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Nobody in Their Right Mind Would Even Want to Be Napoleon!

Nowadays conservative Christians pretty much assume the Return of Jesus Christ is just around the corner. But that doesn't seem to make much difference in their everyday lives. That's because most of them don't think future events matter much one way or the other. They're depending on the "rapture" to

make it out of here before the really rough stuff starts.

I look at the rapture the way I do the "fast train" they used to sing about in popular song. It certainly must be something to experience, but I doubt I'll ever have the chance to take the ride myself. Some will; I'm sure. But will it happen

when those who are counting on it think it will? What if they are sadly mistaken?

I broach the issue only because there seems to be a bad case of ignorant going around—ignorant in the sense that people are *ignoring* things they shouldn't. I'm speaking specifically about passages in the New Testament where the Return of Jesus Christ is fairly well described. Take, for example, the following statement that Jesus made:

It's Not Difficult to See, Comparatively Speaking

The parables of Jesus are undoubtedly some of the most misunderstood passages to be found in the Scriptures. Not only has the Church long since lost all understanding of what Jesus originally *meant* by His words, it no longer even understands how and why He used the speech form we call a "parable." Here I intend to briefly explain just a few simple things about Jesus' parables. A comprehensive treatment of the subject must await publication of the fourth volume in The Resurrection Theology Series: *Prophecy and the Parables of Jesus*.

To illustrate the intricate nature of the topic, I point you to the statements of the Early Church Fathers Irenæus and Hippolytus concerning Jesus' Parable of the Unjust Judge and the Widow Woman as recorded in the Gospel of Luke:

Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart, saying, "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God, and did not respect man. And there was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, 'Give me legal protection from my opponent.' And for a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, 'Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, lest by continually coming she wear me out.'"

(Luke 18:1–5)

*"For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and **they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. Then there shall be two men in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left. Two women {will be} grinding at the mill; one will be taken, and one will be left. Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming.**"*

(Matthew 24:37–42)

That seems pretty clear, doesn't it? Nobody knows when He will return, but when He does a lot of people will be caught off guard, just like those people who missed the boat in the days of Noah. Seems fairly open and shut to me. But

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Letters to the Editor

As some of you already know, *The Voice of Elijah* has seen some major changes this quarter. Michael Clay has turned over the management and editing responsibilities of *The Voice of Elijah* to me, Sara Brooks, so he may concentrate his efforts on other aspects of this ministry.

Since I have not had a chance to address you before as Editor of *The Voice of Elijah*, let me say I look forward to bringing this publication to you with the same quality and depth to which you have become accustomed. I have been fortunate to hear *The Teaching* for almost ten years now, and I am excited at the possibility of bringing this coherent message of God to others.

This issue begins *The Voice of Elijah*'s third year of publication. I hope these last two years have been as eye-opening for you as they have been for me. You can look forward to many more insightful issues in the days ahead which will serve to reinforce what you have heard so far and answer many of the questions raised.

Early on in my own exposure to *The Teaching*, I heard Larry refer to it as a tapestry. As with any intricately woven tapestry, the strands he unravels and makes clear for you one by one will probably raise questions about other strands in the tapestry. But rest assured, the pieces all fit together to form one beautifully detailed picture. True Believers will see it all in God's Own time. Be patient.

Our mailroom has been busy this last quarter, handling the many letters we received from you. One subscriber asked for information concerning *The Voice of Elijah*'s future plans. That letter made us realize that others of you might be interested in what *The Voice of Elijah* is doing. So we have included a copy of our Strategic Plan for 1992-93 in this issue. (See pp. 21-22.)

We also received many encouraging letters this last quarter, and I would like to share a few with you.

I've gotten all the back issues and Not All Israel is Israel. Reading these has excited me and I can hardly wait to read and learn more.

*... I want to say thank you to The Elijah Project for speaking the truth and to **The Voice of Elijah** for printing it.*

Sandra S., Alvarado, TX

I continually find myself desiring more knowledge and yearning to ask questions to enhance my understanding of what I've already read.

Allen F., Wichita, KS

... this new knowledge of "Christ in the Old Testament" has given me new insight and appreciation for the actual and true HOLINESS of the Old Testament ... [It] didn't all of a sudden become irrelevant or used up ...

Clifford B., Huntsville, TX

It [The Voice of Elijah] gives clear and true teaching on the parabolic images throughout the Bible. It is an aid to understanding the Gospel of Christ that is throughout the Scriptures.... It has continued to serve as a set of keys, unlocking the mysteries of the Scriptures and also to help peel away the years of traditional and unscriptural teachings that I've been operating under. I love studying the Old Testament now, with the new and clear perceptions that I've gleaned from The Voice of Elijah.

Bernard K., Ft. Leavenworth, KS

We appreciate the positive response. It is gratifying for all who are involved with *The Voice of Elijah* to hear that so many of you are hungry for more of *The Teaching*. All I can say is keep reading. I know for a fact that Larry has not even scratched the surface yet.

We also get our share of criticism.

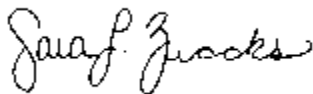
... the writings are very stimulating, but the style is terribly hard to read. One minute Israel is Jesus, then Israel is said to be the land of the Old Testament. Words are extremely important ...there is so much said that confuses what I think he is trying to say.

Steve S., Tulsa, OK

Yes, words are very important. I am sure others have felt that what they read here is confusing at times. If, however, you have seen even a glimpse of Truth in what you have read in these pages or in the publications put out by The Elijah Project, you owe it to yourself to reread and study the material with an objective mind-set.

Often, confusion exists when one tries to reconcile what is said with what one has been taught elsewhere. If, however, you are willing to suspend any preconceived notions you may have regarding the message of the Scriptures, you will be surprised at the clarity you find in these materials. I have found this to be so in my own study. The more I read the things Larry writes and bear them in mind when I study the Scriptures, the clearer *The Teaching* becomes. Every reading highlights some new detail that I did not pick up in the reading before.

We appreciate all the letters we receive from our subscribers, and I look forward to hearing from many more of you in months to come.



P.S. I want to take a moment to personally thank those of you who have agreed to become Regular Contributors to this ministry over the last quarter. It was heartening for the volunteers who work to disseminate *The Teaching* to see so many of you are benefiting from their efforts. I also encourage those of you who have been thinking about becoming Regular Contributors to send in your contribution. It will make a difference in how quickly we reach True Believers with *The Teaching*.

Napoleon!

From Page 1

then, maybe I'm missing something. Or maybe, contrary to what they expect, some today are going to miss that fast train.

Ignorance Is Bliss

You would expect any intelligent person who believes in Jesus Christ to look at what Jesus said and want to make sure they aren't like one of those who "did not understand" in the days of Noah. I would think even the most dogmatic among them would have to admit the possibility does exist that anyone, even those who think they have it all figured out, might be in deep water (figuratively speaking) before too long.

But do you know what those with a bad case of ignorant do when they read that passage? They automatically assume Jesus was *talking about* everybody else! He certainly couldn't have been *talking about* them! The way they've got it figured, they already have a ticket on the fast train.

You see, in spite of what Jesus said, some think they know exactly what will happen. The final events in this realm are going to occur just the way they've heard tell. It escapes me how they can be so sure the "heard tell" they believe is the right "heard tell." It's not like there is only one view of these things! However, that doesn't seem to bother them.

Since they are absolutely convinced they know exactly what's going to happen, they don't think they have to "be alert" and pay attention to such statements. I don't know about you, but to me that seems ignorant. You can slice it any way you want and even serve it up with cheese sauce. It still appears to be flat-out ignorant, right up there with the best of Wylie Coyote.

Then there's that interesting passage in Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians where he *talks about* the Return of Jesus Christ, calling it "the day of the Lord." You know the one. That's where he also *talks about* the appearance of the Antichrist and about the "deluding influence" "God will send" on all those

who “did not receive the love of the truth.” Here, read it for yourself:

Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for {it will not come} unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he may be revealed. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. And then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; {that is,} the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. And for this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.

(2 Thessalonians 2:1–12)

“The one characteristic that all forms of paranoia have in common is the fact that paranoid people can be ascertained as suffering from ‘false beliefs.’”

You would think that any sane, rational human being who believes in Jesus Christ would read that passage and question whether or not they have that “love of the truth” Paul mentions. But do you know what the ignorant do instead? They go to Sunday School on Sunday, not having read the lesson, not having prepared themselves in any way, and they enthusiastically enter into discussion concerning things about which they know little if anything at all.

That seems strange to me. Does it to you? It’s obvious when they do that, they have no particular “love of the truth.” But it’s also almost as if their particular case of ignorant is fostering the early stages of mental illness. They seem to think they’re someone they aren’t. You know—they seem “deluded.” What is it? Do they think they are some well-educated biblical scholar, thoroughly qualified to discuss the subtle nuances of the biblical text at the drop of a hat?

Obviously, I’m exaggerating a bit. But there’s a truth there that needs to be examined. I just thought, “Why not try a little sarcasm? It might be fun!” And it was. But now that I’ve been pugnacious, poked fun at more than one sacred cow, and gotten some so stirred up they stopped reading, I’d like to pursue the subject of mental illness with the rest of you.

Lies Can Be Deadly

If what Paul had to say about the “deluding influence” “God will send” so that some will “believe what is false” is true (and it is), then some of those who are now suffering a serious bout with the bug that carries ignorance already are, or will soon become, the victim of some even more devastating delusional beliefs as well. Some are even now skirting the fringes of a spiritual/mental illness I call “spiritual paranoia,” and I expect they will begin to exhibit even more startlingly aberrant behavior in days to come.

To understand all this better, let’s take a closer look at those among us who suffer from delusions. For example, we’ve all heard about people who imagine they are Jesus Christ. Still others think they are Napoleon, the Virgin Mary, or some other important historical

“Our spiritual/physical being must somehow exist simultaneously as part of a reality that has both spiritual and physical aspects.”

figure. If we can better understand the basics of such extreme delusion, perhaps we can get a better handle on the “deluding influence” “God will send” “so that they might believe what is false.”

What Paul describes and what happens to those who suffer mental delusions sound remarkably similar to me. If somebody thinks they are Napoleon, it’s obvious they “believe what is false.” Napoleon’s been dead since 1821.

What is it about these particular people—the people who think they are Napoleon, for example—that clearly identifies them as delusional? To answer that, let’s go about it logically and define a “rational” person as a person whose STATE OF MIND corresponds with his STATE OF BEING. By that I mean a rational person who is broke and homeless (STATE OF BEING) will readily admit (STATE OF MIND) he is broke and homeless. That contrasts with a delusional broke and homeless person who believes he is the late John D. Rockefeller with all his millions and a mansion in Ormand Beach, Florida.

Now, if we think of a rational person as one whose STATE OF MIND accurately reflects his/her STATE OF BEING, delusions aren’t all that difficult to spot. For example, when I was growing up, I knew an individual who thought he could play a “mean guitar.” Nobody else saw it quite the way he did, but that didn’t seem to faze him. He played his “mean guitar” slightly off beat and out of tune anyway. He was (apparently) mildly deluded.

Psychiatric literature tells us lots of otherwise normal people occasionally suffer mild delusions. So you probably know someone who slips into delusional beliefs once in a while. Among them are people you may know who are prone to “take things personally” when you mean nothing at all by a specific comment.

Psychologically, people who have been clinically diagnosed as delusional are called “paranoid.” We normally think of paranoid people as those who believe somebody is “out to get them.” Actually, paranoid people—we are not discussing here paranoid schizophrenics—may have one of several different types of delusional beliefs. The persecutory variety is just the most common.

However, the one characteristic that all forms of paranoia have in common is the fact that paranoid people can be ascertained as suffering from false beliefs. That is, their perception of reality has been distorted by some unfounded belief(s). These are normally things they have chosen to believe as a mental defense mechanism in an attempt to deal with unbearable feelings of guilt and/or frustration.

“Hearing is our most important physical sense when it comes to our perception of spiritual reality.”

Paranoia is sometimes a seriously progressive mental illness. In those instances where it begins to progress, paranoid individuals constantly seek confirmation of their beliefs. In so doing, they find it easy to misinterpret what others do and say. They filter their perception of reality through their own rigidly fixed belief system—misinterpreting anything that might contradict what they already believe.

As a result, over time, as the delusional beliefs become absolute conviction, it becomes difficult to provide psychiatric aid. Any attempt on the part of a psychiatrist to correct their distorted view of reality is taken as further confirmation of their erroneous beliefs, thus allowing those beliefs to remain firmly in place.

By understanding how and why a paranoiac clings to abnormal mental defense mechanisms, we can begin to see clearly the danger Paul says will face those who have no “love of the truth” in the time of the Antichrist. Just as with the paranoiac, delusional beliefs will even-

tually entrap those today who refuse to accept an accurate perception of spiritual reality. Their false beliefs will allow them no opportunity to escape back to rationality. But how could that happen?

Blind Guides and Pharisees

To begin, let’s consider the complete spectrum of reality—both physical and spiritual—as a single reality continuum, rather than as two separate realms. That will help us get a better idea of how the delusion Paul mentioned will work to engulf the majority of our own day.

If you stop to think about it, the physical and the spiritual must somehow co-exist as part of one unified reality. Scripture tells us we are spirit and flesh in one being. Therefore, (although some will see here an apparent circular reasoning because we have not yet validated the Scriptures as a reliable witness) our spiritual/physical being must somehow exist simultaneously as part of a reality that has both spiritual and physical aspects.

The Church council held at Nicæa in A.D. 325 made some specific statements concerning the issue of how the physical and spiritual overlap. Therefore, if I tried to fully explain how that is myself, I could easily find myself labeled by that council as a heretic. So we will deal only with the obvious here and leave it to those less concerned with orthodoxy to speculate on the matter further.

Besides assuming spiritual and physical somehow co-exist as part of the same reality, we must also presume our knowledge of spiritual reality can only be accurately attained and confirmed via the five senses of the physical body: hearing, seeing, tasting, touching, and smelling. It seems obvious to me that since these provide our only contact with

“Delusional beliefs will eventually entrap those today who refuse to accept an accurate perception of spiritual reality.”

physical reality, they must also provide our only contact with spiritual reality.

Unfortunately, we must disallow perception of spiritual reality gained via some sixth sense or by “out of body” experiences unless the information so gained can somehow be objectively confirmed as accurate. We must do that simply because not everyone has had the benefit of such sensory perception, whether real or imagined, and those who have had such experiences have difficulty validating their particular interpretation of the things perceived.

It seems obvious also that hearing is our most important physical sense when it comes to our perception of spiritual reality. As should be clear to all but the most argumentative, that’s because we cannot confirm with certainty that we can see, taste, touch, or smell spiritual reality. Consequently, we are reduced to listening.

“Our only hope is that Someone Who can see spiritual reality would consent to tell us what it is LIKE.”

Our only hope is that Someone Who can see spiritual reality would consent to tell us what it is LIKE. Note that carefully: If we can verify (which we can) that Someone Who can see that part of reality has ever deigned to speak to us about it, He could have only told us what it is LIKE. That is because, never having seen it for ourselves, we could only understand it in terms of what we have seen in physical reality.

The situation we face concerning our perception of the spiritual side of reality can be illustrated by the old story about the three blind men describing an elephant. One felt the tail and said the elephant was like a rope. The second felt a leg and thought the elephant was like a tree. The last felt the elephant’s trunk and was convinced the elephant was like a snake.

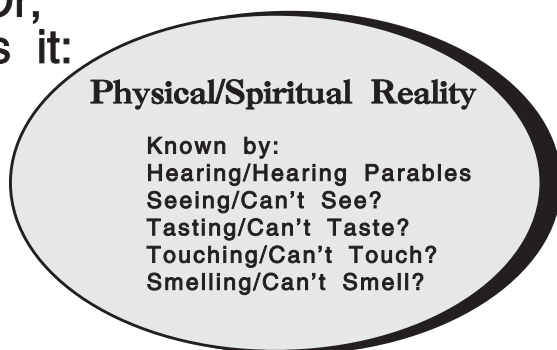
In our case, however, it is doubtful any today can offer sufficient evidence to prove they have ever felt a tangible

How Do You Know?

Is it:



Or,
is it:



Or,
is it:

(Fill in the blank)

We normally think of Heaven as a place far removed from us, a place where God and the angels dwell. And we tend to think of our existence here on Earth as completely separate from the spiritual realm we call Heaven. But physical and spiritual obviously overlap somehow because Jesus often cast out spiritual beings (demons) who had taken up illegitimate residence in physical bodies. We can safely assume, therefore, that there is all around us (and in us) a spiritual reality we cannot see.

In the wisdom of God, an accurate understanding of the parables of Scripture allows us to clearly see that spiritual reality. Therefore, those True Believers who regain their spiritual sight through mastery of *The Teaching* will gradually begin to see through the pretense of superficial godliness the Pretenders have used to cloak their vile, unrepentant spirits.

Pretenders don't know they are spiritually naked (Rev. 3:17). They think they are fully clothed in the theological deception they have woven for themselves. Therefore, as True Believers begin to see the Pretenders' pretense for what it is, they can expect

Pretenders to respond just as Isaiah said some 2,700 years ago: "Who sees us?" (Isa. 29:15) and: "No one sees me!" (Isa. 47:10). Finally, the Pretenders will voice a complete denial of the Truth: "You don't see!" (Isa. 30:9-10).

True Believers can also expect some of the more deceitful Pretenders to use *The Teaching* itself as a shroud, pretending to believe, yet pointing a "holier than thou" finger at those who openly reject it, those they consider less "spiritual" than themselves. Don't be deceived. These too will be "weeded out" before the banquet begins (Matt. 22:11 ff.).

God fully intends His People in these Last Days to gain full use of their spiritual sight and use it to protect the holiness of His Holy Spirit within them. You who are True Believers will "again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between the one who serves God and the one who does not serve Him" (Mal. 3:18). Consequently, there will be no place for the Pretender to hide among you, distorting the Truth and enticing you to join them in their hypocrisy and arrogant contempt for the God of Wrath. □

spiritual reality as the blind men did the elephant. (Note: I am not saying it does not happen, just that it cannot be confirmed.) By contrast, however, we can show there is solid evidence that some—the Prophets and Apostles—have *heard* it accurately described.

That's where the Scriptures become of utmost importance to us. Scripture purports to be REVELATION provided to us by God—the One it claims can clearly see spiritual reality—for the specific purpose of telling us what spiritual reality is LIKE. And just like the three blind men who described the elephant, Scripture describes spiritual reality as being LIKE various things we can see in physical reality—a tree, a house, a city, a mountain, etc. It does so by using *parabolic imagery*. (See "It's Not Difficult to See, Comparatively Speaking" in this issue.)

Since we cannot see the spiritual side of reality, we must accept the fact that we are blind with regard to it, just like the three blind men mentioned above. And that is exactly how the prophetic parables of the Scriptures describe us. For example, Jesus used that *parabolic imagery* to ridicule the pompous, self-assured theologians of His Own day because they did not understand God's REVELATION concerning spiritual reality:

"Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever swears by the temple, that is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obligated.' You fools and blind men; which is more important, the gold, or the temple that sanctified the gold? And, 'Whoever swears by the altar, {that} is nothing, but whoever swears by the offering upon it, he is obligated.' You blind men, which is more important, the offering or the altar that sanctifies the offering?"
(Matthew 23:16-19)

In like manner, the Early Church Father Hippolytus, referring to the same *parabolic imagery*, depicted the Prophets as providing spiritual eyes for the rest of us:

For as the blessed prophets were made, so to speak, eyes for us, they foresaw through faith the mysteries

of the word, and became ministers of these things also to succeeding generations, not only reporting the past, but also announcing the present and the future, so that the prophet might not appear to be one only for the time being, but might also predict the future for all generations, and so be reckoned a (true) prophet But first of all they were endowed with wisdom by the Word, and then again were rightly instructed in the future by means of visions. And then, when thus themselves fully convinced, they spake those things which were revealed by God to them alone, and concealed from all others. For with what reason should the prophet be called a prophet, unless he in spirit foresaw the future?

(*The AntiChrist*, p. 29)

If the REVELATION God provided through the Prophets is supposed to somehow allow us insight into the spiritual side of our unified spiritual/physical reality, however, we have a problem: Nobody accurately understands what the Prophets said.

The Apostles understood the Old Testament prophetic message because Jesus revealed it to them. (See “Where Are Jesus’ Disciples?” *The Voice of Elijah*, April 1991.) But the Early Church lost the Apostles’ understanding of the message of the Prophets—what I call *The Apostolic Teaching*—early on, as I have repeatedly stated in the pages of this newsletter. (See “The Protestant Confession: The Church Lost *The Teaching*,” *The Voice of Elijah*, January 1992.) So we now must admit one most unhappy fact. The blind are again leading the blind, and both are about to fall into a pit just as Jesus said:

“Most people are content to believe anything that can be made to fit in with what they already believe.”

“Scripture describes spiritual reality as being LIKE various things we can see in physical reality—a tree, a house, a city, a mountain, etc.”

But He answered and said, “Every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant shall be rooted up. Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit.”

(*Matthew 15:13–14*)

Just a parenthetical aside: Jesus’ recommendation is still relevant today. If someone refuses to see the Truth that you see in the information you receive from *The Voice of Elijah*, “Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind.” You must realize they are in the process of being “rooted up.” If that be true (and it is), it wouldn’t be wise for you to try to ensure the survival of a “plant” that God intends to burn. You might find yourself with bare roots as well. Spend your time working with those who have ears to hear.

Living in Denial

If the only “Way” one will ever know the Truth about the spiritual side of reality is to understand what the Prophets have to tell us about it, you would assume everybody would want to make certain they understand what the Prophets actually said. That is not the case.

People suffering from delusional beliefs concerning spiritual reality (“spiritual paranoia”) simply are not open to considering a new viewpoint that might reveal the fallacy of their current beliefs. There are a lot of people like that. In fact, some feel seriously threatened by anything that even remotely suggests they believe something about spiritual reality that isn’t true.

With the multiplied hundreds of different theological doctrines in vogue to-

day, however, somebody has to be wrong. Those who claim otherwise are merely admitting they don’t believe true knowledge of spiritual reality can even be attained. Guess which side of the fence they are on? Certainly not on the side of those who have a “love of the truth.”

To understand why anyone would feel no urgent need to seek a true understanding of the prophetic message, you must first be willing to admit to yourself that most people have no “love of the truth.” That includes the majority who fill church pews on Sunday morning.

Most people are content to believe anything that can be made to fit in with what they already believe. It doesn’t take an Einstein to realize that puts them in the group of people most vulnerable to the “deluding influence” the Apostle Paul told us “God will send” on those who “did not receive the love of the Truth.”

“The blind are again leading the blind, and both are about to fall into a pit”

Furthermore, you should also admit that those who feel threatened by beliefs contrary to their own are probably using their current theological beliefs (whatever they might be) to alleviate deep-seated feelings of guilt. They could easily rid themselves of their guilt by turning to God in complete repentance, but they *choose* to believe a delusion instead.

A good many readers just left us because the Truth of that last statement hit too close to home. If you are a True Believer, stay with me. Before I’m through, I intend to point out a couple of the delusions the Pretenders favor most.

Two Steps to Spiritual Sanity

Just as paranoiacs filter their perception of physical reality through their own totally unfounded belief system, changing everything to confirm their existing beliefs, so too the “spiritual para-

“The sad circumstance facing the currently deluded is that they are about to be lured into believing an even more fantastic delusion.”

noiacs” in the Church today adamantly refuse to accept any understanding of the Scripture that contradicts what they already believe. Why? Because these people aren’t seeking knowledge of the Truth, they are bent on confirming their delusion. If that be so (and it is), they are leaving themselves wide open to the “deluding influence” Paul said “God will send.”

The sad circumstance facing the currently deluded is that they are about to be lured into believing an even more fantastic delusion. (See *The AntiChrist*.) The inauguration of that delusion can only be drawing closer every day. So what do you do? How can anyone escape the mass “spiritual paranoia” that surrounds us?

The first step on one’s way back to spiritual sanity is the recognition that those affected by paranoia (whether involving a perception of either physical or spiritual reality) fall into two categories. Each category exhibits its own distinct agenda and concerns. It will help you to understand why these people act as they do if you are aware of their concerns.

The first category of paranoiacs includes those who avidly construct or firmly cling to false beliefs because of their own desperate need to escape feelings of guilt and/or frustration. The paranoiacs in this category will cling tenaciously to their delusion no matter what evidence you present that refutes it. They will, in fact, if they feel too threatened, lash out at the person who presents evidence contrary to what they already believe.

Notice I said they will “lash out at the person.” *The Voice of Elijah* receives letters from such individuals all the time. The letters seldom provide rational argumentation. On the contrary, if they don’t consist of a simple rambling statement of the author’s own beliefs,

they normally argue *ad hominem*, questioning motives or methods rather than refuting what we have written. Most often the writer simply says he/she cannot understand what they have read, attributing that difficulty to the style of writing rather than to his/her own inability to see through his/her own firmly held beliefs. Most of them also engage in a bit of theological “nit-picking” over some minor point in order to demonstrate their prowess with regard to biblical interpretation.

Be forewarned. If you believe what you have read in this newsletter and the publications of The Elijah Project, you will undoubtedly have opportunity to observe many who demonstrate an extremely vehement rejection of the Truth you have heard. When that happens, just ask yourself, “Why would anyone become so angry at the beliefs of another?”

Completely rational people don’t act that way. Christians around the world live amicably beside Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus, whose views they consider totally erroneous. Why then would they find one particular Christian view (out of hundreds) so threatening?

Consider your own circumstances. If you can see the logic presented in this newsletter and still not find the views of other Christians personally irritating, why would anyone respond angrily toward you just because you believe what you find written here? The answer lies in the fact that these people are hiding in a lie, desperately hiding from themselves and God. In their case, it’s best to follow the admonition of Jesus: “Let them alone.”

The second category of paranoiacs consists of those who have been enticed into accepting the erroneous beliefs of others. Fortunately, those in this category have no strong emotional investment in the delusion. That is, they do not depend on the delusion to protect them from their own guilt and/or frustration.

These people have simply been convinced by others that a lie is the Truth because they were unaware of any acceptable alternative. Once they hear a rational refutation of the delusion they have believed, they are free to perceive reality as it actually is. Those who have been successfully “deprogrammed” after having been recruited to join a cult fall into this category.

Those in the first category cannot be reached by this ministry, and we will not even try to reach them. These people actively promote their own delusional beliefs concerning spiritual reality and vehemently reject any understanding that contradicts the false beliefs they hold dear. Consequently, we have nothing to say to them. But unfortunately, since those in this category use their false beliefs as a defense mechanism, they find it necessary to actively campaign against beliefs they find threatening. We already know many of them find ours most threatening.

Some of those in the second category can be reached by us, but only if they have a “love of the truth.” That is so simply because unless one is actively seeking knowledge of the Truth, one has no motivation to question the beliefs they hold. So even though those in this second category have no great emotional need to defend their current beliefs, neither do most of them have any good reason to question them. Since they have no “love of the truth,” they consider one false belief concerning spiritual reality to be just as good as any other.

That being the case, I address my remarks generally to those of you who do not find this ministry overly threatening. Obviously, every True Believer will be wary of any new teaching because they understand how important the Truth is. However, they will also be able to see how Satan plans to get good mileage out of the “cult” issue by playing on that particular element in the Pretenders’ deep-seated “spiritual paranoia.”

Satan has carefully orchestrated high-profile cult fiascos in recent years to cultivate in the Church an almost pathological aversion to any ministry that teaches anything more than

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well-worn Christian clichés. He is now going to play to that mind-set in an all-out attempt to prevent the Truth of the Old Testament Gospel from being heard.

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True Believers won't be deceived. How can there be a “cult” when there is no church, clique, club, commune, or other organization you can join? All we offer is information—information you will need if you intend to avoid the delusion that is coming.

All that aside, however, within the second group of people, I am appealing directly to those of you who have a “love of the truth” because the Holy Spirit resides within you. You need to thoroughly examine your beliefs to see where you have been enticed into believing a lie by those around you who actively promote delusional beliefs. I will here point out but two of their most dangerous beliefs.

Two Big Lies

No one belief in the Church today has more pulling power than the belief that God loves everyone and will freely forgive any and all who mouth the simple words of the sinner's prayer. In practice, that *means* the vilest sinner can unrepentantly go through the ritual confession, yet continue in a life of hidden (or even sometimes open) sin, and still be accepted as a Christian if he shows up for Sunday services once in a while.

And, of course, it doesn't hurt if he occasionally drops a few dollars in the collection plate either. The motto seems to be, “Catch the fast train folks, there is always room for another sinner.” Unfortunately, the fast train is for saints only. And saintly people are few and far between these days.

The Truth is, if you have not honestly repented, “God doesn't love you, and He doesn't have a wonderful plan for your life.” It is true He loves “the world”—that is, His Creation (Jn. 3:16). But He hates the individual evildoer (Ps. 5:5), and unfortunately that's what we all are until we experience the new birth (Rom. 3:23). Despite Pretenders' claims to the contrary, not many have had the pleasure of that unique experience.

It is also true God will willingly accept those who turn to Him, but only if they turn to Him in total repentance. However, sorrow for sin isn't even emphasized in the Church today. Consequently, most “Christians” have no idea that God demands a contrite confession of, and honest apology for, the sins they have committed. Instead, they have been taught that God is a God of love—totally unconditional, forgiving love. That is a lie. (See “Oh, So Many Four-Letter Words!” and “On Fairy Tales and Holy Hell,” *The Voice of Elijah*, July 1992.)

The Early Church knew the God of the Old Testament sent Jesus Christ, His Son, to die as a sacrifice for sins. That God is clearly described as a vengeful, jealous God (Ex. 20:5) Who shows lovingkindness only to those who love Him and keep His commandments (Ex. 20:6).

Contrary to what the Pretenders would have you believe, God has not changed (James 1:17). Moreover, a God Who would demand a human sacrifice for sin does not strike me as a namby-pamby individual you can walk all over and still expect to come away unscathed.

God's requirement is nothing less than perfect obedience. If you cannot meet that requirement on your own, it would seem logical that you should find Someone Who can help you. The oft-heard excuse, “After all, I'm only human!” is a cop-out, not a solution. Those who glibly use it are ignorant of the fact that:

*It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.
(Hebrews 10:31)*

Everybody seems to assume they can treat God like a doormat, walking on Him continually and using Him only when they need to publicly clean off

some of the more unacceptable dirt. It just ain't that way folks!

Until things began to change drastically around 1860, the historic Christian view of God was that of an angry, vengeful God who would not hesitate to consign the wicked to an eternity in hell. You don't hear that view of Him preached much anymore. You hear mainly about the god of love, the one who completely understands that you just cannot stop sinning. It is a convenient delusion, one that was originally intended to make the God of wrath more acceptable to the refined elite. But it is still foundational to Satan's final grand delusion.

Look at the situation of those who believe this lie. If God is angry with them because they have not truly repented and turned away from sin, yet they believe God has accepted them “warts and all,” does their STATE OF MIND accurately reflect their STATE OF BEING? Not by a long shot! Their perception of spiritual reality is as distorted as those who have been clinically diagnosed as paranoid because they have a distorted perception of physical reality.

***“God's requirement is
nothing less than
perfect obedience.”***

Make no mistake. There are millions of Pretenders in the Church today. Every one of them is suffering the classic symptoms of delusional paranoia—a “spiritual paranoia.” And God fully intends to send even more serious delusional beliefs their way.

Having said that, I must now point out there is already in place a second, perhaps more dangerous, belief that Satan has spread throughout the Church only within the last century and a half. Prior to that time, it had no currency at all in Christian theology. It certainly was not a part of Early Church theology. That is the belief that the Jews will be restored to a position of prominence in God's plan for the Final Days, the belief that “all Israel will be saved.” I have shown in *Not All Israel Is Israel* that the original basis for that belief is ill-founded. Based

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on the information one can find there, logic alone dictates that the Jews today hold no more favorable position in God’s eyes than do the Gentiles.

Don’t be deceived, however. God still considers the Jews to be “dedicated” and “holy” to Him alone. (See “Touch Not the Lord’s Anointed,” *The Voice of Elijah*, October 1990.) But in that they are no different than anything else that God has ever placed under the “ban.”

The writings of the Early Church Fathers Irenæus and Hippolytus disclose for us why the current Christian view of God’s plan for Israel is so prevalent in the Church today: Satan would have us believe the Jews will play a central role in days to come because he plans to use that belief to rally deluded Christians around him when he comes to power as the Antichrist. (See *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist* and/or *The AntiChrist*.)

In refutation of the commonly-held view, I have shown in *The Mystery of Scripture* how Jewish theology derives from lies Satan managed to institute among the Jews at the time of Antiochus Epiphanes (ca. 167 B.C.). Furthermore, Jewish expectations concerning the coming messiah are a direct outgrowth of those lies. That’s why Jewish expectations concerning their messiah fit together so perfectly with the widely held, but delusional, Christian belief in the central role of the Jews in the Final Days.

Satan has (in the wisdom of God) been allowed to corrupt both Jewish and Christian beliefs in preparation for the “deluding influence” “God will send” in these Last Days. Together, the lies believed by Jews and Christians provide the underpinnings of one seamless delusion. That delusion will allow the Antichrist to be widely accepted by Christians as the legitimate messiah of both Jews and Christians. (See “Questions & Answers,” *The Voice of Elijah*, April 1992.)

You should understand that what I have just stated is not entirely, nor uniquely, my own view. It was first set down in writing over eighteen hundred

years ago by two leaders in the Church who were spiritual descendants of the Apostle John, the John who wrote the Book of Revelation. You know, the one book in the Bible with the most to say about the Antichrist. You can read what they had to say in *The AntiChrist* or *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*. Then you can make an informed decision as to whether or not you believe what you have read here.

“Satan would have us believe the Jews will play a central role in days to come because he plans to use that belief to rally deluded Christians around him when he comes to power as the Antichrist.”

Take as long as you need to decide, but realize this: the responsibility for your decision is yours alone. If you ask others what they believe concerning what you have read, and then accept their decision as your own, you have not relieved yourself of the responsibility for deciding what is true. You have only sought to weasel out of responsibility for your own beliefs.

For those of you who just can’t decide what to believe, I recommend, as a refuge of last resort, that you pretend you never read this. That way, you can decide without having to decide. No matter what you do, however, I’m certain you’ll eventually answer to God for your decision. That’s just “*The Way*” it is with responsibility.

Are You Still With Me?

I now want to speak specifically to those of you who have the “love of the

truth” concerning which the Apostle Paul wrote so long ago. This is the time for action on your part if you intend to escape the delusional snares that Satan has so craftily laid over past centuries.

Perhaps you don’t yet know whether to believe what you have read in these pages. That’s understandable. Sometimes it gets a bit too unbelievable even for me, and I’ve been living with God’s calling for twenty-six years. All I ask is that you look at the evidence I present. If you do so honestly, the things you read piecemeal in this newsletter and the publications of The Elijah Project will eventually come together for you in one coherent whole.

The least you can do right now is begin to examine carefully your own beliefs and the things you hear others teach. If you do, you will probably discover, as I did some twenty years ago, that what you believe is nothing more than an eclectic collection of beliefs (many of which are lies and half-truths) you have picked up haphazardly over the years.

Why not begin to replace your current amalgamation of disparate beliefs with a coherent, integrated biblical theology that will amazingly (in the wisdom of God) leave the vast majority of your present Christian beliefs intact?

That can happen because your current Christian beliefs are based on doctrines derived from the theological discipline known as systematic theology. Biblical theology doesn’t contradict the tenets of systematic theology, it merely rounds out the biblical basis for that theology. Therefore, it will provide the information you need in order to discern which of two (or three, or four) currently held, but contradictory, Christian beliefs is true.

I’ll provide the information. You decide whether it is true. But you can be certain of this. No matter what you as one individual do, those who have ears to hear will hear. Because you just can’t stop that fast train. It will leave the station right on time with everybody listed in the manifest on board. ■

How Quickly They Do Blaspheme

There is an interesting passage of Scripture in the Gospel of Mark that doesn't get much notice any more. I mention it only because of its relevance to the things you find written in these pages. Perhaps what I say here will help you better understand how God views certain things.

The scribes, on one occasion, were telling the people that Jesus was demon-possessed—that He was able to cast out demons only because he was controlled by Satan, the ruler of demons. Jesus' response was an iron-clad promise:

*“Truly I say to you, all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter; but **whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin**”—because they were saying, “He has an unclean spirit.”*

(Mark 3:28–30)

Those are harsh words. They should make you stop and think. Jesus told the people the scribes had just consigned themselves voluntarily to eternal damnation because they were willing to openly attribute a powerful demonstration of the Holy Spirit's working to Satan. That's interesting; isn't it? The educated theologians of Jesus' day unknowingly committed blasphemy of the Holy Spirit by attributing the working of the Holy Spirit to someone else.

I wonder if that someone else always has to be Satan? Maybe blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is just the attribution of the Holy Spirit's working to *anyone else*. Maybe it is actually just verbally denying the fact that the Holy Spirit is working. That gives you cause to wonder; doesn't it? It's enough to make anyone with the least bit of fear of God think twice before they casually dismiss someone's claim that the Holy Spirit is working through them.

That's why you won't catch me naming names when I *talk about* Pretenders. That's why I *talk about* Satan's lies and half-truths instead. Pretenders are perfectly capable of identifying themselves as liars by adamantly holding to Satan's delusions if they so choose. That way, I don't have to make any claim at all concerning their works. They are perfectly capable of doing that all by themselves. And they will. Obdurately, I might add.

But let's turn this around and take another look from a different perspective. I've said repeatedly that God called me to do what I'm doing now in restoring *The Teaching* the Early Church lost so long ago. I've also stated I haven't a clue as to how God does what He does in helping me fulfill that calling. But I do know His Holy Spirit is involved. That much is clear.

Now wouldn't it be something if all those who so readily attribute what I'm doing to some egotistical motivation on my part have just committed blasphemy of the Holy Spirit? What if the Holy Spirit really is working, and they

claim it's just me ...? If you are a True Believer, you don't need me to spell it out for you. It is not a pleasant thing to think about.

Don't bother trying to explain all that to Pretenders, however. Pretenders wouldn't understand what the fuss is all about. Their god isn't the jealous, vengeful God of the Old Testament Who sent His Son to die for our sins. He is instead an imaginary god who loves everyone so much that he sent his son to die just for them so they can continue to do whatever they want. And since they publicly gush about how great he is, he doesn't care that they remain pious, filthy sinners. So how can you expect them to understand that, when that jealous God of the Old Testament does something through the working of His Holy Spirit, He doesn't take it lightly when someone attributes what He has accomplished to someone else?

That's not too difficult to understand; is it? Since their god isn't the God of Wrath described in the Old Testament, they don't need to be concerned about such things. They have an imaginary loving, all-forgiving god who would never, ever, ever say “No!” to them, much less discipline them for something they've done wrong. Do you know why? Because he loves them soooooooooooooooooooooo much; that's why. He thinks they are just the most wonderful “Christian” folks. And he undoubtedly read Dr. Spock's book.

Maybe that's why they act like spoiled brats, demanding their imaginary god perform at their whim. They even send money to this person or that so they can (magically) get more money back. Can you imagine? They honestly (actually it's dishonestly) believe they can demand (they say “claim”) whatever they want! Ordering their god to give them things they don't need because, get this, they are “children of God.” That's rich! What submission! Act like that around a Father Who really cares, and you should at least get a reprimand. I wonder if they like quail?

It just occurred to me: If the Pretenders' god isn't the God of Wrath described in the Old Testament, why would God's wrath be mentioned thirty times in their New Testament? Good question, huh? Maybe it's because the New Testament isn't theirs. Maybe it wasn't even written to them. Maybe it was written just for True Believers. Maybe they've been reading someone else's mail all this time, thinking all the good parts applied to them when, in fact, those good parts apply only to True Believers. Maybe.

But I'm sure they have a perfectly good explanation. Maybe “wrath” doesn't *mean* “wrath” at all. You know, maybe it's sort of like when they say “fear of God” just *means* “reverence for God.” Maybe. Just maybe.

We True Believers have so many questions. Yet you Pretenders have so few straight answers. ■

Q & A nswers

The Voice of Elijah publishes articles based on the findings of *The Elijah Project*, a private research group headed by Larry D. Harper. In this column we seek answers to general-interest questions concerning the findings, purpose, and philosophy of this project.

Editor: You mentioned in the article "Nobody in Their Right Mind Would Even Want to Be Napoleon!" that **The Voice of Elijah** receives mail from readers who denigrate you personally. Does such criticism ever bother you?

Elijah: Yes and no. It bothers me that someone can read what I write and fail to understand even the basics of my explanation or to at least grasp the *significance* of some obvious statement I've made. It also bothers me that those who write to say they don't believe what I've written don't even try to refute it logically. I wish they would. I've learned a lot from those few who have questioned some specific point.

For example, after you received a letter from a subscriber back in February or March, I began to consider the questions he had asked. [Editor: He's referring to the letter from Allen F. mentioned in "Questions & Answers," *The Voice of Elijah*, April 1992.] I don't *mean* they were asked in any negative sense, but they made me see things I already knew about the Old Testament Book of Daniel, the Intertestamental Period, and the writings of the Early Church Fathers in a much more comprehensive way. The result was the publication of *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist* and now the condensed version of that book, *The AntiChrist*.

But to answer your question, no, negative statements made about me personally in the letters you receive don't bother me. I've known for over twenty years I would eventually have to face that type of response from those in the Church who don't want to understand the Truth.



However, you haven't seen anything yet that compares to what you will see eventually. Satan hates the Truth. He has spent too many centuries cultivating lies and half-truths to let go easily. Believe me, he has plenty of his own in the Church to rail against me and what I teach. Paradoxically, however, in the wisdom of God, what Satan's own say and do will only help me accomplish the very thing God sent me to do, so why should it bother me? In a sense, they're my helpers. We're all, in our own way, going to "weed out" Pretenders. They have their "ways" of convincing other Pretenders not to listen to me; I have mine. God's will is ultimately going to be done no matter what they say or do, so why should I care how they do what has to be done? Let's get to it.

Some of those who write to criticize me are just responding to intentional provocation on my part anyway. So I have no right to be hurt by what they say. It goes with the territory: "If you wear a chip on your shoulder, somebody's going to try to knock it off." I have to get Pretenders to reject what I say, so I deliberately say things, or say things in a certain way, to provoke them. Most often, I deliberately put on an adamant, dogmatic tone. That draws out the contentious because they love to dispute. True Believers aren't contentious. Therefore, it's better for them that contentious Pretenders decide early on they have encountered somebody on the lunatic fringe. If I wanted anything from Pretenders, I suppose what they have to say might bother me. But I don't want or need their money. I don't want or need their acceptance. I don't care what they think or say about me. All I want is to accomplish what God called me to do. People can praise me or curse me; it's all the same. Theirs is just one more opinion, and we all know the world is full of opinions.

To understand how strongly I feel about this, you have to realize God called me over a quarter of a century ago. I was only eighteen. I had my whole life before me. But after He called, I had a choice: I could either answer that call and give up my own plans and ambitions, or I could ignore it. I tried to ignore it, but I simply could not pretend it never happened. So I agreed to do whatever God wanted. That was in spite of the fact I had no idea what He had called me to do. I now know He has called me to do one specific thing, but I spent nearly twenty-five years preparing. Preparing for what? I had no idea for the first eight years. Then, in the spring of 1974, I got just a glimpse of the incredible amount of information that lay hidden in the Hebrew Scriptures. Once I saw that, God's calling consumed me. All I have wanted since is to understand more.

Fifteen years after God called me, I began to realize Pretenders were everywhere in the Church, deceiving True Believers with ridiculous theological doctrines, doctrines that had never been held in the entire history of the Church. Finally, two years ago I started doing what I'm doing now, writing down what I understand to inform others of Satan's deception. But only this past spring did I finally begin to comprehend the broader implications of what God called me to do.

After spending twenty-five years preparing, do you really think what someone says in a letter is going to make me back off now? Not likely. So what are they going to do? Take my life? They can't take something I don't have, don't want, and certainly don't need. I gave up this life on August 17, 1966, when my whole life was ahead of me. Now that more than half my life is behind me, there is nothing for me down here except doing what God called me to do. When I've finished all that I live for in this life, I'll happily move on to the next.

I didn't ask God to call me, and I certainly didn't expect His calling when it came. But I have done, and I will continue to do, whatever it takes to fulfill that calling. I have to admit I enjoy what I'm doing right now. There is a certain adrenalin rush you get when you realize you've engaged the enemy, and he's prepared to stand and fight. I felt that rush in the firefights we had with NVA Regulars in Vietnam.

Although I've never felt anything close to that intense exhilaration since I left the field over there, the feeling I sometimes get when I'm writing is similar. It's exciting to know that some specific thing you are writing is going to provide freedom for countless True Believers. I can see that what I'm doing now is warfare. It's just that my weapons are words and ideas, not a rifle and grenades. However, Satan and his lies are the enemy, not those he has deluded. How can I be offended by what someone has written about me when I know they don't have the first clue as to the meaning of the Scriptures? They're locked into somebody's "conventional wisdom."

God taught me a lot in Vietnam, but the one thing I will never forget is how to look death right in the eye and not blink. All it takes is innate stubbornness channeled into sheer determination. I spent a year over there learning that, so if it makes anyone feel better to send a few nasty words my way, by all means let 'em fly. They don't even compare. And they certainly won't make me back down. How does that saying go? "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me."

Editor: *Let me grant equal time to those letters we get from people who are excited about what they read. We get as many, if not more, of those. How do they make you feel?*

Elijah: I haven't read all the letters you've received, but some of the things I've already said still apply. It doesn't matter whether people praise me or curse me; I'm still the same person. I've still got the same job to do. What's important is that I know where I stand before God. That's where the Old Testament Gospel message becomes crucial. It tells you specifically how you can know where you stand. It also reveals there are millions of people today who think they have a relationship with the *Living God* but don't. They have an imaginary relationship with an imaginary god of their own creation. That's because they lack an accurate understanding of the revelation God has provided. So how do I know the person who writes glowing praises of me isn't enamored by the notion of some false god of their own imagination? If they are, they don't serve the same God I do. They hate the God of Wrath. I know. I've talked to some of them about Him. He's Someone they pretend doesn't exist.

I don't personally know the people who write letters to *The Voice of Elijah*; they could be anyone. I do know people do all sorts of things for all kinds of reasons. Some of those who respond positively probably think they understand what I've written; yet they don't understand at all. They've just interpreted it to fit in with what they already believe. Others may understand yet not have that all important "root" that Jesus *talked about*. [Editor: He's referring to Matthew 13:21.] I know some of your readers just want their ears "tickled." [Editor: 2 Timothy 4:3.] Others have already begun to use selected parts of what I teach to "tickle" the ears of others. No matter. It's all part of the elimination process. True Believers will clearly identify themselves. Eventually. Give 'em time.

Pretenders love excitement and entertainment. If something, even what I teach, seems exciting to them, they'll jump right in. But Pretenders won't find the excitement they crave in what I'm doing because I have no intention of providing them the collective gathering of Believers that would allow them to wallow in the deception that we're all in this together. We aren't, and we never will be. I'm not here to found some new denomination so that Pretenders can pat themselves on the back in the belief that "we alone" know what God is doing. I'm here to encourage individual True Believers to stand fast in their relationship to the *Living God*. The Pretenders don't have a relationship with anything but an imaginary god to begin with, so what I teach *means* little to them.

Everybody has to cultivate their own relationship to God through the mediation of Jesus Christ. Until I know beyond a shadow of doubt that a person has the required relationship with the *Living God* (and there are specific ways to determine that), I have to consider them just one more "tare" that needs to be "rooted up." But in the end, it won't matter all that much what I do or how I do it. By the time God is through "winnowing" His "harvest" in that hot, dry, desert "wind" that Hippolytus alludes to and the

Prophets describe in detail, there won't be a speck of "chaff" clinging to the "grain." [Editor: Hos. 13:15–16 as explained in Hippolytus' "On the Day of the Consummation." See also *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*, p. 198.]

Pretenders will be long gone from among True Believers by the time the Antichrist has completed his assigned task. In the meantime, however, anyone who thinks "*The Way*" to Heaven is broad enough for a group to travel two or three abreast is a fool. It's nothing more than a footpath. Individuals "walk" the same "path," but they do it one after the other, separately—alone, not together. That's just common sense. But it's also *parabolically* explained in the Prophets. The *parabolic image* says that only those with the mentality of the ancient Levites are going to make it. [Editor: He's alluding to Mal. 3:3.] The Levites were mercenaries—God's mercenaries. They were originally enlisted by God to kill their own brother if necessary to protect God's holiness. [Editor: Ex. 32:25–29.] That determination to live a life loyal to God alone is an alien mind-set in the Church today. Jesus described it in terms of one hating the members of his own family. [Editor: Matt. 10:34–39.] He was alluding to the mercenary mind-set of the Levites. People today think that if they get together often enough and say they're all going to Heaven together, that will make it so. It doesn't work that "way." The Truth is, the life of the True Believer is a solitary "walk," alone with God.

Moreover, a relationship to the eternally *Living* God of the Old Testament can only derive from an overwhelming fear of His wrath. That fear drives the True Believer to a totally honest repentance, confession of sin, and acceptance of God's provision of atonement through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, a strong and vibrant relationship to God can only be built through continual prayer and study of the Scriptures. I can't do any of that for you, and you certainly can't do it for me. I have to do it for myself. But if anyone intends to attain the resurrection of the just, they had best focus on but one thing—a relationship to the God revealed in the Scriptures—and make that their top priority. However, contrary to popular opinion, you don't really know God unless you have accurately understood what He has said about Himself in the Scriptures. A vague understanding of the message of the Scriptures may have been sufficient in the past. It won't be in days to come. Not many will accept that. But then, proverbial fools are a dime a dozen.

Editor: *You just mentioned the "proverbial fool." I know what you're referring to because I've heard you teach about the second message hidden in Scripture—the message concerning "The Way." Is there something you can tell The Voice of Elijah readers so they aren't left totally in the dark?*

Elijah: The proverbial fool is described in the Book of Proverbs, which, in large part, is just a collection of short parables. I say "in large part" because there is one rather lengthy parable in the first nine chapters. That's actually what the Hebrew word *mashal* means—"parable." The verbal form *means* "to compare" or "to be like" just like the Greek verb *paraballo*. The noun form of the Hebrew verb is normally translated "proverb," which is misleading. The Book of Proverbs (or better, The Book of Parables) is a collection of *parabolic statements* about wisdom and foolishness based on *parabolic imagery* explained elsewhere in the Prophets. Unfortunately, unless you know what is being compared in those parables, as well as why and how, knowing the book is a collection of parables doesn't help much.

Jesus alluded to the message of the Book of Proverbs every time he told a parable about a wise person or a foolish person. For example, "The wise man built his house upon the rock, and the foolish man built his house upon the sand." [Editor: Matt. 7:24–27.] What does that parable *mean*? Nothing, unless you already understand the *significance* of wisdom in the ancient Near Eastern religions. Even then, its precise *meaning* will elude you unless you also understand the parables of the Prophets associated with the Hebrew idiom "build a house" and can discern how they mock ancient mythological beliefs concerning the Flood. Then maybe, just maybe, you would have a vague notion of the parable's *meaning*. But you still wouldn't understand what Jesus *meant* unless you also understood the specific things He was comparing.

My favorite "wisdom" parable is the Parable of the Ten Virgins [Editor: Matt. 25:1–13.], although the parable I just mentioned has to be a close second. What was Jesus *talking about* when He told the story about the five wise and five foolish virgins? Nobody has an inkling unless they understand he has described specific details of an ancient Near Eastern sacred marriage ritual and tied together the messages one can find hidden in Proverbs and Song of Songs. I can't explain much more than that simply because those are things reserved for the time when the five "wise virgins" who have prepared their "lamps" go in to the "wedding feast."

But that's of no great concern now. There is so much more of the Old Testament Gospel message that has to be mastered before we can look at the Book of Proverbs. There would be no basis for understanding its message otherwise. So your readers have plenty of time to examine what I write and say, plenty of time to determine for themselves whether they believe it. If it doesn't make sense to them, they should reject it, consider me "loony," and continue on in their current understanding. If it does make sense to them ...? Well, like Jesus said, "Wisdom is vindicated by all her children." [Editor: Luke 7:35.] ■

Comparatively

From Page 1

To most, that parable is just a nifty little story that teaches perseverance in prayer. That's only because they don't understand how Jesus used parables and *parabolic pantomime*. I have written previously concerning His use of *parabolic pantomime*. (See "The Parabolic Pantomimes of Jesus Christ," *The Voice of Elijah*, January 1991; "The Passover Parable," *The Voice of Elijah*, July 1991; and *Not All Israel Is Israel*, p. 175 ff.) Here I want to discuss a few things related to His (and the Prophets') use of parables.

In this short space I am probably going to raise more questions than I answer. But bear with me; I'll tie it all together for you—eventually. That's why I'm here. By then, most of the skeptics will have long since stopped listening, so just be patient until they do.

Parables Compare

Both Irenæus and Hippolytus agree that, in the parable concerning the unjust judge, Jesus was *parabolically* referring to the earthly Jerusalem as the "widow" and the coming Antichrist as the "unjust judge." (See Irenæus, *Against Heresies*, V. 25:4; Hippolytus, *Treatise on Christ and AntiChrist*, 56–57; *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*, pp. 59–60, 181.) If that be so (and it is), one should inquire as to the prophetic basis for Jesus' *parabolic* comparison.

We can begin our discussion with that one word—"comparison." That is exactly what the Greek word *parabole* means—"comparison." A parable *compares* one person, place, thing, or situation to another. Consequently, it tells us how the one "is LIKE" the other. Take a look at the following:

"The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea, and gathering {fish} of every kind; and when it was filled, they drew it up on the beach; and they sat down, and gathered the good {fish} into containers, but the bad they threw away. So it will be at the end of the age; the angels shall come forth, and take out the wicked from among the righteous, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matthew 13:44–50)

In each instance, Jesus makes His *parabolic* comparison overtly by the inclusion of the word "LIKE." You can easily review Jesus' parables for yourself. Often you will find the words "may be compared to" or "is comparable to" instead of "is LIKE." Sometimes there is nothing at all to indicate the fundamental nature of His parable or *parabolic statement*. But you can be certain that in all His parables and *parabolic statements* Jesus intended to teach by drawing some comparison between two things.

Idioms and Images

Every parable of Jesus, in one way or another, alludes to something explained fully in the seven messages hidden in the parables of the Prophets of Israel. (See "Did Jesus Leave a Will?" *The Voice of Elijah*, July 1991.) Those parables, in turn, are based on one or more of the Hebrew idioms that relate to some particular image in ancient Near Eastern mythology. (See "Is Iraq Mystery Babylon?" *The Voice of Elijah*, January 1991; "The Image of the King as a Tree," *The Voice of Elijah*, April 1991; "The Passover Parable," *The Voice of Elijah*, July 1991; and *Not All Israel Is Israel*, p. 172 ff.)

The Hebrew idiom "cut off from," which I explained in *Not All Israel Is Israel*, and its corresponding ancient Near Eastern theological imagery, a sacred tree or vine, give insight into how Jesus used parables to teach concerning the prophetic message. In *Not All Israel Is Israel*, I have shown how, by the time of the baptism of Jesus Christ, God had dealt with the individual members of *Corporate Israel* so as to "cut off from" Israel all mem-

bers of *Corporate Israel* except Jesus Christ. As the sole remaining member of Israel, Jesus Christ thereby became, in Himself, "all Israel," the Firstborn Son of God. Consequently, the only Israel that exists today in the eyes of God is the Body of Jesus Christ into which one must be "grafted" before one can be saved, just as Paul says:

But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, {remember that} it is not you who supports the root, but the root {supports} you. You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear; for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will He spare you. Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more shall these who are the natural {branches} be grafted into their own olive tree?" (Romans 11:17–24)

As I also briefly mentioned in *Not All Israel Is Israel*, Jesus was alluding to the message hidden in the parables of the Prophets that are built around the Hebrew idiom "cut off from" (among others) when He said this to His disciples:

"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vine dresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every {branch} that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither

{can} you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch, and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and {so} prove to be My disciples. Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love.
(John 15:1-10)

You can understand how, without knowledge of the message of the Hebrew Scriptures concerning the divine process of "cutting off" all evildoers "from" Israel, one could easily take Jesus' words as just a simple illustration of some *general principle* rather than as a statement of *specific fact*. By having knowledge of the meaning of that one idiom, however, you can now see that Jesus was (*parabolically*) stating He is (in Himself) *Corporate Israel*, "in Whom" one must now remain in order to attain resurrection from the dead and ascension to Heaven.

We know that is His message because we are also aware that the parables of the Scriptures teach us it is only the Messianic King, all Israel, the Firstborn Son of God, who has been guaranteed resurrection from the dead. (See "The Passover Parable," *The Voice of Elijah*, July 1991.) All others can only be resurrected by remaining "in Him," as Paul repeatedly emphasizes (Gal. 3:26-28; Eph. 1:1-3:21; Col. 2:1-3:17). He states that specifically in at least one passage:

For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive.
(1 Corinthians 15:22)

Furthermore, the *parabolic image* tells us that, as the resurrected King of Israel, Jesus Christ will (*parabolically*) live forever as the Tree of Life in the Garden of God. (See "The Image of the King as a Tree," *The Voice of Elijah*,

April 1991.) Therefore, those resurrected "in Christ" will (*parabolically*) live forever as "branches" on that "Tree." That's why the early Christians proudly called themselves "branches of the cross."

A Total Mystery

The tree image only tells us what our eternal existence in spiritual reality will be LIKE. The image does not tell us what that existence will BE. That's because parables only speak of spiritual reality as a "mystery," as Paul so eloquently states in reference to Isaiah 64:4:

Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden {wisdom}, which God predestined before the ages to our glory; {the wisdom} which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; but just as it is written,
"THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN
AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD,
AND {which} HAVE NOT ENTERED
THE HEART OF MAN,
ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR
THOSE WHO LOVE HIM."
(1 Corinthians 2:6-9)

As an example of how the Prophets (*parabolically*) explained these unseen things, we can look at the psalmist's description of Jesus Christ, "the man" who is LIKE a tree (in whom all the righteous will dwell as branches):

How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. And he will be like a tree {firmly} planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season, And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers.
(Psalm 1:1-3)

Notice the writer clearly identifies his statements as *parabolic* by his inclusion of the word "LIKE." Therefore, we know he is speaking *parabolically* about the Messiah of Israel, the eternally living "Tree," because we know the Prophets elsewhere have painted a complete *parabolic* portrait of the Messiah as Israel, the "Tree" that "sprouts" and becomes a living "Tree" again after it has been "cut off." (For a more complete explanation, see the forthcoming volumes in The Resurrection Theology Series: *The Inheritance of the Believer and House of Israel, Temple of God*. For now, examine the footnotes in *Not All Israel Is Israel*, p. 196 ff.)

The psalmist continues his *parabolic* explanation of spiritual reality by describing the fate of those who will not be gathered "in Christ." He again uses the *parabolic imagery* (elaborated fully elsewhere in the Prophets) to tell us that, unlike the gathering of the righteous in the Messiah, the wicked will be scattered LIKE chaff:

The wicked are not so, But they are like chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the wicked will perish.
(Psalm 1:4-6)

John the Baptist, also speaking *parabolically*, appropriated the *parabolic images* of the Prophets to warn the Jews of his day that not only did they not understand they could lose their position "in Israel," they also did not realize they were in imminent danger of being "cut off" completely, thus becoming subject to the scattering and burning of the wicked:

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bring forth fruit in keeping with repentance; and do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father'; for I say to you, that God is able from these stones to raise up

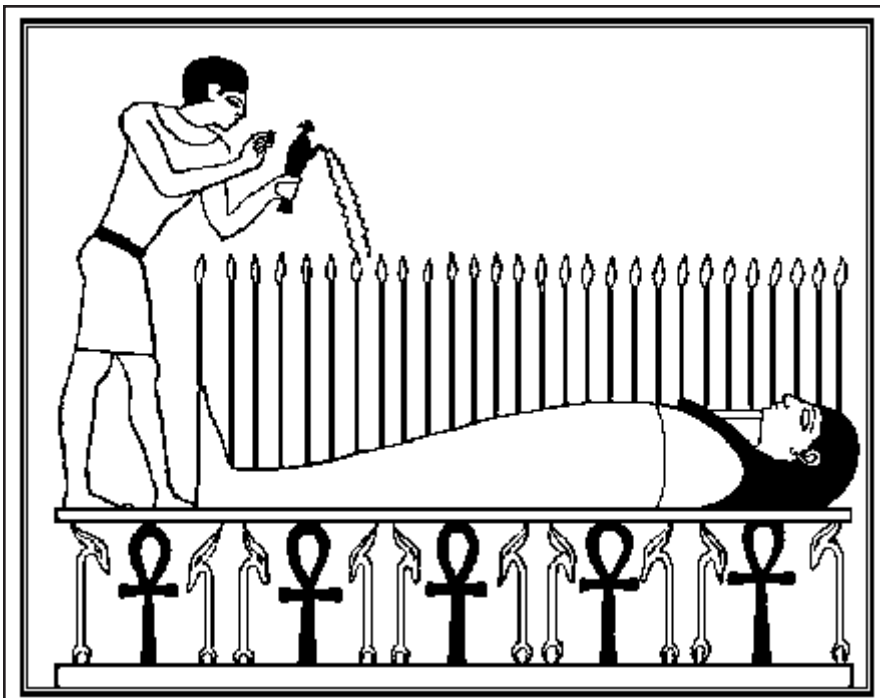
children to Abraham. And the axe is already laid at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. And His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat

into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matthew 3:7-12)

John the Baptist has added (as Jesus did in His parable concerning Himself as the "True Vine" quoted above) additional *parabolic imagery* concerning the "fire" of God that will forever seek to consume the harvest "chaff." (See "On Fairy Tales and Holy Hell," *The Voice of Elijah*, July 1992.) But he has taken that *parabolic imagery* from the Prophets as well. For example, Isaiah prophesied

that those who oppose Jerusalem—that is, the enemies of God—would be consigned as "chaff" to the "flame":

*Woe, O Ariel, Ariel the city {where} David {once} camped!
Add year to year, observe {your} feasts on schedule.
And I will bring distress to Ariel,
And she shall be {a city of} lamenting and mourning;
And she shall be like an Ariel to me.
And I will camp against you encircling {you},
And I will set siegeworks against you,
And I will raise up battle towers against you.
Then you shall be brought low;
From the earth you shall speak,
And from the dust {where} you are prostrate,
Your words {shall come}.
Your voice shall also be like that of a spirit from the ground,
And your speech shall whisper from the dust.
But the multitude of your enemies shall become like fine dust,
And the multitude of the ruthless ones like the chaff which blows away;
And it shall happen instantly, suddenly.
From the Lord of hosts you will be punished with thunder and earthquake and loud noise,
{With} whirlwind and tempest and the flame of a consuming fire.
And the multitude of all the nations who wage war against Ariel,
Even all who wage war against her and her stronghold, and who distress her,
Shall be like a dream, a vision of the night.
{Isaiah 29:1-7}*



The above is a drawing of an ancient Egyptian bas-relief at Philae. In it, the deceased Egyptian king (Osiris) is shown supported by the Egyptian symbols for life and power. The wheat growing out of his body symbolically represents his resurrected form. "The germination of the grain typified the germination of the spirit-body of the deceased." (E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Egyptian Religion of Resurrection: Osiris*, Reprint University Books, 1961, p. 58.)

The Canaanites had a similar resurrection theology, as can be ascertained by the fact that the Greeks believed much the same thing regarding their god Adonis, whose ritual and resurrection mythology they gained by appropriating intact the Canaanite's worship of Baal and Anat.

The Prophets mocked the Canaanite beliefs concerning the resurrection by using their mythological imagery to speak in parables that foretold how the death and resurrection of Israel's Messiah would be LIKE the mythological death and resurrection of the Canaanite god Baal. (See "The

Parabolic Pantomimes of Jesus Christ," *The Voice of Elijah*, January 1991; "The Passover Parable," *The Voice of Elijah*, July 1991; "It's Not Difficult to See, Comparatively Speaking," in this issue; and *Not All Israel Is Israel*, p. 175 ff.)

Jesus continued the prophetic tradition of mocking such mythological beliefs by referring to True Believers (those in whom the Spirit of the resurrected Christ dwells) as "wheat" and Pretenders (those in whom Christ's Spirit does not dwell) as "tares" whom Satan has "sowed" in God's "field" (Matt. 13:24-30).

The time has now come for the "tares" to be "uprooted" and removed from among the "wheat" so the Body of Christ (get the *parabolic imagery*?) is again clearly identifiable. God is going to separate Pretenders from True Believers no matter what Pretenders do to thwart it. Therefore, if you believe you have found that "treasure hidden in a field" of which Jesus spoke (Matt. 13:44), now is the time for you to "sell" all you have and "buy" that field. Let the reader understand. □

Isaiah was speaking in terms of complex *parabolic imagery* in which he has combined the *parabolic image* of the heavenly Jerusalem with *parabolic images* of harvest, war, storm, wind, and fire. He *parabolically* calls Jerusalem "Ariel"—that is, "Lion of God"—thereby linking this prophecy to *parabolic statements* he has made elsewhere concerning the Messiah as the "harlot"

woman Jerusalem who awakens in the resurrection after having drunk the cup of God's wrath. (See "The *Parabolic Pantomimes* of Jesus Christ," *The Voice of Elijah*, January 1991.)

John the Baptist was not alone in his use of the *parabolic imagery* of the Prophets. Jesus and the Apostles used it also. Jesus, for example, confirmed John the Baptist's *parabolic statements* concerning the "cutting off" of the Jews "from" Israel, calling the Jews "the sons of the kingdom." (See *Not All Israel Is Israel*, pp. 161 ff.) Speaking concerning the extraordinary faith of a Gentile centurion, Jesus indicated the Jews would eventually be replaced by "many"—that is, Gentiles with faith like the centurion's—who would be gathered from around the world to dine (another *parabolic image*) with the Patriarchs of Israel:

Now when Jesus heard {this}, He marveled, and said to those who were following, "Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel. And I say to you, that many shall come from east and west, and recline {at the table} with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." And Jesus said to the centurion, "Go your way; let it be done to you as you have believed." And the servant was healed that {very} hour. (Matthew 8:10-13)

Finally, in yet another parable, Jesus combined the harvest image with the image of the fire used by farmers to burn the chaff and weeds that had been separated from the grain:

He presented another parable to them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares also among the wheat, and went away. But when the wheat sprang up and bore grain, then the tares became evident also. And the slaves of the landowner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How

then does it have tares?' And he said to them, 'An enemy has done this!' And the slaves said to him, 'Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?' But he said, 'No; lest while you are gathering up the tares, you may root up the wheat with them. Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn."'" (Matthew 13:24-30)

A Fine Wine

In all these *parabolic* references to the message of the Old Testament Gospel concerning the "gathering" of the Body of Jesus Christ and the "scattering" of the wicked at the End of the Age, we have scarcely begun circumnavigating a vast network of intricately interwoven statements that Jesus, the Apostles, and the Prophets made concerning the topic. For example, we have not even questioned why the pruning of a fruit-bearing tree or vine should be linked with the separation of grain from harvest trash. The results of such investigation must await a much more comprehensive treatment. However, suffice it to say for now, the answer lies in the ancients' superstitious rites of homage paid to the harvest gods.

When the farmer harvested the grapes, for example, there was, according to ancient myth, a specific religious ritual—the rites of sacred marriage—that accompanied the pressing of the grapes. In order to mock the absolutely asinine beliefs associated with that ritual, God appropriated the mythological imagery for His Own purposes. Consequently, the Book of Revelation contains a final mocking *parabolic statement* concerning the subject. It begins as follows:

And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; and he said with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; and worship

Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters." (Revelation 14:6-7)

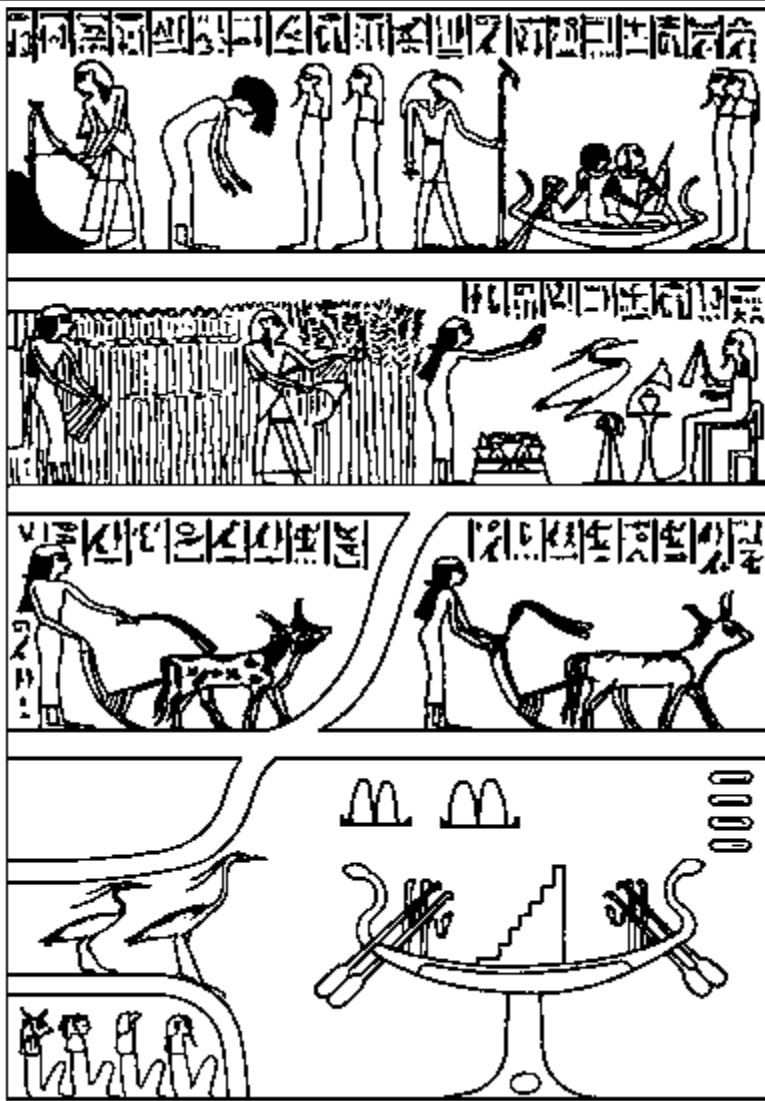
The angel's proclamation represents the final dissemination of the Old Testament Gospel message to the inhabitants of Mother Earth, along with a final call for them to fear the God of Wrath and repent. Unfortunately, few will heed that call. Consequently, shortly after that Truth has been proclaimed, another messenger will issue the final decree concerning the irreversibility of Earth's sorry state:

And another angel, a second one, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality." (Revelation 14:8)

As a result of humanity's refusal to heed His final proclamation of the Truth of the Old Testament Gospel, God has, at this point in this summary account of the Final Days, granted the Antichrist complete authority over her (Rev. 13:5, 7). Her fate is sealed. The drinking of wine mentioned in this verse *parabolically* refers to the cup-drinking ritual explained below. The point is simply that the physical reality we can see—the "harlot" Earth—has continually enticed us to join in her lasciviousness:

And another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or upon his hand, he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name." (Revelation 14:9-11)

With this pronouncement concerning the ultimate consequence that will befall those who fail to heed God's call, the angel has plainly stated the *parabolic imagery* around which this section of the



The above is an ancient Egyptian artist's rendering of scenes of the afterlife taken from the Book of the Dead of the priestess Anhai. (XX Dynasty, ca. 1100 B.C., British Museum.)

The Egyptians believed the blessed dead would live and work in a region known as the fields of Iaru—"the Field of Reeds." There they would plow, plant, and harvest the celestial grain while the damned suffered in a desolate place without any food whatsoever. The four-panel drawing above depicts the newly deceased priestess meeting her deceased mother and father (top-most panel), harvesting grain and making an offering to Osiris (second panel), and tilling the soil (third panel). The bottom panel shows the divine barque of the sun-god Ra on which is the staircase whereby the triumphant deceased eventually ascends to Heaven to dwell forever as a member of Osiris, the god of the dead. Jesus was mocking this, or some similar Canaanite conception of the afterlife, in His parables concerning laborers working in God's "field" or "harvesting" God's "grain" (Matt. 9:37 ff., 20:1 ff.; Lk. 10:2 ff.; Jn. 4:35 ff.).

The Apostles and Early Church Fathers

often wrote using *parabolic imagery* of the Prophets and Jesus as though it represented spiritual reality rather than merely telling us what that reality is LIKE. Hence, their statements have been taken as analogy rather than as *parabolic* portrayals of metaphysical fact (1 Cor. 3:6-9; Heb. 6:7-8; James 5:7-8).

Foolish and unlearned Pretenders who infiltrated the Early Church, having heard *The Apostolic Teaching* but not understanding the basis for the *parabolic comparisons*, nonetheless began to teach others what they had heard. In so doing, they distorted *The Teaching* to suit themselves. Some Pretenders will do the same today. Most often, as can be seen in the Gnostic literature, the Early Church Pretenders construed *parabolic statements* to be statements of actual fact, as many Christians still do. That is, they took them as conveying what spiritual reality is rather than as statements of what spiritual reality is LIKE. The result was nothing less than a re-creation of the very same paganistic concepts the parables were intended to mock. It is little wonder that Early Church leaders reacted so vehemently against such a virulent threat. □

Book of Revelation revolves. John's account will go on to describe in detail Earth's final observance of the ancient cup-drinking ritual of harvest. But before it does, we first are reminded of the persecution of the saints of God that will occur during the reign of the Antichrist. (See *The AntiChrist* and/or *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*):

Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Write, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them."

(Revelation 14:12-13)

The account then turns to the beginning of the "harvest" of Mother Earth. That "harvest" will occur in two stages:

And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud [was] one like a son of man, having a golden crown on His head, and a sharp sickle in His hand. And another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle and reap, because the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe." And He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth; and the earth was reaped.

(Revelation 14:14-16)

This passage depicts the ingathering of the grapes of the "True Vine," Jesus Christ—that is, True Believers—at the time when the One Who will return for His Own arrives on clouds of glory. Take note: This is a *parabolic* portrayal of the fast train leaving the station. (See "Nobody in Their Right Mind Would Even Want to Be Napoleon!" in this issue.) Relatively few of the billions of Earth's current inhabitants will be on board. An incredible persecution of True Believers will precede this event, completing the process of "weeding out" all Pretenders. (See *The AntiChrist* and/or *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*.)

The ingathering of True Believers will be followed shortly thereafter by the "harvesting" of what Moses called the "grapes of poison" (Deut. 32:32) pro-

duced by the “strange vine”—that is, the Antichrist—that Jeremiah also mentions (Jer. 2:21). Notice the grapes are clearly identified as from “the vine of the earth”:

And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. And another angel, the one who has power over fire, came out from the altar; and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, “Put in your sharp sickle, and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe.” And the angel swung his sickle to the earth, and gathered {the clusters from} the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God. And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses’ bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles. (Revelation 14:17–20)

The tromping of the grapes from “the vine of the earth”—that is, those who have chosen to become “branches” of the false messiah—in “the great wine press of the wrath of God” *parabolically* describes final events in physical reality. Those events will be far from pleasant. The mention of the angel “who has power over fire” alludes to this angel’s participation in the burning of the “harlot” described more fully later in the Book of Revelation (Rev. 17:16; 18:9).

Chapter 14 is just a brief overview of the final week of Daniel’s “Seventy Weeks.” (See “That’s Why He’s Called AntiChrist!” and “When the Trumpet Sounds,” *The Voice of Elijah*, April 1992.) Its purpose is to introduce the *parabolic imagery*. Chapters 15 through 18 of the Book of Revelation elaborate on the thumbnail sketch of Chapter 14. They are a *parabolic description* of God’s observance of the ancient mythic harvest ritual. The account is a mocking description of the same cup-drinking ritual explained in “The *Parabolic Pantomimes* of Jesus Christ,” *The Voice of Elijah*, January 1991. See that article for a more in-depth explanation of the ritual’s significance.

Briefly explained, in the ritual a “harlot” woman and her “redeemer”

drink a narcotic-laced cup of wine in order to sleep the sleep of death and gain children for the woman, children whose existence will ensure her eternal existence. Jesus pantomimed the cup-drinking ritual in His death and resurrection. Several times in the final hours before His death He alluded to the *parabolic imagery* of His pantomime:

And He went a little beyond {them}, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as Thou wilt.” And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “So, you {men} could not keep watch with Me for one hour? Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, “My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Thy will be done.” And again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. And He left them again, and went away and prayed a third time, saying the same thing once more. (Matthew 26:39–44)

In like manner, this present world—the “harlot” Babylon—will soon drink the same cup of God’s wrath that Jesus drank. The text of Revelation states that specifically (Rev. 14:8–10; 17:4; 18:6). But why? Surely she would not seek to do again what Jesus Christ already accomplished by His death and resurrection? For what purpose?

The answer lies in the fact that the Jews did not accept their Messiah when He came. Instead, as the Church Fathers Irenæus and Hippolytus clearly explain (see *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*, pp. 59–60 and 180 ff.), they have continually sought for “another” just as Jesus said they would:

“I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another shall come in his own name, you will receive him.” (John 5:43)

The “unjust judge” has, or soon will, decide in favor of the “widow,” the

earthly Jerusalem. She has been, or soon will be, granted the right to choose her own “redeemer.” She will choose the Antichrist. All but True Believers will subsequently accept the Antichrist as the divinely ordained messiah of the Jews.

Don’t be misled. Jerusalem is not a widow who deserves our pity. Hardly. She knew the judge was unjust. She sought him out intentionally because God “cut off” her own children (the Jews) “from” Israel. Since the earthly Jerusalem (the Jews) rejected Jesus Christ, she now lacks the son (her resurrected messiah) necessary to ensure her own eternal existence. Therefore, she has constantly sought for herself a favorable, although unjust, judgment against the One she considers responsible for her bereavement, the One she considers her adversary—Jesus Christ.

The earthly Jerusalem will (to all appearances) get the messiah she seeks. But since Satan has freely chosen to masquerade as the messiah of the Jews in his last desperate attempt to best God, he has thereby also chosen to undergo the same messianic cup-drinking ritual that Jesus *pantomimed*. Consequently, the “harlot” Babylon—all who believe in Satan as the true messiah of the Jews—must drink from that same cup of God’s wrath along with their “redeemer.”

That’s too bad for them. But by the time of the Antichrist’s appearance, those who accept him will have freely chosen to believe his delusion. They will have plenty of opportunity to see through it, but they will choose not to. Don’t be deceived. Satan’s efforts will accomplish nothing more than his own destruction and the destruction of all those who freely choose to follow him. After all, the Parable of the Unjust Judge clearly tells you his decision was merely an expediency to rid him of the constant clamoring of the Jews for “another” messiah.

Although Satan’s verdict may appear to have some legitimacy for a time, appearances are often deceptive. Unjust verdicts have always been easily overturned by a higher authority. The question is: Do you honestly believe there is a Higher Authority? Maybe you don’t and just want to pretend there is. If so, now is the time to stop the pretense. Let the one who has ears to hear hear what the Spirit is saying. ■

Voice of Elijah, Inc.
Strategic Plan for 1992-1993

I. PURPOSE OF THE CORPORATION

A. The sole mission of Voice of Elijah, Inc. (hereafter referred to as "the corporation") as a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation is to make available to the general public the findings (hereafter referred to as "The Teaching") of The Elijah Project (hereafter referred to as "the project"), a private biblical research group.

II. FUNDING STRATEGY

A. The primary outreach/solicitation vehicle of the corporation is **The Voice of Elijah** newsletter (hereafter referred to as "the newsletter") which publishes articles generated by the project. The corporation publishes the newsletter quarterly and distributes it via mail to subscribers who have contributed to the corporation. All labor required to produce the newsletter is provided by volunteers. No salaries are paid at this time, although as subscriptions to the newsletter increase over the next two years it is projected that one full-time clerical worker will be employed to handle newsletter-related activities.

B. Other literature made available by the project to the corporation, such as the volumes in The Resurrection Theology Series, is all published by the project itself and made available to the corporation at cost. These publications allow the corporation to generate additional revenue through the solicitation of one-time contributions. The corporation, in turn, uses these monies to fund further outreach.

III. CONTRIBUTOR TARGETING STRATEGY

A. The Christian Believers targeted by the corporation are those with an interest in understanding **The Teaching**, the Old Testament Gospel message of Jesus Christ, its implications for their personal walk with God, and God's plan for the end of this age.

B. Believers have been targeted on three levels:

1. Those Believers who subscribe to the newsletter and order other publications of the project made available to the corporation.
2. Those Believers who value the work of this ministry enough to become regular contributors, agreeing to contribute at least \$15 per month to the corporation.
3. Those Believers who, after becoming regular contributors, reveal a further interest in supporting the work of this ministry by attending seminars offered by the project.

IV. OUTREACH STRATEGY

A. Current methods of outreach vary according to the category of Believers targeted.

1. All revenues not needed to cover direct costs of publishing and distributing literature are allocated to reaching the first targeted group of Believers. The current method used by the corporation for reaching these individuals is direct mail. Although this has proven the most cost-effective method to date, contributions received from subscribers cover less than half the cost incurred in reaching them. The shortfall is covered by dedicated Christian Believers interested in seeing this ministry succeed, just as other volunteers provide the labor required to produce direct mailing pieces.

In production of a direct mailing piece attention is paid to the following:

- a) Specific Offer: A direct mail consultant provides advice concerning the marketing aspects of the direct mail offer.
 - b) Mailing Layout: The layout of the mailing piece is designed and produced by volunteers.
 - c) Production: The corporation pays only the actual cost of printing, folding, and postage.
 - d) Targeted List: Names are purchased from various mailing list companies. The response rates from different lists are then compared to determine the list that provides the best rate of response.
 - e) Response to Mailings: Changes are made to the mailing piece at regular intervals to ensure an optimum response rate.
2. Contributions from the second targeted group of Believers are solicited through appeals made in the newsletter. Those who respond to those appeals and become regular contributors automatically receive a copy of all publications made available by the corporation during the time they remain regular contributors. They also receive other publications directly from the project for their additional instruction in appreciation of their commitment to the ministry of the corporation. These are publications the project does not make available to the corporation for distribution to a wider audience. The corporation also, from time to time, invites those Believers in this second group to participate, through additional contributions, in other outreach efforts.
 3. The third targeted group of Believers are those in the second group of Believers who respond to personal invitations from the project to attend seminars sponsored directly by the project. Such seminars are arranged specifically for the purpose of production of video tapes that will allow the corporation to make the seminars offered by the project available to a wider audience. The seminars are made available to this third group of Believers in order to allow them opportunity to meet and fellowship with Believers of like mind—those with an expressed desire to learn more of **The Teaching**.
- B. The corporation may, from time to time, develop and use additional methods as seem expedient in achieving the corporation's clearly defined mission.

Why Not?

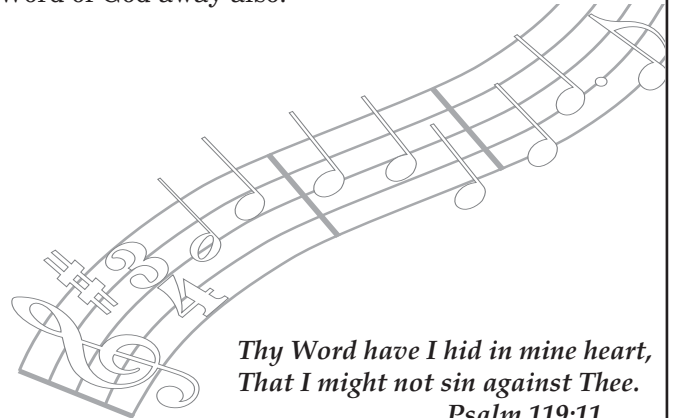
If you find *The Voice of Elijah* beneficial to you in your own walk with the Lord, won't you please join with us and make this ministry your own? Everybody can do something. Some can do more than others. Please do what you can:

- ☛ **Pray for our work.**
- ☛ **Tell others.**
- ☛ **Give a gift subscription to a friend.**
- ☛ **Give *Not All Israel Is Israel* to a friend.**
- ☛ **Give a one-time gift.**
- ☛ **Become a Monthly Contributor.**

Time is short. Much remains to be done. Please stand with us in this ministry. Contributions are tax-deductible. 100% of all contributions go to outreach. No salaries are paid.

Scripture Songs Volumes 1 & 2

The Word of God is easier to memorize when it has been set to music. That's why *The Elijah Project* has taken key passages from the Prophets and the Psalms, combined them with catchy melodies, and produced *Scripture Songs, Volumes 1 & 2*. Not only will they keep a song in your heart, they will help you hide the Word of God away also.

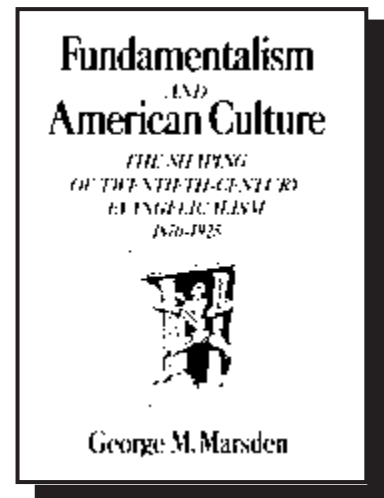


*Thy Word have I hid in mine heart,
That I might not sin against Thee.*
Psalm 119:11

To Order, use the Order Form

Where Did That Come From?

- ❖ How did the novel notion that God loves everybody find its way into fundamentalist beliefs?
- ❖ Where did Dispensationalism originate?
- ❖ How did it come to be a part of fundamental doctrine?
- ❖ How did Fundamentalism become identified with ignorance and narrow-mindedness?
- ❖ What did William Jennings Bryan, former Democratic Party leader, presidential candidate, and Secretary of State for Woodrow Wilson, contribute to the fundamentalist image?



Do you consider yourself a Christian Fundamentalist? Have you ever wondered where some of the fundamentalist doctrines came from? Are you starting to think some of what you've been taught needs to be validated? If so, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism, 1870-1925* by George Marsden will answer many of the questions you might have about the roots of your beliefs.

To Order, use the Order Form

Who is Israel?

According to Scripture, Israel is the descendants of Jacob, heir to God's *promise* to the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But did you know that Scripture also says an individual could be "cut off from" Israel?

Today, the nation of Israel—the Jews living in the land occupied by biblical Israel—claim to be Israel, heirs to *the promises* God gave to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But are they really?



What if all Israel was “cut off?”

John the Baptist warned it could happen. (Matt. 3:10)
The Apostle Paul said it did happen. (Rom. 11:11–24)

Here for the first time ever, in simple, easy-to-read English, one book finally explains this intricate message of Scripture hidden for so long in the Hebrew idiom. Read and discover for yourself how *Not All Israel Is Israel*.

To Order, use the Order Form