deal for its Pacific partners, nor has it made any significant contribution to balancing China’s military dominance of the region. These failures of initiative—and the bad taste of America’s botched withdrawal from Afghanistan—leave Japan in an uncomfortable position.

Its leadership is not sitting on its hands. In 2016, then-Prime Minister Shinzo Abe began pushing the idea of a “free and open Indo-Pacific,” reviving the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (called the “Quad”) with the U.S., India, and Australia. In 2018, it reinvigorated the TPP with its own, smaller version and signed a major trade deal with the European Union to limit its reliance on Chinese merchandise and supply chain.

As previous administrations had also done, it continued loosening the constitutional constraints on its military, allowing it to project power farther abroad. For instance, Japanese leaders have hinted that, should China assault Taiwan, its military would join U.S. forces in the regional war that would surely follow. Already, it is installing anti-ship missiles on the Ryukyu Islands, which almost reach Taiwan far to the south. It also has plans to employ submarines to deny China access to the open Pacific if war erupts.

For its part, China is watching Japanese policy closely and with rising anger, warning that Japan is once again becoming militaristic and aggressive. A Chinese propaganda piece even threatened to wage nuclear war on its islands if it interfered

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with its handling of Taiwan. Rather than warning Japan off, its hyperbolic reaction could backfire, spurring Tokyo to hasten its plans to take a more significant role, even militarily, in the region.

This pragmatic approach to foreign policy is typical for Japan. It has fundamentally overhauled its stance at least three times in the last two centuries: when, in the 1850s, Western powers compelled it to transform into a modern nation; when it adopted a policy of militaristic expansion during the Great Depression, leading to WWII; and when it renounced its aggression after suffering catastrophic defeat by the Allies. At this pivotal point in history, a fourth change of direction will certainly align with Japanese self-interest.

Using Jerusalem as an example, Lamentations 1:2 warns Israelite nations that ally themselves with foreign powers: “. . . among all her lovers [allies] she has none to comfort her. All her friends have dealt treacherously with her; they have become her enemies.” In short, allies will cut and run when a nation shows weakness.

We cannot expect old alliances to hold when circumstances on the ground change because nations will always follow their self-interests. Japan’s recent history demonstrates that it will turn on a dime to put itself in the most advantageous position. If America continues to retreat from its premier position on the world stage, Japan—and others of its allies—may just choose to find new friends elsewhere.

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**See Richard T. Ritenbaugh’s other articles at:**

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

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## **We can’t see the stars for the nebulae – it’s all just theoretical** **(Copyright 2021) by David Rives (Lewisburg, Tennessee)**

Why should you believe in creation, and not evolution? I mean, scientifically speaking. Haven’t we proven that Evolution is a fact?

Evolution is a very loose term. It could refer to dozens of things, but today, let’s look at stellar nurseries, as stars are born into existence... You see, the theory goes something like this, although I’m going to try to simplify a little: When a lot of gas in space begins to contract in on itself, eventually that gas balls up, and starts to form a dense, tight ball of gas called a star. This happens trillions upon trillions of times, until you’ve got a nice, populated universe. However, we’ve already run into a problem because – we’ve never seen a star form!

Am I saying that entire section of our science textbooks is all just theoretical? Yes, that’s exactly what I am saying.

Since I started in apologetics ministry, I’ve had the opportunity to work with large observatory class telescopes and I’ve also taken lots of photos of space. I once even caught a supernova which is a pretty rare event. However, the only examples of supposed star formation that you will observe are when cloudy (or nebulous) areas of space start to clear, and we spot a star for the first time. – We can’t see the stars for the nebulae.

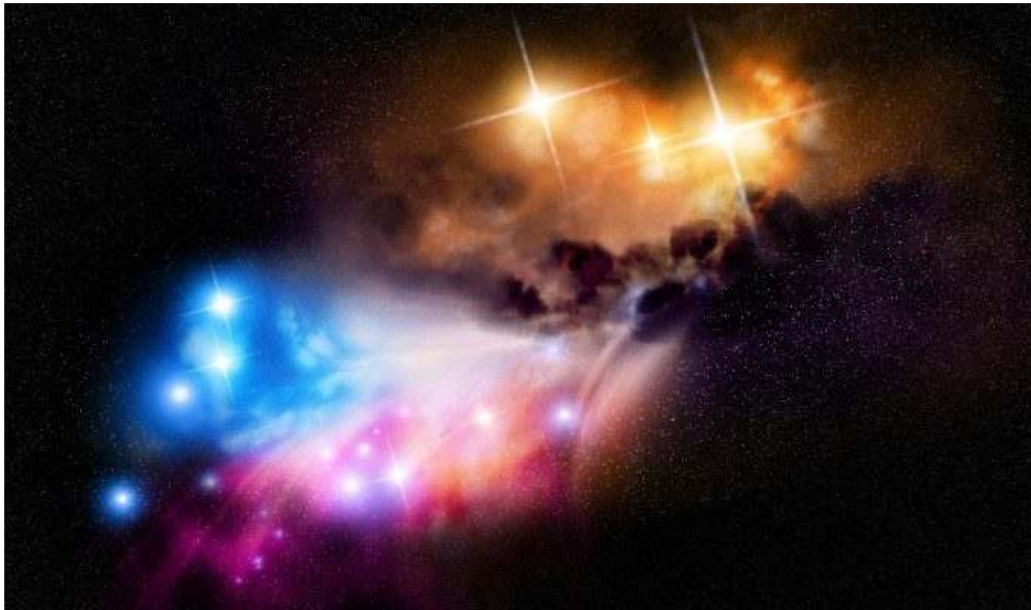
Let me give you an analogy of what I’m talking about: – let’s say that you and I are driving down the road in a dense fog, and suddenly the fog lifts, and then we see a massive mountain ahead of us. The mountain did not just magically form in the last 10 minutes; it was just revealed to us when the fog dissipated.

This is just the proverbial ‘tip of the iceberg’ – the evolutionary problem gets a lot worse. It is a physical law in science that gas in a vacuum expands. That means that gasses are going to always be on the move away from each other. They

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will never compress together and form a star. The mutual gravity of the particles in those regions of space simply cannot bring everything together, so it all slowly dissipates into a larger and larger cloud.

Now, proponents of the Big Bang have one rescuing device claiming that maybe under special circumstances, there's an exception. We would need a lot of exceptions to explain how trillions of stars formed in only 14 billion years. They can give it all of the time in the world, but they shouldn't expect physical laws to change just to salvage their theory. That's invoking a miracle to make it work.



Let me conclude I am a born again Christian, I think miracles can occur but I don't claim this to be 'science'. These proponents of the Big Bang can teach it as their own mysterious religion if they want, but if you're following the scientific evidence, you should stick to the facts and leave stellar evolution out of the picture.

That is Just one more scientific reason that you shouldn't believe in cosmic evolution. It takes a LOT of faith.

I'm David Rives. Truly, the Heavens Declare the Glory of God!

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**See David Rives other articles at:**

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

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## **Without Trust**

**(Copyright 2023) by David Antion (Pasadena, California)**

We concluded the 7 days of the Feast of Tabernacles and the 8th Day on October 7, 2023. This year GM's sponsored Feast was in South Lake Tahoe, California. The Brethren there seemed to love the beauty of the location and were thrilled with the services -- sermons, music, special presentations, prayers, and readings.

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It was a most joyous Feast with people commenting mostly on the warmth of the Brethren and the loving atmosphere. I commented one day that I knew I was among Christ's followers because of the love they exhibited toward one another.

As you all know on the holy day of the 8th Day, we heard about the hate that knew no bounds! It's been over a month since we were hit by the news that Israel had been attacked by Hamas troops and terrorists committing unspeakable atrocities against Jews and any others they could capture in Israel.

It didn't matter -- young, old, male, and female -- if Hamas could they would capture or kill. Most were killed and some were taken as hostages. Since that time there has been a nonstop reporting of the war between Israel and Hamas with Palestinian civilians used as shields for the Hamas terrorists.

Now Israel has invaded Gaza and is determined to wipe out Hamas terrorists by using ground troops and killing them in direct combat. We see on the news demonstrations -- some pro-Hamas and some pro-Israel -- sometimes violent clashes.

Let's be clear. Hamas and other groups ruling over the Palestinians do not want a two-state solution. They have rejected it. They want the nation of Israel gone and all Jews dead. The Israelis don't want all Palestinians dead or any group for that matter. What they want is to have their own territory so they can protect themselves from another holocaust like what happened under Hitler.

However, it is true that there have been unfair dealings on both sides because of a lack of trust and goodwill. People cannot have good relations even in a family without trust. Israel doesn't trust the leaders of the Palestinians and they don't trust Israel.

No solution can be worked out without trust.

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**See David Antion's other articles at:**

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**<http://daveantion.com/>**

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## **God IS Working!!!**

**(Copyright 2023) by Dwight Fleming (Oroville, California)**

Have you heard the news?

A new Speaker of the House has been elected. Mike Johnson from the great state of Louisiana. Now the House of Representatives can get back to work in fulfilling their duties for which American voters sent them to Washington, DC, to do.

I urge you to listen to his first speech as Speaker of the House. You may think that you are hearing a church sermon rather than a political speech. He mentions how the motto, "In God We Trust," above the Speaker podium came to be. Also, the new Speaker points to the face of Moses that looks down from the gallery. It is an inspiring and encouraging message.

With the war in Israel against Hamas and the possibility of others attacking Israel, it is vital that the House can now function since the House is the chamber which has control of appropriations. Israel will need help in their fight against their enemies. Please read Psalm 18.

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The second video is very short with Netanyahu speaking to the House many years ago. However, it shows the face of Moses that Mike Johnson points to during his speech.

Here is the link to Speaker Johnson's speech: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZ-WqI0OyRk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5SNBFnGenA0> Face of Moses in Congress

See Dwight Fleming's other articles at:  
[Fleming, Dwight – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://church-of-god-bismarck.org)

## If Israel Just?

(Sent in 2023) by Mark Vande Pol (Redwood Estates, California)

A Decent Summary on the "Two State Solution"

<https://www.prageru.com/video/why-isnt-there-a-palestinian-state>

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<https://www.wildergarten.org/>

## Ambassador College Photos From 1952

Sent by Craig M. White (Australia)



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1. Co-eds in formal dress
2. Dr. & Mrs. Hoeh
3. HWA with Dr. Merrill
4. HWA with Students
5. HWA's mother on left with house mother Annie Mann
6. Kenneth Herrmann with Elise Bernard
7. Kenneth Herrmann's dorm
8. Students 4 pics
9. Mrs. Herrmann crocheting
10. Mrs. Herrmann on bridge. Rose Bowl in background

See Craig White's other articles at:

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<http://www.friendsofsabbath.org/>

# Have a Great Sabbath!

## Iron Sharpening Iron

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

## In regard to: Calendar

Article by Rafael Algorri  
Comments by Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)

Okay, so Rafael sent me the link I asked for. It is below:

<https://laodiceantimes.com/articles/Why%20Hebrew%20Calendar%20Is%20Wrong.html>

I read the article, and it is not accurate, and the author Adam Eliyahu Berkowitz is the senior reporter for Israel 365 News. I am not sure if he is a Jew or not, but the Rabbi mentioned in the article is a Zionist who does not live in Israel. Orthodox Jews and Zionists are on two opposite sides of the spectrum. In other words, they oppose each other.

There are many sects of the Jews, even at the time of Christ. The only Jews Christ ever endorsed were the Pharisees which are today the Orthodox Jews.

### In the article is found the following statement:

The modern Jewish calendar was set according to a 19-year cycle with an additional month added seven times during that cycle. Even with this correction, the Hebrew calendar **falls behind the actual lunar cycle at the rate of one day every 216 years**. As a result, the established calendar is now out of sync with the lunar cycles.

If that statement were true, then there is no way the full moon would ever show up on Passover/1<sup>st</sup> Day of Unleavened Bread or on the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles. And yet it continues to show up every year for those Holy Days. If that statement would be true, which it is not we would be running almost ten days behind on all Annual Holy Days.

Yes, the Hebrew Calendar does need to be adjusted very soon but that will not happen until there is a new temple and a new temple will not be built until the 1000-year millennium. Even in the temple at the time of Christ the moon sightings were only used to make sure their calendar calculations were correct.

The Hebrew Calendar we have today is set by Tishri One and not by a moon before or after the equinox or when they find barley. No, it is set by Tishri One. On Tishri One there is a 0 to 2-day slide because the full moon has to show up on Passover/First Day of Unleavened Bread and also on the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles. When you use only moon sightings those full moons are not going to show up on the holy days except on a rare occasion.

The biggest problem I see with the Hebrew Calendar is that most people have never taken the time to study it and even when they do study it they have a tendency to dismiss it because of all the bad things the other sects of the Jews have to say about it or they themselves hate Jews. That hatred of Jews comes out in many articles I see come across my desk, that are written by people in the Church of God. Please remember the Jews are your brethren and their sin is no greater than the sins of the other tribes of which you are most likely a part of.

## In regard to: Calendar

Article by Rafael Algorri  
Comments by Rafael Algorri (New Jersey)

As far as who is going to be in the first resurrection or not is not up to any of us!

Regarding the calendar, in my 19 1/2 years with WCG at least 3 times "Passover" services had to be cancelled because of snow/icy roads back in N J. How is that for keeping a Holy Day in the Spring? If you lived in warmer climate this would not be an issue or even in the minds of those who were keeping the "Last Supper" and called it "Passover. I don't recall making this point before here but for Yahshua to hold a Passover service would be violating His own Law, the sacrifices were to be done in the Temple, and nowhere in the OT or NT is there any mention of a change to the timing of Passover. Many ministers use Paul's statement in:

1 Cor. 11:23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:

24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

This New Testament covenant required a Blood Sacrifice. When was that? Not that night! He had to do it this way because He would be in the grave on Passover.

26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

When did He die? not that night and you cannot keep a memorial until after the fact not before. There was only one official Passover that year and even before He was born while in the womb, His Mother was keeping the Passover along with the other Jews and like I said, the timing just like the Sabbath has not changed.

I guess we have to wait for the Two witnesses to come and be the authority most people will accept. I don't have to wait for that, I believe to be on the right side of the fence on this.

## In regard to: Did Herbert Armstrong Ever Observe Pentecost on Sivan 6?

Article From David Ben-Ariel  
Comments by Rafael Algorri (New Jersey)

100% correct (Shavuot) HWA had it wrong. WCG Never apologized for All the damage they caused when they forced marriages to split up because of false understanding. Don't get me wrong, I do acknowledge that we were Blessed with Truth others didn't have or ignored, we got a good foundation in that regard. So, in spite of man and his frailties, shortcomings, a calling went out and it hasn't been in vain. It is our job and responsibility to 1Thes. 5:21.

**1Th 5:21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.**

Thank you for the work you are doing, keep it up!

## In regard to: Azazel Observations and Questions

Article by Pat Higgins  
Comments by Rafael Algorri (New Jersey)

Good answer on the Azazel goat with one exception, Only One represented Messiah and He alone can take away sin! The live goat cannot take away sin but it bears the Responsibility, the Guilt for all sin including its own.

## In regard to: Azazel Observations and Questions

Article by Pat Higgins  
Comments by Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)

### Rafael Algorri writes:

Good answer on the Azazel goat with one exception, Only One represented Messiah and He alone can take away sin! The live goat cannot take away sin, but it bears the Responsibility, the Guilt for all sin including its own.

### Laura writes:

The first goat was a sin offering representing Christ. I don't believe there is anyone that disputes that, at least not to my knowledge.

The second goat, the live one probably does not represent Christ or Satan. The live goat's purpose, simply put "was to carry the sin of the people away from the camp", for one day. This is symbolic of a future time when all sin will no longer exist.

The live goat did not bear anyone's responsibility or guilt.

If you were to murder someone and regret it later, you are the only one who was responsible for that murder, and you are the only one who can feel guilty for what you did. No one else, not even the live goat can take your responsibility or guilt away for having killed another person.

The scriptures that talk about both goats make it very clear that both goats were sin offerings. It says nothing about the live goat being responsible or guilty for the sins of Israel.

**Lev 16:5** And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering.

**Lev 16:21** And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send *him* away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: **Lev 16:22** And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.

## **In regard to: The Fall Holy Days**

**Article by John Reiss**  
**Comments by Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)**

This is a good teaching article to give everyone an overview of the plan of God. There are a few things I would like to point out. The first is that Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread spoken of here is the same Feast. It starts on the 15th of Nisan and runs for seven days.

After the millennial reign of Christ everyone who has lived and died from the time of Adam, those who never understood the plan of God, will be resurrected and be given a 100-year chance. Speculation has it that not all of these billions of people will be raised at the same time. They may be given a 100 year chance to learn the ways of God but the resurrections may well be staggered over a thousand year period.

We believe that the First Fruits will be resurrected on Pentecost and go to heaven to attend the Wedding Supper of the Lamb and to be trained for their duties in ruling with Christ. The First Fruits will then return to Earth on the Feast of Trumpets with Christ to set up the Kingdom of God for the millennial reign of Christ.

The parts of the article I am commenting on are highlighted in yellow in the article.

## **Prayer Requests**

### **Prayer Request for Kenya Orphans (November 9, 2023)**

Hope all of you are doing well.

Conditions in Kenya are quite difficult at this time. Two of the remote orphans are now in the hospital due to starvation, and some of the other orphans and widows are also suffering for lack of food. We have not been able to supply them with the ingredients to make the nutritional porridge.

Since the Feast of Tabernacles donations have been down. If you can help please do so. No donation is too small or too large. And please pray for more to join hands with us in helping our impoverished brethren.

Below is a link to a letter we sent to donors dated November 4, 2023, describing the conditions.

Thank You.

Bill Goff

November 4th donor letter:

<https://khofh.com/donor-letter-november-4-2023/>

Website: <http://www.khofh.org>

E-mail: [goffb50@aol.com](mailto:goffb50@aol.com)

Phone: 843-447-0140

## Special Edition Article

# Dividing the House of Israel (Part 1)

(Copyright) by Rich Travers (Clifton, Colorado)

***Brought from obscurity, as a Family Clan in deepest bondage, the Children of Israel rose to become a prosperous and potent power in their Promised Land. But things didn't go as expected, not as a result of economic reversals, but from Apostasy!***

Formed into a new nation from a relatively obscure family clan, the Children of Israel became what today is an immense multitude, a force in the modern world, unrecognized for who they were, who they are, and who they ultimately will become. Upon these peoples would rest the "blessings of Abraham", but that's another aspect of this story.

### **God's Model Nation?**

From a religious perspective, these peoples are thought to be God's Model Nation instrumental in bringing salvation to the world. But their record in history severely challenges such an idea. They may think that of themselves, but their record speaks otherwise! They proved to be more examples of what not to be and do rather than what the intent was.

As the nation prospered, they became a tempting target for other powers in the area who could be looking toward them for conquest and empirical gain. This of course was a concern to the citizens, which prompted them to want to be organized like the nations around them. They wanted a king, which demonstrated a lack of faith in their current situation!

### **God Acquiesced**

Despite His predictions of what would come, God granted their request for a king, explaining what they should anticipate. Their first king proved to be a disaster. Their second was exemplary at times, and their third went on to become seriously compromised religiously by his foreign wives. In no way could it be said that the nation was living up to expectations.

With full awareness of how things were developing with the people, God had a Plan for fulfilling His intentions. On the surface, we might not have thought so, but there was. In Isaiah 55:8 He explains, "*My thoughts are not your thoughts, and My ways are not your ways...*" If there was in fact a Plan for the nation of Israel to be useful to God, obviously there was a need for serious remediation.

Such a consideration would be a very challenging dilemma for us. If we were to conceive of a way of 'dealing with' such a situation, how would we do it? There IS a Plan being 'worked out' regarding the ultimate salvation of humanity. There is, but it's just more subtle than apparent.

### **Directed From Above**

A line from a Shakespearian Play is insightful. In 'As You Like It', it says: "***All the world's a stage, And all the men and women merely Players...***" Can we accept that the events of history are not all random or entirely 'natural'? Especially where it involves one special ethnicity, things don't "just happen"! The idea of Israel being useable is still in play despite their historic rebellion and gross ignorance.

So, despite the prestige and wealth the nation of Israel had achieved in their short existence as a unified kingdom under Kings David and Solomon, (some 80 years) **disaster** came after the reign of Solomon ended. It was in 931BC when the Kingdom became divided. That was nearly 3000 years ago!

From that point, there were two separate dynasties. What Bible students aren't fully aware of, for the most part, is that this was by Design, not just by politically motivated incentive!

We tend to think that it was some desire on the part of a preeminent figure in the nation, who sought power and schemed to do what he did. Rather, there were events in the background that caused the out-come. The division of the nation into two kingdoms was God ordained. We can read of that in 1<sup>st</sup> Kings.

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### **The Kingdom is Rent**

The servant of King Solomon is introduced to us in the chapter 11 of 1<sup>st</sup> Kings. His name was Jeroboam.

**[26]** *“And Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephrathite of Zereda, Solomon's servant, ... [28] And the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valour: and Solomon seeing the young man that he was industrious, he made him ruler over all the charge of the house of Joseph.”* (That'd be the prominent tribes (Ephraim and Manasseh) in the north.) So Jeroboam gained a reputation in service to Solomon! But an extraordinary thing happened.

### **God's Prophet Ahijah**

**[29]** *“And it came to pass at that time when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way; and he had clad himself with a new garment; and they two were alone in the field: [30] And **Ahijah** caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces: [31] “And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give **ten tribes** to thee: [32] (But he shall have one tribe for my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel:)*

So, Jeroboam was enlisted privately!

### **The Underlying Reason**

**[33]** *“Because that they have forsaken me, and have worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walked in my ways, to do that which is right in mine eyes, and to keep my statutes and my judgments, as did David his father. [34] Howbeit I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand: but I will make him prince all the days of his life for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept my commandments and my statutes: [35] But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, even **ten tribes.**”*

It's widely assumed that Jeroboam's actions were the result of personal ambition. That he'd taken advantage of the sentiment among the people resulting from Solomon's, and his son Rehoboam's, severe taxation. (1<sup>st</sup> Kings 12:1-16) While that provided a convenient excuse, it wasn't the real reason for the kingdom being divided. The real reason was rank religious Apostasy! It's in this that we begin to see God's Plan at the earliest stages of implementation!

### **Civil War Loomed!**

It's not hard to expect that when the separation into two separate kingdoms occurred, there was a serious thought to go to war to restore unity. Another 'intervention' on God's part prevented that from happening. Again in 1<sup>st</sup> Kings 12: it says: *“Speak unto Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the remnant of the people, saying, [24] Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; **for this thing is from me.** They hearkened therefore to the word of the LORD, and returned to depart, according to the word of the LORD.*

So, the kingdom became divided. War was averted, and that on account of God insisting that the northern Ten Tribe's separation into another kingdom was from Him.

We tend to not realize how long situations existed in ancient times. Once the nation was divided, both houses coexisted adjacent to each other for the next 200-years. It was not a brief period! What may not be adequately considered is the spiritual condition of the people during that interval.

### **Situation Unresolved**

That's not to say that the apostasy situation was corrected in either kingdom. The House of Judah (which the southern two tribes were called after this point in their history – later becoming called “Jews”), continued much as before, so far as their religious orientation was concerned.

There's a general idea that The Kingdom of Judah was the more faithful of the two kingdoms. But that impression came after their return from Babylonian captivity. After all, Jeroboam set up his own priesthood, altered their Holy Day calendar and established their own worship centers. Jeroboam realized that his people in returning to Jerusalem regularly to keep

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the original Holy Days there would tend to foster a sentiment for reunification. That was what prompted him to establish their own priesthood and worship centers. (1<sup>st</sup> Kings 12:26-33)

But we shouldn't think that either kingdom was religiously more true-to-the-faith than the other during this period. Reformation was needed and was to come, **but later!**

It was this multi-generational lapse that created what was going to be needed in the future. While the peoples became divided politically, they also developed as two separate ethnicities, with different cultures and with two religious systems operating under different philosophical approaches. This had a purpose!

### **Threat of Conquest**

As the ancient nation of Assyria grew in power and regional influence, their ambitions caused them to look into further expansion of their empire. The House of Israel was a prime target.

It was in this timeframe that Jonah was recruited by God to go up to Nineveh (capitol of Assyria – one of the largest cities in the world at that time) and warn them of God's wrath to come. We might wonder why God gave a rip as to the spiritual condition in Assyria. What was a factor was that these were the people to conduct God's correction on the House of Israel. It was important that His 'instrument of correction' be of superior moral character to that of their intended conquest! Is there another reason?

And Nineveh repented! How did they know what repentance was? How did they have such regard for the God of Israel to take Jonah's warning seriously?

### **Brotherly Intrigue**

Now, another 'interesting' detail was that the southern kingdom, the House of Judah, had a hand in the conquest of their northern brethren. The northern House of Israel was at the time in alliance with Syria. *“So Ahaz (King of Judah) sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying, I am thy servant and thy son: come up, and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel, which rise up against me. [8] And Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent it for a present to the king of Assyria. [9] And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him: for the king of Assyria went up against Damascus, (capitol of Syria) and took it, and carried the people of it captive to Kir, and slew Rezin.”* (2<sup>nd</sup> Kings 16:7-9)

This was after about 200 years had passed from the time of the dividing of the Kingdom. Samaria (capitol of Israel) was besieged thereafter, falling in 732BC with deportations from there continuing for much of a decade.

### **Why Separate Captivities?**

With the thought in mind that these events were due to the peoples of Israel (both houses) having forsaken God and the form of worship He gave them, that we might wonder why both houses weren't taken into captivity together?

But the House of Judah was ultimately taken captive, this time by Babylon (successor to the Assyrian Empire). That was in 586BC, about 145 years later!

It's posed here that the reason for separate captivities was to allow development of two religious cultural environments between the two Houses. Each conquering nation had a different culture. The northern House was largely depopulated from their land and was exiled way to the north (between the Black and Caspian Seas up against the Caucasus Mountains) the other by a more refined culture (see Daniel 2:38) which the people came to appreciate as time passed. Repatriation as a result took some time.

After a long generation (beginning some 50 years <sup>1</sup> later) the peoples of Judah were permitted to begin returning to Jerusalem and to rebuild the Temple and the City at the behest of Cyrus. The same didn't happen with the House of Israel. They remained in exile, but this was for a very consequential reason!

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<sup>1</sup> While this is but 50 years, it's important to remember that the people migrated home over a span of time. The stated 70-year interval more likely brought the timeframe to the time the Temple was rebuilt suitable for restoration of its Services.



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The curious thing is that Babylon rose in power to subdue Assyria. Babylon had been a province within the Assyrian Empire. In effect, Babylon now ruled the same region that had been Assyrian territory, which contained the northern Israelite captives. But no such release was granted to them! Was it because of the power-in-numbers they'd come to be? Was it because Babylon saw the presence of the northern house back in the same area as a potential military threat should the two houses become reunited there?

**Corrective Punishment**

We need to consider what the reason for this was. Punishment with intent to correct is one thing, and it worked to significant degree with the House of Judah, but the situation with the House of Israel took on a very different dynamic. They didn't return to their former belief system, nor were they repatriated to their former homeland. So then, how do we explain what God was intending with them?

What history doesn't reflect upon is that the long-term effect of the tribal division was intentionally **useful in the Plan of God**. What we need to realize is that the situation ultimately led to a religious and cultural environment within the Ten Tribes more **amenable to accepting “Christianity”** when the time came. This is the important piece of the puzzle that escapes most historians.

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See Rich Traver's other articles at:

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

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## Holy Days 2024

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

Passover/Unleavened Bread – April 23-29, 2024

Pentecost – June 12, 2024

Trumpets - October 3, 2024

Atonement – October 12, 2024

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

Last Great Day – October 24, 2024

## Notes

## Notes