



THE VOICE of ELIJAH

Restoring the hearts of the fathers to the children

Understanding Always Depends on Your Viewpoint

Now God shall be glorified in His handiwork, fitting it so as to be conformable to, and modelled after, His own Son. For by the hands of the Father, that is, by the Son and the Holy Spirit, man, and not [merely] a part of man, was made in the likeness of God. Now the soul and the spirit are certainly a *part* of the man, but certainly not *the* man; for the perfect man consists in the commingling and the union of the soul receiving the spirit of the Father, and the admixture of that fleshly nature which was moulded after the image of God.

For this reason does the apostle declare, "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect," terming those persons "perfect" who have received the Spirit of God, and who through the Spirit of God do speak in all languages, as he used Himself also to speak.

In like manner we do also hear many brethren in the Church, who possess prophetic gifts, and who through the Spirit speak all kinds of languages, and bring to light for the general benefit the hidden things of men, and declare the mysteries of God, whom also the apostle terms "spiritual," they being spiritual because they partake of the Spirit, and not because their flesh has been stripped off and taken away, and because they have become purely spiritual.

For if any one take away the substance of flesh, that is, of the handiwork [of God], and understand that which is purely spiritual, such then would not be a spiritual man, but would be the spirit of a man, or the Spirit of God. But when the spirit here blended with the soul is united to [God's] handiwork, the man is rendered spiritual and perfect because of the outpouring of the Spirit, and this is he who was made in the image and likeness of God.

But if the Spirit be wanting to the soul, he who is such is indeed of an animal nature, and being left carnal, shall be an imperfect being, possessing

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indeed the image [of God] in his formation (*in plasmate*), but not receiving the similitude through the Spirit; and thus is this being imperfect. Thus also, if any one take away the image and set aside the handiwork, he cannot then understand this as being a man, but as either some part of a man, as I have already said, or as something else than a man.

For that flesh which has been moulded is not a perfect man in itself, but the body of a man, and part of a man. Neither is the soul itself, considered apart by itself, the man; but it is the soul of a man, and part of a man. Neither is the spirit a man, for it is called the spirit, and not a man; but the commingling and union of all these constitutes the perfect man.

And for this cause does the apostle, explaining himself, make it clear that the saved man is a complete man as well as a spiritual man; saying thus in the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, "Now the God of peace sanctify you perfect (*perfectos*); and may your spirit, and soul, and body be preserved whole without complaint to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ." Now what was his object in praying that these three—that is, soul, body, and spirit—might be preserved to the coming of the Lord, unless he was aware of the [future] reintegration and union of the three, and [that they should be heirs of] one and the same salvation?

For this cause also he declares that those are "the perfect" who present unto the Lord the three [component parts] without offence. Those, then, are the perfect who have had the Spirit of God remaining in them, and have preserved their souls and bodies blameless, holding fast the faith of God, that is, that faith which is [directed] towards God, and maintaining righteous dealings with respect to their neighbours.

Irenæus, "Against Heresies," Book 6, Chap. vi, in Roberts and Donaldson (Eds.), *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (1867), Vol. 1, pp. 531–532.

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A Note From the Editor

In the past five issues of *The Voice of Elijah*®, I have talked about the fact that we humans lie to ourselves for a variety of reasons. Sometimes we do so to alleviate the emotional distress associated with doing something wrong; other times we do so to experience the emotional high that some particular lie produces within us; and still other times we lie to ourselves simply because we are too stubborn to admit the Truth. Regardless of our reasons, one thing is consistently true: We lie to ourselves because we find lies more comforting (emotionally and psychologically) than the harsh reality of the Truth. Think about it. If the Truth were always more comforting than lies, or if the Truth always provided a justifiable reason for us to do what we want to do, why would we choose to believe anything but the Truth? We wouldn't.

The fact that the Church today believes a plethora of lies can be traced to the fact that "Christians" prefer to hear comforting words that make them feel secure in their relationship with an imaginary god rather than the Truth that instills fear in the God Who is. Nowhere is this desire to hear comforting words more prevalent than in the study of End-Times prophecy and events—eschatology. One eschatological belief that makes "Christians" feel especially comfortable and secure these days is a belief system known as "Dispensationalism."

Since the topic of Dispensationalism was discussed in great detail in the October 1996 article, "Wanna Hear the Whopper the Liar Came Up With? (I Doubt You'll Believe It!)" the only thing I want to touch on here is the fact that the core belief around which Dispensationalism revolves is the lie that God still considers the Jews to be Israel, the People of God. Those of you who have read and believed what is written in *Not All Israel Is Israel* already know how insidious that lie is because you know that the Church—the parabolic Body of Jesus Christ—is now Israel because Jesus Christ Himself is the Israel of God. If you don't know how Jesus Christ became Corporate Israel, the Firstborn Son of God (Ex. 4:22), I suggest you get about the business of finding out because the need to understand the Truth is absolutely essential in these Last Days. (See the Order Form to obtain *Not All Israel Is Israel*.)

The belief that the Jews are Israel, the People of God, and that the Church is something other than Israel, is a lie that will prove perilous for "Christians" who believe it in these Last Days. That is so for a variety of reasons, but the main reason is because those who believe this lie will see no reason to prepare themselves for the appearance of the Antichrist and the unimaginable horrors he will bring upon the Earth. And the reason they will not see fit to prepare themselves for that day is because the lie of Dispensationalism has convinced them that the Church will be "raptured," or "caught up," to the Lord (1 Thess. 4:17), before the Antichrist begins his three-and-one-half-year reign of terror. Sadly, that's just

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another comforting lie that “Christians” choose to believe because it’s what they want to hear.

If it seems like an oversimplification to say that most “Christians” choose to believe lies simply because lies are more comforting to believe than the Truth, it’s not. I say that because I once heard a “pre-tribulationist”—someone who believes the Rapture will occur before the Tribulation takes place—ask in a smug tone why anyone would “want to believe” that the Church must endure three and one-half years of persecution at the hands of the Antichrist before being “raptured.” That says a lot about the mentality of “Christians” today and how they decide what to believe. The clear implication of his statement is that the only thing that matters is what “Christians” “want to believe.”

It’s a sad commentary on the state of the Church today that most “Christians” decide what to believe on the basis of what sounds good to them rather than on the evidence found in the Scriptures. That’s why most “Christians” decide what they want to believe first and then go to the Scriptures to search for evidence that supports their predetermined beliefs. That’s not the way it should be.

It may be hard to fault laymen in the Church for being “listeners” first and students of the Bible second since Jesus did, after all, establish the teacher/disciple relationship as the sole means of handing down the Truth of God’s Word—The Teaching—in the Early Church. However, just because false teachers are to blame for the loss of The Teaching, that doesn’t mean those who listen to false teachers and never question what they hear are not to blame as well. That’s because when push comes to shove, most “Christians” want to believe the lies they are taught. The Apostle Paul said it best:

*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but {wanting} to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths.
(2 Timothy 4:3–4)*

If you believe what you read in the materials made available by *The Voice of Elijah*®, you undoubtedly realize this is exactly what is going on in the Church today. If you don’t realize it, I doubt there is much I can say to open your eyes, so I won’t even try. But if you are one who fears the Lord and has felt the searing heat of the “fire” of God’s Word in your “ear,” I encourage you to hold fast to The Teaching you have heard and to continue seeking more Truth because you are going to need it. You see, the reason God is restoring The Teaching in these Last Days is so that True Believers might acquire the insight they will need to overcome the Antichrist—“the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan” (2 Thess. 2:9)—and endure to the End. Because True Believers will need as much insight as possible, I am pleased to announce that an extraordinary book about the Antichrist is now, for the first time, being made available to anyone who wants it.

For the past thirteen years, *The Voice of Elijah*® has distributed *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist* exclusively to those who contribute financially to our ministry while offering only a condensed version of this book—*The AntiChrist*—to the public. Effective immediately, we are making *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist* available to everyone. This 260-page book contains excerpts from the writings of three Early Church Fathers—Polycarp, Irenæus, and Hippolytus—who were first-, second-, and third-generation disciples of the Apostle John—the Apostle who wrote the Book of Revelation.

In this book you will find an incredibly detailed account of the horrifying events these three men understood would occur when the Antichrist comes to power. More importantly, this book also provides True Believers with important insight they will need to avoid being taken in by Satan’s greatest delusion. The fact that the understanding these men had about the Antichrist can be traced back to the Apostle John is reason enough to own this book. You can secure your copy by using the Order Form or by going to our website—www.voiceofelijah.org—and placing your order there. Monthly and Next Step Contributors will automatically receive a copy.

Allen Fries

They Are Trying to Hide When They Should Be Seeking

There is a misconception common among “Christians” today that God is still *working with* “the Church”—whatever that *means*. The Truth is, God has never *worked with* “the Church” as a *collective* Body because God does not—and has never—*worked with* groups. God *works in* individuals *individually*, pure and simple; nothing more, nothing less. He has always left the responsibility for *working with* the group *collectively* up to individuals He has specifically called to that task. Whether it was Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, or the Apostle Paul, God gave the men He called the responsibility for *working with* the Elect as a *collective* while He *worked in* the *individuals* within the *collective* Body. But it is easy to see why some self-delusional folks who don’t know how God works might get confused and think they can hide in the crowd, thereby slipping into Heaven unnoticed. As the Prophet Isaiah *parabolically* described “The Way” it is going to be here at the End of the Age, that is clearly not going to happen:

*Seek from the book of the LORD, and read:
Not one of these will be missing;
None will lack its mate.
For His mouth has commanded,
And His Spirit has gathered them.
And He has cast the lot for them,
And His hand has divided it to them by line.
They shall possess it forever;
From generation to generation they shall dwell in it.
The wilderness and the desert will be glad,
And the Arabah will rejoice and blossom;
Like the crocus
It will blossom profusely
And rejoice with rejoicing and shout of joy.*

*The glory of Lebanon will be given to it,
The majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They will see the glory of the LORD,
The majesty of our God.
Encourage the exhausted, and strengthen the feeble.
Say to those with anxious heart,
“Take courage, fear not.
Behold, your God will come {with} vengeance;
The recompense of God will come,
But He will save you.”
Then the eyes of the blind will be opened,
And the ears of the deaf will be unstopped.
Then the lame will leap like a deer,
And the tongue of the dumb will shout for joy.
For waters will break forth in the wilderness
And streams in the Arabah.
And the scorched land will become a pool,
And the thirsty ground springs of water;
In the haunt of jackals, its resting place,
Grass {becomes} reeds and rushes.
And a highway will be there, a roadway,
And it will be called the Highway of Holiness.
The unclean will not travel on it,
But it {will} be for him who walks {that} way,
And fools will not wander {on it}.
No lion will be there,
Nor will any vicious beast go up on it;
These will not be found there.
But the redeemed will walk {there},
And the ransomed of the LORD will return,
And come with joyful shouting to Zion,
With everlasting joy upon their heads.
They will find gladness and joy,
And sorrow and sighing will flee away.
(Isaiah 34:16–35:10)*

Isaiah is speaking *parabolically* concerning the restoration of *The Teaching* (which the Prophets *parabolically* call “*The Way*”) at the End of the Age so that the Redeemed will be able to “walk in *The Way*” (mentally) as they *parabolically* make their “way” back to the “Heavenly Jerusalem.” In mentioning “the book of the Lord,” Isaiah is alluding to the fact that God has finally set about putting the census book of Israel in order—that is, “cutting off from” Israel those who deserve to be “cut off from” that *collective* Body. (See *Not All Israel Is Israel*.) But I assume you already knew that. Isaiah explains a bit more clearly how God plans to go about doing what needs to be done in this passage:

“Comfort, O comfort My people,” says your God.
 “Speak kindly to Jerusalem;
 And call out to her, that her warfare has ended,
 That her iniquity has been removed,
 That she has received of the LORD’s hand
 Double for all her sins.”
 A voice is calling,
 “Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness;
 Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God.
 Let every valley be lifted up,
 And every mountain and hill be made low;
 And let the rough ground become a plain,
 And the rugged terrain a broad valley;
 Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed,
 And all flesh will see {it} together;
 For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”
 A voice says, “Call out.”
 Then he answered, “What shall I call out?”
 All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is
 like the flower of the field.
 The grass withers, the flower fades,
 When the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
 Surely the people are grass.
 The grass withers, the flower fades,
 But the word of our God stands forever.
 (Isaiah 40:1–8)

Perhaps the most misunderstood fact that allows some Pretenders to get their hopes up way too high in regard to the possibility of them slipping into Heaven unnoticed in the crowd is the Apostle Paul’s mention of the fact that the Apostolic Church was a *collective* organization with a definite governmental structure. He indicates the government of the Church in his day

included at least the four offices of Apostle, Prophet, Teacher, and Evangelist. Here is the one passage in Paul’s epistles that most people point to as the basis on which the Apostolic Church was organized:

But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Therefore it says,
“WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH,
HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES,
AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN.”
(Now this {expression,} “He ascended,” what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And He gave some {as} apostles, and some {as} prophets, and some {as} evangelists, and some {as} pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all {aspects} into Him, who is the head, {even} Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.
 (Ephesians 4:7–16)

As you can see from what Paul says, God called men to perform specific functions in the Apostolic Church for the purpose of “the building up of itself/the body of Christ.” We’ll come back to the *parabolic imagery* standing behind the phrase “building up of” a little later. It holds a definite *significance* that you should not ignore. But first let me explain “*The Way*” God works in His People. (Notice I did not say “works with.”)

Pretenders changed the organizational structure of the Church after they took control around the beginning of the third century. That was because there were no longer all that many in the Church *in whom* God was working. Consequently, they muddied the waters a bit by talking more in terms of bishops and such. You can easily see what happened to the Early Church if you

compare a piece of Apostolic Church literature called “The Didache” with a third-century revision of it. You certainly won’t find any mention of Prophets in the revised document. That’s because Pretenders had to change things as soon as they got control of the Church. They evidently realized they couldn’t pull off the pretense of being a Prophet since God wasn’t *working* in them. Consequently, the governmental structure of the Church today has little in common with its original structure. But at least the Church started out organized the way God intended.

About the only part of the original organizational structure of the Church that remained the same—up until recently—was the ministry of the Evangelists that God continued to call to minister to unbelievers *outside* the Church. (See “What’s Left of the Right That Stayed Down When He Went Up?” *The Voice of Elijah*® *Update*, September 1995.) Nowadays, even those folks and the Gospel they are *supposed to be* preaching have been increasingly corrupted by Satan. Most *legitimate* Evangelists today are either preaching the liberal’s goofy god of unconditional grace or “pastoring” a church somewhere. Some who appear to have once had a legitimate calling are now on television hawking vitamins. That may explain why God has finally decided it is time for Him to step in and impose His will on things again. But I’m just guessing.

The only reason the Church ever existed as a *collective* organization was because the leaders of the Apostolic Church needed some way to deal with all Believers as a *collective* group. However, you would do well to keep in mind the fact that God didn’t *have* to set things up the way He did; He *chose to*. The reason for that should also be fairly easy to understand: God can do whatever God *wants to*; and no matter what *you think*, the only thing that really matters is what *God thinks*. Under those circumstances, it might be best in the long run if you stop thinking what you *want to* think and spend some time trying to determine what God thinks. That way, you can make sure you are both on the same page.

“*The Way*” God sees it, the True Believers in the Church today (notice I specifically did not say “everybody in the Church”) are *parabolically* LIKE members of the *resurrected* Body of Jesus Christ. The *parabolic imagery* related to the phrase “Body of Christ” is a bit complex, but it is basically one in which all True Believers (again, I did not say “everybody”) are (*collectively* and *parabolically*) “*The Woman*” Israel. The Apostle

Paul explains the *significance* of that *parabolic imagery* this way:

Wives, {be subject} to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself {being} the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives {ought to be} to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless. So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also {does} the church, because we are members of His body. FOR THIS CAUSE A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE; AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.

(Ephesians 5:22–32)

Paul is quite obviously speaking *parabolically* in that passage. Only a completely irrational *literalist* idiot could summon up the stupidity necessary to claim otherwise. But it is not nearly as obvious that when he says “this mystery,” he is referring to the supernatural *transformation* that will occur when those True Believers who *collectively* make up “*The Woman*” Israel *literally* become “one flesh” with Jesus Christ—“*The Man*” Who has already been resurrected in the image and likeness of the *Living Word* of God. That *transformation* of their mortal *physical* bodies into immortal *physical* bodies will occur when they are resurrected with the same “*flesh and bone*” that Jesus Christ took on shortly before He demonstrated the nature of His resurrected body to His disciples:

And while they were telling these things, He Himself stood in their midst. But they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit. And He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.” [And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and

*His feet.] And while they still could not believe {it} for joy and were marveling, He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish; and He took it and ate {it} before them.
(Luke 24:36–43)*

Don't be a fool! Satan has disseminated the lie that the resurrected body will be a "spirit" only because he does not want you to understand that God is not yet finished *creating* the *physical beings* who will forever inhabit this *physical* Creation. Sorry to be the one to tell you this, but I shot that sacred cow quite some time ago. (See "Transformed Into the Image and Likeness of God," *The Voice of Elijah*®, April 2003.) But delusional folks, being what they are, won't be able to accept the fact that one of their most prized possessions is dead. They will just go on pretending everything is "the way" they want to believe it is.

The Truth is, when Jesus encouraged His disciples to touch His resurrected body, He was merely showing them the *physical* nature of the *new creation* that God *created* when He *transformed* the mortal *physical* body of Jesus Christ into His Own *spiritual* image and likeness. That *hybrid new creation* is just as much a part of this Creation as you and I are. But He is no longer a member of the sub-species (*Homo sapiens*) from which He was "built." (You might also want to consider how that last statement applies to the lies that Satan floated to provoke the current controversy over evolution.) Here is a passage where Moses defines one of the *parabolic images* related to the resurrection from the dead:

*Then His Majesty—God—made a deep sleep fall on the man and he slept. Then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place. **Then His Majesty—God—BUILT the rib that He had taken from the man into a woman** and brought her to the man. Then the man said: "Now this one is bone from my bone And flesh from my flesh. This one will be called 'woman' Because she was taken from a man." Therefore, a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his woman and they become one flesh.
(Genesis 2:21–24) —my interim translation*

Did you see how Moses used the term *built* to describe the *creation* process God used? He was just defining terminology and *parabolic imagery* for the

Prophets and Apostles who would come along later. Just as God "built" Eve from the man Adam, so also He "built" "The Man" Jesus Christ from the man Adam. He, likewise, plans to "build" His entire "house" from "The Man" Jesus Christ *and* the man Adam. Now you know (part of the reason) why the Prophets, the Apostles, and Jesus Christ Himself used the Hebrew idiom "build a house" to describe the process by which God determines who will, and who will not, be a member of His "house." Those who remain "in Christ" have hope, but nobody else stands a chance.

My point is, the Prophets and Apostles speak in terms of a *parabolic image* in which True Believers are *collectively* (and *parabolically* LIKE) "The Woman" Israel—"The Woman" Who currently is already a part of the Body of Christ (*parabolically* LIKE a rib, maybe?) and will become "one flesh" with "The Man" Israel (Jesus Christ) after the Resurrection of the Righteous. That *parabolic image* describes what it will be LIKE for those who participate in the Resurrection of the Righteous. When they are *physically* resurrected from the dead, their mortal bodies will be, at that time, completely *transformed* into the Glory of the *Living Word* of God that Jesus Christ already is; and they will become members of the same "flesh" that He already has. No longer *parabolically*, but *literally*. Jesus had in mind the *parabolic imagery* the Prophets used to describe that event when He prayed this prayer:

*These things Jesus spoke; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Thy Son, that the Son may glorify Thee, even as Thou gavest Him authority over all mankind, that to all whom Thou hast given Him, He may give eternal life. And this is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. I glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou hast given Me to do. And now, glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, Father, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. **I manifested Thy name to the men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world; Thine they were, and Thou gavest them to Me, and they have kept Thy word. Now they have come to know that everything Thou hast given Me is from Thee; for the words which Thou gavest Me I have given to them; and they received {them,} and truly understood that I came forth from Thee, and they believed that Thou didst send Me. I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the***

world, but of those whom Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine; and all things that are Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine; and I have been glorified in them. And I am no more in the world; and {yet} they themselves are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep them in Thy name, {the name} which Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, even as We {are.} While I was with them, I was keeping them in Thy name which Thou hast given Me; and I guarded them, and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy made full in themselves. **I have given them Thy word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.** I do not ask Thee to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil {one.} They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. **Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth.** As Thou didst send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. **I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, {art} in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me. And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given to them; that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and didst love them, even as Thou didst love Me. Father, I desire that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, in order that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me; for Thou didst love Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, although the world has not known Thee, yet I have known Thee; and these have known that Thou didst send Me; and I have made Thy name known to them, and will make it known; that the love wherewith Thou didst love Me may be in them, and I in them."**

(John 17:1–26)

Jesus is praying for every True Believer down through the centuries who has (through belief in the introduction to the *Living Word of God*, which is known as "the Gospel") become "One" with Jesus Christ in the *Living Word of God* that He became when God resurrected Him from the dead. That *Living Word* is not only the image and likeness of the *Living Word*

that Jesus Christ is; it is also His Glory. But that's somewhat beside the point.

As you may remember, I began this diatribe by deriding the numskull notion that God *works with* "the Church" as a *collective* organization rather than *working in* the individual members of the *collective* Body of Believers. I only brought up the *parabolic imagery* related to "the Church" as the *collective* Body of Christ so that I could tell you the organizational structure that God imposed on the Apostolic Church was just part of a *parabolic pantomime* in which the Apostles, Prophets, Teachers, and Evangelists of the Apostolic Church were "building a house" for God. God gave up on that organizational structure a long time ago—when Pretenders finally managed to take control of the Church. But He has never given up on *working in* the individual Believer.

Let's All Pitch in and "Build a House"?

Remember the phrase "for the building up of itself/the Body of Christ" that we saw Paul use earlier? The Greek text does not say "building up." It just says "building." Paul was speaking *parabolically* in terms of the *parabolic imagery* related to the Hebrew idiom "build a house." The translator did not know that, so he added the word *up* because he thought Paul *meant* something like "edify." The Truth is, Paul was referring to the role that the leaders of the Apostolic Church played in *parabolically* "building a house" for God by explaining the Truth of *The Apostolic Teaching*—the *Living Word of God*—to True Believers. Paul's point in that passage is, if True Believers in the Apostolic Church continued to grow in their knowledge of the Truth of *The Teaching*, the *collective* Body of Believers would eventually become "*The House*" that God desired. As he indicates, the leaders of the Church were supposed to continue working to "build *The House*" of God:

until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ.

(Ephesians 4:13)

The *parabolic imagery* related to the Hebrew idiom "build a house" is exactly the same *parabolic imagery* Paul had in mind when he said this:

And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to babes in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able {to receive it.} Indeed, even now you are not yet able, for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men? For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not {mere} men? What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave {opportunity} to each one. I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But let each man be careful how he builds upon it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is {to be} revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire. Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and {that} the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are.

(1 Corinthians 3:1–17)

Most folks ignore those last two verses, but that sort of negates the point of what Paul has said about the Apostles working to "make a name," "raise up a seed," and "build a house" for God. But here is a small bit of information you need to know before you can understand what Paul *meant* by what he said in those two verses. The Greek language of the New Testament makes a distinction between "you" (*singular*) and "you all" (*plural*). The Hebrew language in which the Hebrew Scriptures were written makes exactly that same distinction. Moses, the Master Prophet, uses that grammatical idiosyncrasy to conceal some rather important

information about God's plan. But we can (and will) talk about that a bit later. For now, let's just make sure we understand what Paul had in mind when he said "you."

Every *you* in the last two verses quoted above is *plural*, not *singular*. I pity you if you cannot grasp the *significance* of that seemingly *insignificant* fact. In that passage, Paul is not alluding to the *parabolic imagery* in which an individual Believer is a "temple" (residence) in which the "Spirit" of God resides, he is speaking in terms of the *collective* Body of Believers as "*The House*" (family) of God. As I may have already mentioned on other occasions, the *parabolic imagery* standing behind the two phrases "*in Christ*" and "*Christ in you*" (*plural*) is exactly the same. But if you get the two concepts confused, you can end up believing some absolutely *stupid* things, one of which is the belief that God *works with* the *collective* Body of Believers rather than just *working in* the *individual* Believer.

The Apostles were *working with* the *collective* Body of Believers ("you all" plural) because God called them to "build a house" (the *collective* Body of Believers) and "raise up a seed" (the *collective* Body of Believers) in which His "Name" (the *Living Word* of God) could dwell forever. Speaking *parabolically*, "*The House*" (family) that the Apostles, Prophets, Teachers, and Evangelists were "building" is a "temple," but that is only because the *collective* Body of Believers will be God's "house" (family) when it is finally COMPLETE. Since the Apostles were themselves members of that "house," "*The House*" was *parabolically* "building itself." So let's not get God and the Apostles confused. The last time I checked, they were not one and the same—but perhaps I was mistaken. (A little sarcasm never hurts.)

Just because the Apostles were *working with* the *collective* Body of Believers, that does not *mean* God was also *working with* that "house" as a *collective* Body of Believers. By no means! He kept right on doing what He has always done—*working in* (not *with*) each *individual* member of "*The House*" (family) *individually*. That is, He left the things related to the *physical* to the men He called to *work with* the *collective physical* Body of Believers. It was their responsibility (and they had the authority) to set up local church governments and do whatever else was necessary to impose discipline on the *collective physical* Body of Believers so that the men God called could teach True Believers *The Apostolic Teaching*. All the while, God was *working in* each *individual*

Believer to *transform* him into His Own image and likeness through the *Living Word* of God the Believer heard taught by the men God had called to that task. As each *individual* member of the *collective* Body learned more of the Truth of *The Teaching*, that *Living Word* of God *worked* in him and he was thereby able to contribute more to the work of the *collective* Body of Believers. In that way, the Church was *parabolically* “building” itself.

One of the most distasteful tasks that God appointed the leaders of the Apostolic Church to accomplish was the not-so-desirable job of *physically* “cutting off from” the *collective* Body of Believers those unregenerate lamebrains who somehow *thought* God would accept them if they could just rub shoulders with the Elect on a regular basis. The Church is filled with fools like that today. That’s why God reserved to Himself the right to *spiritually* (not *physically*) “cut off from” the *collective* Body of Believers in those cases where the men He appointed to *work with* the *collective physical* Body of Believers failed at their appointed task. (See *Not All Israel Is Israel*.) Unfortunately, God has once again decided it is time for Him to step in to do what the leaders of the Church failed to do.

As I have repeatedly pointed out over the past fifteen years, the leaders of the Early Church could not keep Pretenders out of the Church. Consequently, over the course of the second century, Satan was gradually able to infiltrate his agents into leadership positions in the Church. (See *The Way, The Truth, The Life*.) Those unregenerate individuals were ultimately responsible for the loss of *The Apostolic Teaching*. (See past issues of *The Voice of Elijah® Update*.) That is exactly what Jesus indicated would happen to the Church when He told His disciples the Parable of the Tares:

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)

It should be obvious that, somewhere along the way, the leaders of the Church failed to accomplish the task God had given them. The Roman Catholic Church doesn’t do much excommunication nowadays, and the Protestant Church has never even tried. I have to admit rather sheepishly that I don’t know where the Greek Orthodox Church stands on the issue of “cutting off from” the Church. But wherever it is, you can safely bet they are faring no better than the Catholics and Protestants. Rather than doing what the Apostles did, the Pretenders who control the Church today do precisely the opposite. They invite every Tom, Dick, and completely unregenerate Harry to “come on down and worship with us on Sunday”; and there is very seldom, if ever, a legitimate Evangelist waiting to preach the Gospel to them when they arrive. That is why God now intends to do what Jesus said the leaders of the Church should not even try to do after Satan’s “tares” took root in the Church. He is going to separate His “wheat” from Satan’s “tares”:

Then He left the multitudes, and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.” And He answered and said, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, and the field is the world; and {as for} the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil {one;} and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels. Therefore just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.”
(Matthew 13:36–43)

The time has finally arrived when God is going to “cut off from” *Corporate Israel*—once and for all—all the Pretenders who at one time repented and believed the

Gospel but failed to nurture the Holy “Seed” that they *received* when they were “born again.” However, just as in the days of Elijah—when God stepped in and “cut off from” Corporate Israel a majority of those “in Israel”—and in the days of John the Baptist—when He once again took it upon Himself to “cut off from” Corporate Israel all the Jews except Jesus Christ—He is not going to do anything that anyone can observe *physically*. (See *Not All Israel Is Israel*.) He is merely going to take out “the book of the LORD” that Isaiah mentions in Isaiah 34:16 and “blot out” the names of all those who have somehow become “a root bearing poisonous fruit and wormwood”:

“Now not with you alone am I making this covenant and this oath, but both with those who stand here with us today in the presence of the LORD our God and with those who are not with us here today (for you know how we lived in the land of Egypt, and how we came through the midst of the nations through which you passed. Moreover, you have seen their abominations and their idols {of} wood, stone, silver, and gold, which {they had} with them); lest there shall be among you a man or woman, or family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the LORD our God, to go and serve the gods of those nations; lest there shall be among you a root bearing poisonous fruit and wormwood. And it shall be when he hears the words of this curse, that he will boast, saying, ‘I have peace though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart in order to destroy the watered {land} with the dry.’ The LORD shall never be willing to forgive him, but rather the anger of the LORD and His jealousy will burn against that man, and every curse which is written in this book will rest on him, and the LORD will blot out his name from under heaven. Then the LORD will single him out for adversity from all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant which are written in this book of the law.”

(Deuteronomy 29:14–21)

Just as was the case in both of the instances I mentioned above, there will also be in these Last Days those who go on falsely claiming to be members of Corporate Israel. But God will not be *working* in any of them. He will instead be *working* in the members of a *remnant* that consists solely of those who have not yet succumbed to Satan’s lie:

I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says in {the passage about} Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? “Lord, THEY HAVE KILLED THY PROPHETS, THEY HAVE TORN DOWN THINE ALTARS, AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE.” But what is the divine response to him? “I HAVE KEPT for Myself SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL.” In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to {God’s} gracious choice.

(Romans 11:1–5)

Now that I have explained *what* God intends to do here at the End of the Age, let me explain a bit more about *how* He intends to go about it.

Those Who Don’t Know, Don’t Know

If you are able to see through Satan’s lies, you already know that God despises the hoards of Pretenders who rather routinely rest their rotund rears in the pews every Sunday and falsely claim to be one of His Own. But how does He expect True Believers to deal with that totally aberrant situation? That is, how should we as True Believers view our relationship to those “Pharisees” in the Church who have no insight at all into what God is doing? I ask that question only because the author of the Book of Hebrews makes the following rather interesting statement in regard to the *physical* gathering of the *collective* Body of Believers:

Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since {we have} a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled {clean} from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging {one another;} and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.

(Hebrews 10:19–25)

You are probably already aware that dimwitted Pretenders will challenge True Believers with the equally dimwitted assertion that the author of the Book of Hebrews is demanding their participation in the geophagic goofiness of the Serpent that masquerades as “Christianity” today. So let’s take a good hard look at the writer’s exhortation and discuss how it applies to the True Believers scattered throughout the Church today.

It goes without saying that the Pretenders in the Church won’t be able to understand what the author of the Book of Hebrews had in mind when he said “a new and living way”; but True Believers will. He is alluding to the *parabolic image* of *The Apostolic Teaching* as “*The Way of the Lord*” in which Believers are supposed to “walk” (mentally) on “*The Way*” back to Heaven. As the Prophet who wrote the Book of Proverbs repeatedly tells us, Pretenders can’t get their feeble minds around that *parabolic imagery* simply because they have their own “way” of thinking. However, anyone with a reasonable amount of intelligence should be able to understand the reason the author gives for exhorting True Believers to assemble together when he says this:

*And let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging {one another;} and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.
(Hebrews 10:24–25)*

First of all, it should not (but probably does) need to be pointed out that the personal pronouns *us*, *our*, and *you* mentioned in that verse can only be referring to the *collective* Body of True Believers. Since that restrictive designation does not include Pretenders, it cannot logically be applied to the Church today since Pretenders are in the majority there. So let’s not fall for the nonsensical notion that God would insist True Believers should gather together in some local church somewhere with Pretenders who claim to be “Christian” but really aren’t. Those people are nothing more than busybodies who have somehow acquired the insidiously bad habit of opening and reading other people’s mail. Somewhere along the way they fell for Satan’s delusion and thereby got the absolutely insane notion that the things they read in the Scriptures were addressed to them personally. They aren’t. Never have been. Never will be.

If you took the time to read the passage above very carefully, you already know that the author of the Book of Hebrews had in mind the assembling of True Believers for the purpose of encouraging each other to continue believing the Truth of *The Apostolic Teaching*. One can easily imagine that the leaders of the Apostolic Church were contributing their part to that goal by teaching *The Apostolic Teaching* and exhorting True Believers to live according to the Truth they understood. If that be true—and it is—how do you think God expects True Believers today to respond to the author’s exhortation, especially since the Early Church lost *The Apostolic Teaching* and the Church has long since been overrun by Pretenders?

If the leaders of the local church no longer have a knowledge of the Truth of *The Teaching*, and the other folks in the local church are nothing more than Pretenders, what does God expect a True Believer to do? Good question. Unfortunately, God did not call me to answer that question for you. You need to decide for yourself what is right for you. I can only tell you that God did not call me as an Apostle with the authority to establish a local “church” so that True Believers might once again be able to assemble together and return to the practice of excluding Pretenders. No, the time has long since passed for that. God has a far more definitive “gathering” of True Believers in mind. This time, He intends to “gather” Believers in such a way that Pretenders will *forever* be “cut off from” the *collective* Body of Jesus Christ.

What Sort of “Assembling Together”?

Do you remember what Jesus said about the “gathering” of Believers and unbelievers in the Parable of the Tares? Take another look. Here is how He describes the End of the Age:

*“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 13:29–30)*

When Jesus explained the Parable of the Tares to His disciples a bit later, He said this:

“Therefore just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.”
(Matthew 13:40–43)

Don’t you find that passage interesting? I do. He specifically mentions the “gathering” of Believers in the parable itself, but He omits any mention of it in His explanation of what He *meant* by the parable. Instead, He only *talks about* how the angels are going to “gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks.” Jesus is *talking about* God “cutting off from” Corporate Israel (what He calls “His Kingdom”) those who failed to pay due diligence when diligence was due. But Jesus also gives an extremely important clue as to the process He had in mind when He says this:

“Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father.”
(Matthew 13:43a)

If one does not understand that every parable Jesus told is in some way pointing back to something the Prophets said, one has no hope at all of ever understanding what He *meant* by what He said. And unless one has insight into the *parabolic imagery* and Hebrew idioms He had in mind when He quoted the Hebrew Scriptures, that person will open (and does open) his mouth only to reveal he is an abject idiot. In this case, it is generally agreed that Jesus is rather loosely quoting a phrase the Prophet Daniel used to describe events that will occur at the End of the Age:

*“Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands {guard} over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace {and} everlasting contempt. **And those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the***

expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase.”
(Daniel 12:1–4)

That passage *parabolically* explains the process by which God intends to go about “gathering out” the Pretenders who have somehow found their way into Corporate Israel (“His Kingdom”). That is, He is going to determine who needs to be separated out of the *collective* Body of Believers by assessing what each one believes. The ones who Jesus indicates will not be “gathered out”—that is, not be “cut off from” Corporate Israel (“His Kingdom”)—are “those who have insight” at “the end of time.” Daniel doesn’t actually say “the end of time”; he says “the time of the end.” He uses exactly the same phrase twice and the translator translates the phrase in two entirely different ways. He failed to get it exactly right either time, but he did get it more or less right in the following passage, where Daniel explains what he *meant* by “those who have insight” at “the time of the end”:

Then I, Daniel, looked and behold, two others were standing, one on this bank of the river, and the other on that bank of the river. And one said to the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, “How long {will it be} until the end of {these} wonders?” And I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as he raised his right hand and his left toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half {a time;} and as soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these {events} will be completed. As for me, I heard but could not understand; so I said, “My lord, what {will be} the outcome of these {events?}” And he said, “Go {your way,} Daniel, for {these} words are concealed and sealed up until the end time. Many will be purged, purified and refined; but the wicked will act wickedly, and none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand.”
(Daniel 12:5–10)

It seems self-evident (to me at least) that if one does not understand the things that Daniel was told to conceal and seal up until “the time of the end,” that

person would fall squarely into the category clearly defined by the statement “none of the wicked will understand.” That complete lack of insight into the Truth on the part of those unsuspecting misfortunates is what the Apostle Paul explains this way:

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 2:3–12)

In other words, Paul tells us that when Satan appears in the person of the Antichrist, most folks—those who take pleasure in wickedness—won’t understand the Truth just because they don’t want to understand. That sounds a whole lot like the Pretenders firmly entrenched in the Church today, doesn’t it? You can’t tell them anything they don’t already know; and should you be stupid enough to try, they simply shrug it off with, “That’s your interpretation.” But that’s somewhat beside the point. What do you think about all this? How would you go about making sure that you aren’t one of “the wicked” that Daniel points to when he says “the wicked will act wickedly, and none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand”? You might want to start by making sure that you know what you need to know when you need to know it. So let’s get to it.

It Is Written ...

One of the phrases the Prophets used that Jesus was also rather fond of quoting is the statement, “It is written.” In His handling of Satan’s rather ridiculous temptation, He used the phrase three times:

*Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. And the tempter came and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.” **But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.’”** Then the devil took Him into the holy city; and he had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, ‘HE WILL GIVE HIS ANGELS CHARGE CONCERNING YOU’; and ‘ON {their} HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, LEST YOU STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.’”*

*Jesus said to him, “On the other hand, it is written, ‘YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.’” Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory; and he said to Him, “All these things will I give You, if You fall down and worship me.” **Then Jesus said to him, “Begone, Satan! For it is written, ‘YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.’”** Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and {began} to minister to Him.*

(Matthew 4:1–11; cf. Luke 4:1–13)

If you did your homework, you already know that when Jesus says to Satan, “It is written,” He repeatedly quotes from the Book of Deuteronomy. (You might want to make a note of that; it could come in handy later on.) He doesn’t always do that; at other times He refers to something that one of the other Prophets wrote:

*“This is the one about whom **it is written,** ‘BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER BEFORE YOUR FACE, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY BEFORE YOU.’”*
(Matthew 11:10; cf. Mark 1:2, Luke 7:27)

*And He said to them, “**It is written,** ‘MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER’; but you are making it a*

ROBBERS' DEN."

(Matthew 21:13; cf. Luke 19:46)

"The Son of Man {is to} go, just as **it is written** of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born."

(Matthew 26:24; cf. Mark 14:21)

Then Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away because of Me this night, for **it is written**, 'I WILL STRIKE DOWN THE SHEPHERD, AND THE SHEEP OF THE FLOCK SHALL BE SCATTERED.'"

(Matthew 26:31; cf. Mark 14:27)

And He said to them, "Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as **it is written**,

"THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS,

BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME.

BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME,

TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.'"

(Mark 7:6–7)

"But I say to you, that Elijah has indeed come, and they did to him whatever they wished, just as **it is written** of him."

(Mark 9:13)

And He said to them, "Thus **it is written**, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day."

(Luke 24:46)

"**It is written** in the prophets, 'AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me."

(John 6:45)

It should be obvious that when Jesus says, "It is written," He is explaining how something Moses or the other Prophets wrote applies to His Own day. But, if we apply that same principle to the occasions on which the Prophets themselves said, "It is written," an interesting fact sort of magically floats to the surface. It begins with what the Lord said to Joshua:

"This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to **all that is written in**

it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success."

(Joshua 1:8)

After that, the Prophets who wrote the historical books of the Old Testament repeatedly refer back to what Moses wrote in "this book of the law (*Teaching*)" by saying, "It is written." They say this:

Then Joshua built an altar to the LORD, the God of Israel, in Mount Ebal, just as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded the sons of Israel, **as it is written in the book of the law of Moses**, an altar of uncut stones, on which no man had wielded an iron {tool;} and they offered burnt offerings on it to the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings.

(Joshua 8:30–31)

Now it came about after many days, when the LORD had given rest to Israel from all their enemies on every side, and Joshua was old, advanced in years, that Joshua called for all Israel, for their elders and their heads and their judges and their officers, and said to them, "I am old, advanced in years. And you have seen all that the LORD your God has done to all these nations because of you, for the LORD your God is He who has been fighting for you. See, I have apportioned to you these nations which remain as an inheritance for your tribes, with all the nations which I have cut off, from the Jordan even to the Great Sea toward the setting of the sun. And the LORD your God, He shall thrust them out from before you and drive them from before you; and you shall possess their land, just as the LORD your God promised you. Be very firm, then, to keep and do **all that is written in the book of the law of Moses**, so that you may not turn aside from it to the right hand or to the left."

(Joshua 23:1–6)

Moreover, Jehoiada placed the offices of the house of the LORD under the authority of the Levitical priests, whom David had assigned over the house of the LORD, to offer the burnt offerings of the LORD, **as it is written in the law of Moses**—with rejoicing and singing according to the order of David.

(2 Chronicles 23:18)

However, he did not put their children to death, but {did} **as it is written in the law in the book of Moses**, which

the LORD commanded, saying, "Fathers shall not be put to death for sons, nor sons be put to death for fathers, but each shall be put to death for his own sin."

(2 Chronicles 25:4)

{He} also {appointed} the king's portion of his goods for the burnt offerings, {namely,} for the morning and evening burnt offerings, and the burnt offerings for the sabbaths and for the new moons and for the fixed festivals, **as it is written in the law of the LORD.**

(2 Chronicles 31:3)

Then they removed the burnt offerings that {they} might give them to the sections of the fathers' households of the lay people to present to the LORD, **as it is written in the book of Moses.** {They did} this also with the bulls.

(2 Chronicles 35:12)

Then Jeshua the son of Jozadak and his brothers the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his brothers arose and built the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings on it, **as it is written in the law of Moses, the man of God.** So they set up the altar on its foundation, for they were terrified because of the peoples of the lands; and they offered burnt offerings on it to the LORD, burnt offerings morning and evening. And they celebrated the Feast of Booths, **as it is written, and** {offered} the fixed number of burnt offerings daily, according to the ordinance, as each day required.

(Ezra 3:2-4)

Then they appointed the priests to their divisions and the Levites in their orders for the service of God in Jerusalem, **as it is written in the book of Moses.**

(Ezra 6:18)

Let's put these things into proper perspective. Today, we have both the New Testament and the Old Testament Scriptures to quote from and say, "It is written." The Apostolic Church did not have the New Testament—since it had not yet been written and canonized. Therefore, they could only refer to the Hebrew Scriptures (which they did) and say, "It is written." Likewise, the Prophets other than Moses had only what Moses had written—the Pentateuch—since the prophetic writings had not yet been written and canonized. Consequently, when they say "It is written," they are logically referring to something Moses wrote.

But then there is the issue of what the Prophet meant when he wrote this:

*Sacrifice and meal offering Thou hast not desired;
My ears Thou hast opened;
Burnt offering and sin offering Thou hast not required.
Then I said, "Behold, I come;
In the scroll of the book it is written of me;
I delight to do Thy will, O my God;
Thy Law is within my heart."
(Psalm 40:6-8)*

If I were to hazard a guess as to which Prophet wrote this psalm and dedicated it "to {Messianic} David," I would have to say it was undoubtedly Ezekiel. The reason for that is fairly easy to understand. Ezekiel explains a lot of the things mentioned in the psalm, especially *why* God does not desire sacrifices and burnt offerings. He sums it up when he says this:

*"And I also gave them statutes that were not good and ordinances by which they could not live."
(Ezekiel 20:25)*

Ezekiel also explains how God plans to "put" "the Law (Teaching)" within the "heart" of the Believer under the New Covenant. Beyond that, the Prophet who wrote Psalm 40 uses a Hebrew word (*megillah*) that is rather commonly taken to mean "scroll"; but if that be so, it is illogically paired with another word that is known to mean "scroll." Since Jeremiah (Jer. 36:2, 4) and Ezekiel (Ezek. 2:9) are the only Prophets who do the same thing, that is just one more piece of evidence that Ezekiel most likely wrote the psalm. But that does not solve the problem of what the Prophet meant when he said, "In the scroll of the book it is written of me." What "scroll"? What "book"? Where is it written?

The author of the Book of Hebrews explains the meaning of Psalm 40 this way:

For the Law, having a shadow of the coming good things—not the very image of the actions—by the same sacrifices which they offer every year can never permanently COMPLETE those who approach. Otherwise, would they not have stopped offering because, having been cleansed once, none of those who serve would still have a consciousness of sins? But in those is a recollection of sins every year. For blood of bulls and goats is not able to remove sins.

Therefore, coming into the world, He says: "A SACRIFICE AND AN OFFERING YOU DID NOT DESIRE, BUT YOU PREPARED A BODY FOR ME. AND IN BURNT OFFERINGS FOR SIN YOU DID NOT TAKE PLEASURE. THEN I SAID, 'LOOK! I COME (AT THE HEAD OF THE SCROLL IT IS WRITTEN CONCERNING ME) TO DO—O GOD—YOUR WILL.'" After saying above that

"SACRIFICE AND OFFERING

AND BURNT OFFERINGS FOR SIN

YOU DID NOT DESIRE" and

"YOU DID NOT TAKE PLEASURE IN"

—which are offered according to law, He then said, "LOOK! I COME ... TO DO YOUR WILL." He removes the first to raise up the second. By which "will" we have been made holy through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. (Hebrews 10:1-10) —my interim translation

Did you notice how I translated the phrase that you saw translated earlier as "in the scroll of the book"? I translated it "at the head of the scroll" because that is what the Greek text actually says in Hebrews 10:7. That is also the way Psalm 40:7 was translated by the Jews who created the Septuagint when they translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. Furthermore, they did exactly the same thing in Ezekiel 2:9. That is because the Greek word for *head* was—in their day—used to refer to a "head," "chapter," or "division" of a written text. So the Jews who translated the Septuagint obviously thought that was what the author of the Hebrew text *meant* in those two instances.

The Truth is, the Prophet who wrote Psalm 40 was referring to "the head of the scroll" on which Moses wrote the Pentateuch. So if you want to see where "it is written" that Jesus Christ, the *Living Word* of God, would one day come to do the will of God in a Body that the *Living Word* of God prepared for Him, I suggest you begin by *carefully* reading what Moses wrote in the first chapter (*head*) of the Book of Genesis. There, you will find that God planned to do what He *promised* twice. So let's not confuse those two occasions and ignorantly assume the author of the Book of Hebrews was *talking about* one and not the other.

Where Is It "Written Concerning Me"?

Before we continue on, meandering down "The Way," let's look back at where we have been. First, I showed you how Jesus quoted the Prophets by saying,

"It is written." Then I pointed out that the Prophets are *always* referring to what Moses wrote when they say "It is written." Now that you know that, let me point out another not-so-obvious characteristic of the Prophets.

Just as today we quote from the New and Old Testaments without saying, "It is written," Jesus and the Apostles also quoted (most often) from the Greek Septuagint translation of the Old Testament without saying, "It is written." The Prophets, in turn, do exactly the same thing when they quote what Moses wrote. The problem is, unless you pay really close attention to what Moses wrote, you have no idea when the Prophets are quoting him. That's why I am going to show you what Moses wrote about God "gathering out" unbelievers and "gathering in" Believers here at the End of the Age. Then you will know where the Prophets got what they say about that.

One of the most intriguing experiences one could ever imagine is reading the original Hebrew text of what Moses wrote and being able to see the various techniques he used to conceal what he *meant* by what he *wrote*. At times, his methods are so remarkable that one has to step back and just admire the artistic ability he so obviously brought to his task. His deliberate obfuscation so completely befuddled the liberal "scholars" of the nineteenth century that they completely gave up trying to understand what he had written. Instead, they began slicing and dicing the text of the Pentateuch like a bunch of kindergarten kids making paper-doll strings. Consequently, much of what passes for "scholarship" in the realm of Old Testament studies today is nothing more than the grotesque byproduct of a tacit admission on the part of unregenerate men that they have no idea what Moses *meant* by what he wrote.

Remember what I told you about the *significance* of Paul saying "you" (*singular*) and "you all" (*plural*)? He learned to make that extremely fine distinction by reading what Moses and the other Prophets of Israel wrote. As you might expect, the Prophets of Israel learned it from none other than the Master Prophet himself—Moses.

One of the ways that Moses concealed the *meaning* of what he wrote was to speak in terms of "you" (*singular*) and "you all" (*plural*). When he wasn't doing that, he was amusing himself by playing "him" (*singular*) off against "them" (*plural*). But again, if one does not understand the *parabolic imagery* that Moses had in mind when he wrote those things, that person may as

well be reading a phone book. In that case, at least, he probably wouldn't come away with the delusional belief that he understood what all those names and numbers *meant*. Here is a passage that illustrates the way Moses mixes things up so that he both conceals and reveals what he had in mind:

"Now when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very corners of your field, neither shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest. Nor shall you glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather the fallen fruit of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the needy and for the stranger. I am the LORD your God."
(Leviticus 19:9–10)

Did you see it? Did you see what Moses did? Of course you didn't! You didn't see anything at all. If you *thought* you did, you had best brush Satan off your shoulder so that he can't keep whispering nonsense in your ear. How could you see what Moses did when the English translation completely obscures the details Moses hid in the original text? Let me show you what Moses actually said:

*"Now when **you** {plural} reap the harvest of **your** {plural} land, **you** {singular} shall not reap to the very corners of **your** {singular} field, neither shall **you** {singular} gather the gleanings of **your** {singular} harvest. Nor shall **you** {singular} glean **your** {singular} vineyard, nor shall **you** {singular} gather the fallen fruit of **your** {singular} vineyard; **you** {singular} shall leave them for the needy and for the stranger. I am the LORD **your** {plural} God."*
(Leviticus 19:9–10)

Do you see how careful Moses was to make a distinction between the individual and the group as a whole? That's an interesting bit of insight, isn't it? Now that you know *what* Moses did, let me tell you *why* he did it. To understand what I am going to tell you, you have to start thinking in terms of the *parabolic imagery* which depicts Corporate Israel as one Individual—the Firstborn Son of God ("You") Who never changes—and the *individual* members of Corporate Israel as a *collective group* of individuals ("you all") that constantly changes. Then you should be able to see that when Moses is referring to Corporate Israel, he speaks in the *singular*; and when he is referring to

the *collective group*, he speaks in the *plural*. Got that? We'll see. Take a look at this passage:

*"But if **you** do not obey Me and do not carry out all these commandments, if, instead, **you** reject My statutes, and if **your** soul abhors My ordinances so as not to carry out all My commandments, {and} so break My covenant, I, in turn, will do this to **you**: I will appoint over **you** a sudden terror, consumption and fever that shall waste away the eyes and cause the soul to pine away; also, **you** shall sow **your** seed uselessly, for **your** enemies shall eat it up. And I will set My face against **you** so that **you** shall be struck down before your enemies; and those who hate **you** shall rule over **you**, and **you** shall flee when no one is pursuing **you**. If also after these things, **you** do not obey Me, then I will punish **you** seven times more for **your** sins. And I will also break down **your** pride of power; I will also make **your** sky like iron and **your** earth like bronze."*
(Leviticus 26:14–19)

Every *you* in that passage is either *singular* or *plural*. Which one do you think they are? Are they all *singular*, or are they all *plural*? Before you answer that, let me show you another passage where Moses does exactly the same thing but this time uses exactly the opposite number of the personal pronoun:

*"The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law. So it shall be when all of these things have come upon **you**, the blessing and the curse which I have set before **you**, and **you** call {them} to mind in all nations where the LORD **your** God has banished **you**, and **you** return to the LORD **your** God and obey Him with all **your** heart and soul according to all that I command **you** today, **you** and **your** sons, then the LORD **your** God will restore **you** from captivity, and have compassion on **you**, and will gather **you** again from all the peoples where the LORD **your** God has scattered **you**. If **your** outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD **your** God will gather **you**, and from there He will bring **you** back. And the LORD **your** God will bring **you** into the land which **your** fathers possessed, and **you** shall possess it; and He will prosper **you** and multiply **you** more than **your** fathers. Moreover the LORD **your** God will circumcise **your** heart and the heart of **your** descendants, to love the LORD **your** God with all **your** heart and with*

all **your** soul, in order that **you** may live. And the LORD **your** God will inflict all these curses on **your** enemies and on those who hate **you**, who persecuted **you**. And **you** shall again obey the LORD, and observe all His commandments which I command **you** today. Then the LORD **your** God will prosper **you** abundantly in all the work of **your** hand, in the offspring of **your** body and in the offspring of **your** cattle and in the produce of **your** ground, for the LORD will again rejoice over **you** for good, just as He rejoiced over **your** fathers; if **you** obey the LORD **your** God to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law, if **you** turn to the LORD **your** God with all **your** heart and soul.”
(Deuteronomy 29:29–30:10)

Every *you* in that passage is exactly the opposite of what it was in the passage above. In each case, every *you* is either *singular* or *plural*. So which one is which? In the passage above, the topic was “scattering.” Here it is “gathering.” Does that give you a clue as to what Moses had in mind? It should. Because those Pretenders (*plural*) “in Israel” who are “gathered out” certainly won’t be members of the One (*singular*) Who is going to be “gathered in.”

The reason Moses promises *Corporate* Israel (“*You*” *singular*) that He (*singular*) will be “gathered” and *restored* to the Promised Land is because He knew He was speaking to Jesus Christ, the *Individual* Who would eventually become *Corporate* Israel and thereby qualify to *inherit what was promised* when God finally *fulfilled the promise*. (See *Not All Israel Is Israel*.) But God’s *promise* that He would one day “gather” *Corporate* Israel applies only to those who are members who are “in” *Corporate* Israel, that is, those “in Jesus Christ,” at the time when God decides to *fulfill the promise*. It does not apply to any arbitrary *group* of individuals who *think* they are, and claim to be, *Corporate* Israel. The best that the *individual* members of any such *collective group* can hope for is to escape the fate of those who are “gathered out,” that is, “cut off from” *Corporate* Israel, before *Corporate* Israel *inherits what was promised*. Which brings us right back to where we began.

“It Is Written” in the Book

The Pretenders in the Church today who *think* they can slip into Heaven unnoticed in the *collective*

crowd of Pretenders surrounding them really should consider the implications of what I just explained to you. But they won’t. The sad news is, they can’t even understand enough of what I said to realize they are standing in an *extremely* precarious position—directly under the wrath of the angry God of *Corporate* Israel. Consequently, they will continue right on doing what they have gotten accustomed to doing—publicly practicing their ridiculous religious rituals and piously pretending they are one of God’s Own. As far as they can tell, everything is still right between them and their goofy god of unconditional grace. And it is, since that god doesn’t even exist.

For the benefit of those of you who can still understand the things I have written here, I must say just one more thing. When the Righteous awaken on the morning of the Resurrection, they will find that God did exactly what He *promised* He would do in the *parabolic imagery* of *The Teaching*. That is, He *parabolically* “took” a “harlot” woman and “built a house,” “raised up a seed,” and “made a name” for Himself. In so doing, He merged their two “houses” into One—in the One Who is “*The Name*.” The members of that new “house” will continue to bear the image and likeness of those who founded the two “houses” from which they have descended. Yet they will be a completely new species of *creatures*, unlike any that God *created* before.

If you can understand these things, God expects you to continue to grow into the image and likeness of the “*Seed*” He “planted” within you. He does not expect you to become “a root bearing poisonous fruit and wormwood.” Therefore, if you don’t understand the *parabolic imagery* related to “wormwood,” you might want to start there. Those who seek will find; but those who merely want to pretend will be obvious to all at the End, because it will no longer be possible for Pretenders to hide in the crowd:

So you will again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him. “For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze,” says the LORD of hosts, “so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. But for you who fear My name the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall.”
(Malachi 3:18–4:2) ■



The Voice of Elijah® includes this column to show you how some of the underlying parabolic images of the Gospel message of the Old Testament speak to the times in which we find ourselves. There are a variety of weather images to be found in the parables of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Most are associated in some way with the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

The function of a parable is to say, "This IS LIKE that." One can usually determine what "this" is; the problem with understanding lies in knowing what "that" is. You should already know how the Passover Parable depicts the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. I explained those things nearly fifteen years ago. Now, since circumstances change over time, I can also tell you the Passover Parable depicts events that will occur at the End of the Age.

I didn't say I would explain those things; I merely said, "I can also tell you the Passover Parable depicts events that will occur at the End of the Age." So let me point out just one "this" that will be LIKE "that" at the End of the Age, when God pours out His wrath on Planet Earth, which the Apostle John says "mystically is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified." (Rev. 11:8) John said that so that those who understand the *parabolic imagery* of *The Teaching* would mentally superimpose the imagery of the Exodus over the Crucifixion and the End of the Age. That is because the *parabolic imagery* in the Passover Parable describes not only the death and Resurrection of "The Man" Jesus Christ, it also describes the death and resurrection of the man Adam at the End of the Age. [See "He's Coming in Clouds of Glory (Whatever That Means)," *The Voice of Elijah*®, January 2001; "If He's 'The Man,' Who Are You?" *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 2001; and "Moses and 'the Man,'" *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 2003.]

Take a look at the following part of the *parabolic pantomime* that God orchestrated when Moses and

Aaron led the sons of Israel out of Egypt:

Now the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky, that **hail** may fall on all the land of Egypt, on man and on beast and on every plant of the field, throughout the land of Egypt." And Moses stretched out his staff toward the sky, and the LORD sent thunder and **hail**, and fire ran down to the earth. And the LORD rained **hail** on the land of Egypt. So there was **hail**, and fire flashing continually in the midst of the **hail**, very severe, such as had not been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. And the **hail** struck all that was in the field through all the land of Egypt, both man and beast; the **hail** also struck every plant of the field and shattered every tree of the field. Only in the land of Goshen, where the sons of Israel {were,} there was no **hail**.
(Exodus 9:22–26)

The Apostle John explains the role that hail will play in the days that are coming:

And huge **hailstones**, about one hundred pounds each, came down from heaven upon men; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the **hail**, because its plague was extremely severe.
(Revelation 16:21)

That sounds fearsome, doesn't it? But that is not the most terrifying aspect of what is yet to come. There is one thing the sons of the Liar fear more than anything else: The Truth. Therefore, the hail that is coming will play one extremely important role in God's plan:

Because you have said,
"We have made a covenant with death,
And with Sheol we have made a pact.
The overwhelming scourge will not reach us when it passes by,
**For we have made falsehood our refuge and
we have concealed ourselves with deception.**"
Therefore thus says the Lord GOD,
"Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone,
A costly cornerstone {for} the foundation, firmly placed.
He who believes {in it} will not be disturbed.
And I will make justice the measuring line,
And righteousness the level;
**Then hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies,
And the waters shall overflow the secret place.**"
(Isaiah 28:15–17) ■



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: A recent event that made front-page news across America has pushed a book entitled *The Purpose-Driven Life* into the forefront of America's consciousness. The author of this book claims there are five basic purposes to life and that unless a person understands that we were all "made by God and for God," life makes no sense. As you may recall, I asked you some years back ("Questions & Answers," July 1997) to explain God's purpose in creating man. Not surprisingly, your answer was quite different than this fellow suggests in his book. Since anyone can read your response in that newsletter, I won't ask you to reiterate what you said (although you can if you like) but instead will ask a slightly different question. How does an individual's purpose in life change, if at all, once they become a Child of God through the new birth? In other words, what is God's purpose for True Believers?

Elijah: I remember when you asked that question. I also vividly recall amusing myself by doing a little song-and-dance routine to avoid answering your question about God's purpose in creating "man." I told you God did not create "man," He created "a man"—the man called "Adam" in Hebrew; and I also explained that the rest of us are here only because Adam and Eve sinned and thereby became sexually mature. (Although I'm not sure I told you that last part.) In avoiding your question, I merely took a play from the playbook of all

good *literalists*. That is, I responded to *what you said* rather than *what you meant* by what you said. I intentionally addressed the "letter" rather than the "spirit" of your question because that was not the time to explain openly what I am going to explain now.

What I said then was true, but it was all just a diversion—solely intended to divert attention from the fact that I was not going to answer the question you were really asking. This time you have phrased your question so that it would be difficult for anyone—even a fanatical, farcical, and fundamentally flawed *literalist*—to misunderstand, either *intentionally* or unintentionally, what you are asking. So I'll answer your question forthrightly—and probably agitate more than a few such "nattering nabob" numskulls along the way.

Contrary to the lie believed by those today who ignorantly tell the unregenerate that "God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life," God has no purpose whatsoever (in this life or the next) for an unbeliever. Why would He? They are nothing more than dinosaurs headed for extinction. Unbelievers have chosen not to seek (or to believe) the Truth that Jesus Christ—the *Living Word of God*—is. So why would that *Living Word* have a "wonderful plan" for a person whose *physical* body He is going to *literally* resurrect so that it can forever burn in the *parabolic* fires of Hell? That miserable fate is not His "wonderful plan" for them; it is theirs. Consequently, His logical response to those stubborn individuals who arrogantly condemn Him for His totally immoveable position is rather blunt as well: "Change your mind, or you will *forever* regret it."

Once a person has changed his mind (and the person that he is) by believing the simple message of the Gospel that God's Evangelists are *supposed to be* preaching, God expects him or her to go on seeking to know the Truth that He—the *Living Word of God*—is. Unfortunately, most of those today who have been born again by believing the basic Truth of the Gospel eventually give up seeking to know anything more about the Truth of the *Living Word of God* and settle comfortably into believing one of the many lies of Satan that contradict some essential part of the Gospel that they believed when they were "born again." That sad circumstance is what Jesus was *talking about* when He told the Parable of the Sower:

On that day Jesus went out of the house, and was sitting by the sea. And great multitudes gathered to Him, so that

He got into a boat and sat down, and the whole multitude was standing on the beach. And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, "Behold, the sower went out to sow; and as he sowed, some {seeds} fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up. And others fell upon the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth of soil. But when the sun had risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out. And others fell on the good soil, and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty. He who has ears, let him hear."
(Matthew 13:1-9)

Should you doubt that Jesus was talking about those who hear and believe the Truth that He—the Living Word of God—is, here’s how He explained what He meant by that parable:

"Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, the evil {one} comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road. And the one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word, and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no {firm} root in himself, but is {only} temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away. And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit, and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty."
(Matthew 13:18-23)

Immediately after Jesus told the Parable of the Sower, He went on to tell the Parable of the Tares. Those two parables are related to each other in that each one views the same subject—what one chooses to believe—from a slightly different perspective. The Parable of the Sower depicts what happens to the Living Word of God after it has been “sown” as the “Seed” of the Gospel in the “heart” of four different types of individuals. The Parable of the Tares depicts what Jesus knew would happen to the Corporate Body

of Believers (the Church) after Satan “sowed” his lies in the Church by infiltrating those who believe his lies in among True Believers. As Jesus indicates, those Pretend “Christians” who believe Satan’s lies will be allowed to remain among True Believers until they are finally separated out at the End of the Age:

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)

It shouldn’t take a rocket scientist to understand what Jesus is talking about, but Satan’s lies being what they are, it might come fairly close. Here is how Jesus explained what He meant by the Parable of the Tares:

Then He left the multitudes, and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field." And He answered and said, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, and the field is the world; and {as for} the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil {one;} and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels. Therefore just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear."
(Matthew 13:36-43)

How do those two parables relate to God's purpose for the True Believer? I'm glad you asked. The Truth is, the issue of *what one believes* stands at the very center of God's purpose for everyone who has ever been "born again." The blatantly obvious Truth is, it is impossible for anyone to be anything other than a "wheat" or a "tare" plant. That is, if you don't believe the Truth of the Living Word of God, you are most certainly believing one of Satan's lies—a lie that will eventually prevent you from participating in the Resurrection of the Righteous. To put it another way: Everybody believes something about God, but only those who believe the Truth about God will be saved.

I realize the majority in the Church today believe theological Truth is just one big "gray area" where "Christians" can believe almost anything and still be "Christian." That's nothing new. That mind-set has held sway ever since Satan "planted" his "tare seed" among True Believers. But the Truth is, knowledge of the Truth is not some grayscale "maybe this, maybe that." It is a matter of pitch black and dazzling white—as "The Many" who "have insight" (Dan. 12:3) here at the End of the Age have already begun to see. That's why Jesus said "*The Way* is narrow" and then indicated that *parabolic* "path" is not very well traveled at all:

"Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it."
(Matthew 7:13–14)

As Jesus inferred by that *parabolic statement*, not all that many in any generation ever "find" "*The Way*" to Heaven. That's because not many of those who hear and believe the Gospel (that God's Evangelists are *supposed to be preaching*) keep on looking after they have been "born again." But those who do keep looking have in common one characteristic that every Pretender lacks. They have "a love of the Truth." And, as the Apostle Paul indicated, that is precisely what will save them here at the End:

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 2:7–12)

Now that I've gotten that bit of ranting off my chest, let's go over the basics of what God is trying to accomplish in True Believers. To do that, I first need to correct a few of the lies that Satan has successfully "planted" in the Church over the past 1800 years:

1. The seven "days" of Creation are not *literal* twenty-four-hour "days"; they are the "Ages" that Jesus and the Apostles mention. Those "Ages" are *parabolically* LIKE twenty-four-hour "days" in that each one has a period of *parabolic* "darkness" followed by a period of *parabolic* "Light."

2. God did not create the "first Adam" in His image and likeness when He formed him from the dust of the ground on the third *parabolic* "day" of Creation; He created the "Second Adam" in His image and likeness when He resurrected Him from the dead on the sixth *parabolic* "day" of Creation.

3. We are not living in the seventh *parabolic* "day" of Creation; we are still living in the sixth. That means God is not yet "resting" on the seventh *parabolic* "day" of Creation, He is still at work on the sixth *parabolic* "day" of Creation creating "*The Man*" Jesus Christ—the Corporate Body of Christ, that is, the members of the universal Church—in His image and likeness.

4. Believers are not "born again" when they believe the Gospel; they are only "engendered again" as *parabolic* "Children of God." They will be *parabolically* "born again" in the image and likeness of God if/when they attain to the Resurrection of the Righteous.

5. Just as God accomplished every other act of Creation through the agency of the Living Word of God that He is, so also He will accomplish His creation of "*The Man*" Jesus Christ in His image and likeness. That

same *Living Word*—which can be “found” only in the Gospel and *The Teaching*—will also accomplish what He desires *within* those who believe.

As you should already be able to see, God’s purpose for those who have been “born again” is directly related to His purpose in creating “*The Man*” Jesus Christ in His Own image and likeness on the sixth *parabolic* “day” of Creation. Those who believe the Truth will one day be resurrected in the same image and likeness of the *Living Word* of God that Jesus Christ now is. Satan knows that. That’s why he has worked so hard to distort the Truth concerning the Creation Account. He has the Pretenders in the Church today believing so many contradictory lies about that part of Scripture that it’s not even funny.

Pretenders stupidly believe (and ignorantly insist) that the “days” of Creation are *literal* twenty-four-hour “days.” Yet they never stop to think that, if that is true, God must have already been “resting” on the seventh twenty-four-hour “day” for several thousand years. That is, of course, unless they want to argue that the seventh-day “rest” of God that Believers are supposed to “enter” has already somehow passed us by in one twenty-four-hour blink of an eye. So much for eternity. Who knew it would be gone before we got there?

It should be obvious that the seventh “day” of Creation has not yet begun, since the author of the Book of Hebrews exhorts us to be diligent to enter that *parabolic* “day” of “rest”:

And to whom did He swear that they should not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? And {so} we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief. Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it. For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said,

*“AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH,
THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST,”
although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. For He has thus said somewhere concerning the seventh {day}, “AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS”; and again in this {passage}, “THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST.” Since therefore it*

remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience, He again fixes a certain day, “Today,” saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before,

*“TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE,
DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS.”*

For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that. There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God. For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall through {following} the same example of disobedience.

(Hebrews 3:18–4:11)

That passage should put all *literalists* with at least the mental capacity of a moron in an obvious catch-22 position. (The rest are so dimwitted they can’t even understand the logic.) If the *literalist* continues to insist that the seven “days” of Creation are *literal* twenty-four-hour days, he makes the writer of the Book of Hebrews a liar, since the writer clearly believes the seventh “day” of Creation on which God “rests” is still to come. But if the *literalist* concedes that the seventh “day” of Creation is still to come—as the writer plainly states—then the sixth “day” of Creation cannot be a *literal* twenty-four-hour “day.” That “day” must either be several thousand years long, or else we are settled in some sort of sick, sad state of suspension, somehow stuck between the sixth “day” and the seventh “day” of God’s “rest.” (Sorry. I like alliteration.)

It should be obvious to anybody with half a brain and one eye open that somebody somewhere somehow got their theological “wires” crossed and thereby short-circuited their brain. The Truth is, the Pretenders in the Church who propound the *literal* theory of interpretation are so completely enamored with Satan’s lie that they can’t even begin to see the essential incongruity between their belief in seven *literal* twenty-four-hour days of Creation and the fact that the writer of the Book of Hebrews obviously understands the seventh *parabolic* “day” of Creation is an “Age” that is yet to come when he says this:

Consequently, a Sabbath rest remains for the people of God. For the One who has entered His rest has Himself also rested from His works just as the {Living} God from

His Own. Therefore, let's be zealous to enter that rest so that nobody "falls" by the same pattern of unbelief. (Hebrews 4:9–11) —my interim translation

If you are one of those who can't see that the author of the Book of Hebrews is *talking about* the same *parabolic* Sabbath-day "rest" in all three of the instances he mentions, you really should examine yourself to make sure that Jesus Christ—the *Living Word of God*—is still alive (if He ever was) within you:

Test yourselves {to see} if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test? (2 Corinthians 13:5)

Now that I have stirred up that proverbial hornet's nest, let me state the Truth a bit more plainly for the benefit of those who need to clearly understand what God's purpose for them is here at the End of the "Age." God's will for the True Believer begins the second he believes the Gospel message and repents. At that moment, the *Living Word of God* that Jesus Christ is takes up residence within him as a "Spirit." His only goal in life from that moment on *is supposed to be* protecting and nurturing that *Living Word* until his *physical* body dies. God has *promised* that, if the Believer does that, the *Living Word of God* he has protected and nurtured will resurrect his *physical* body as a *parabolic* "member" of "*The Man*" Jesus Christ, "the man" that God is currently *creating* in His Own image and likeness. The Apostle Paul explains those things this way:

But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you. So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we

suffer with {Him} in order that we may also be glorified with {Him.} For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for {our} adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. (Romans 8:11–23)

Even an idiot should be able to see that Paul is *parabolically* describing the Resurrection of the Righteous as the time when the *resurrected* bodies of True Believers will be *parabolically* "born" in the image and likeness of God. It's too bad that some folks can't see that. "*The Way*" God views that sad circumstance is, they don't want to. In spite of their sorry plight, that passage makes me chuckle every time I read it. I find it remarkable that "evangelical" Pretenders will dumbly insist Paul can only be *talking about* those who have already been "born again" as the "Children of God." Yet they are the very ones who insist abortion is immoral because it involves killing an unborn "child." It seems to me they have already conceded the fact that a child becomes a child at the point of conception rather than at birth. That applies to the *parabolic* "Children of God" as well.

Little do such dingbat dullards know, but they will wake up on Resurrection Day (the "birth day" of the "Children of God") to find they, unfortunately, fell victim to a *parabolic* miscarriage. As you are undoubtedly aware, such an event happens most often when a fetus has developed some sort of abnormality—you know, something that mars the "image and likeness" it is supposed to bear. Jesus is describing the fate of those folks when He says this:

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and

in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.’”
(Matthew 7:21–23)

The following is another passage where Paul is speaking in terms of the *parabolic imagery* in which the Holy “Spirit” Who takes up residence within the True Believer is developing into one of the “new creatures” God is *creating*:

For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, that they who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf. Therefore from now on we recognize no man according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know {Him thus} no longer. Therefore if any man is in Christ, {he is} a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all {these} things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.
(2 Corinthians 5:14–19)

The expression translated “new creature” in that passage would better be translated “new creation,” as it is in the passage immediately below, with the understanding that every new *creature* God *creates* is also a new *creation*. That is, the word translated “creature” can be used to refer to the whole of God’s *creation* or to any *created* part thereof:

Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised, simply that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may boast in your flesh. But may it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.
(Galatians 6:12–15)

In both of the passages just quoted, Paul has in mind the fact that every True Believer has become a “new creation” in that—through his belief in the Truth of the Gospel—he now bears the image and likeness of the *Living Word* of God he has believed. But the obvious Truth standing behind what Paul says is this: *God is still in the process of creating “new creatures” on the sixth “day” of Creation.* You don’t believe that? Do the math: Six plus one is seven. If God has already completed His *creation* on the sixth “day” and is now resting on the seventh, where are all these “new creations” coming from? Don’t fall for Satan’s lie! The unregenerates who do not bear the image and likeness of the *Living Word* of God at the end of the sixth “day”—including all who stupidly *think* they do—face the same fate as the dinosaurs: extinction. But enough sarcasm. Let’s get back to answering your question.

How does one protect the “Spirit” of the *Living Word* of God that took up residence within him when he believed the Truth of the Gospel? By making sure he does not believe one of Satan’s lies that specifically contradicts, and thereby kills, the Truth of the *Living Word* of God he believed when he was “born again.” As the Apostle Paul describes it:

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. {We are} destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and {we are} taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.
(2 Corinthians 10:3–5)

So much for the “protect” part of the statement I made. The flip side of the question is this, How does the True Believer “nurture” the Holy “Spirit” that he *received* when he was “born again”? The Apostle Paul answers that question this way:

I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, {which is} your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.
(Romans 12:1–2)

As Paul indicates in that passage, God's purpose ("will") for the True Believer is that he be *completely transformed* from the person he used to be (by that I mean what he believed, since we are what we believe) and become an entirely new person by *changing "The Way" he thinks*. That is, the True Believer must "nurture" the *embryonic "Spirit" of the Living Word of God* (that he *received* when he believed the Gospel) and learn to always think "*The Way*" God thinks. It should be obvious (but isn't because of Satan's lies) that "*The only Way*" anyone can do that is by somehow gaining an even greater knowledge of the Truth of the *Living Word of God* that Jesus Christ is.

That's where the office of Teacher plays a role—at least it did until the Church lost *The Teaching*. Now we just have numskulls spouting nonsense. The dolts in the Church today who are totally obsessed with Church-ianity stupidly assume they already think "*The Way*" God thinks—that in spite of the fact that Isaiah plainly tells us such is not the case:

*Seek the LORD while He may be found;
Call upon Him while He is near.
Let the wicked forsake his way,
And the unrighteous man his thoughts;
And let him return to the LORD,
And He will have compassion on him;
And to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.
"For My thoughts are not your thoughts,
Neither are your ways My ways," declares the LORD.
"For {as} the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways,
And My thoughts than your thoughts."
(Isaiah 55:6–9)*

Let me step down from my raggedy old soapbox for a moment or two—just long enough to give you an essential bit of insight into the *parabolic imagery* of *The Teaching* related to the *parabolic "conception"* of the "Children of God." The Apostle Paul *talks about* the Truth of the *Living Word of God* that the True Believer has *received* as being *parabolically* LIKE an "inner man" that is living within him. That "inner man" is in a constant struggle with the flesh, because the flesh wants the person to believe whatever will allow him to do what the flesh wants him to do. Here are just a few of the sundry passages where Paul touches on that subject:

I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wishes to do good. For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.

(Romans 7:21–23)

So death works in us, but life in you. But having the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I BELIEVED, THEREFORE I SPOKE," we also believe, therefore also we speak; knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will present us with you. For all things {are} for your sakes, that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God. Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For indeed in this {house} we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven; inasmuch as we, having put it on, shall not be found naked. For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed, but to be clothed, in order that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

(2 Corinthians 4:12–5:4)

For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man; so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; {and} that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fulness of God.

(Ephesians 3:14–19)

There is obviously a wealth of *parabolic imagery* standing behind those passages. I could explain it, but I

won't—only because it is not appropriate here. As the Prophet said, there is a time for everything. In this case, it is the time for me to remain silent:

*There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven—
A time to give birth, and a time to die;
A time to plant, and a time to uproot what is planted.
A time to kill, and a time to heal;
A time to tear down, and a time to build up.
A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
A time to mourn, and a time to dance.
A time to throw stones, and a time to gather stones;
A time to embrace, and a time to shun embracing.
A time to search, and a time to give up as lost;
A time to keep, and a time to throw away.
A time to tear apart, and a time to sew together;
A time to be silent, and a time to speak.
A time to love, and a time to hate;
A time for war, and a time for peace.
(Ecclesiastes 3:1–8)*

By his use of the *parabolic imagery* related to the “inner man,” Paul is saying that, if a True Believer is doing what God expects him to do, he is constantly allowing the *Living Word* of God that dwells within him to control him. If the True Believer does that, the “inner man” (the “Spirit” of Jesus Christ) will manifest Himself to the True Believer by constantly seeking to know more Truth. That “Spirit” specifically will not manifest Himself in an argumentative, contentious desire to make sure that others believe and act the way that person *thinks* they should. That dim-witted characteristic is one of Satan’s most obnoxious. It certainly does not come from the “Spirit” of the *Living God*.

Editor: I’m sure you are aware of the recent controversy surrounding the Terri Schiavo case, the severely brain-damaged woman in Florida who was kept alive for fifteen years using a feeding tube, but who recently passed away when the feeding tube was removed. While I can see both sides of this issue and can empathize with both the husband and the parents, I’m not certain what I would have done in that situation. My question is this: What do you believe is God’s perspective on this matter and how do you believe He views a “living will”? Is it ever right to take another’s life to eliminate their pain and suffering?

Elijah: My initial reaction to both of your questions was to respond the way Jesus did when a man asked him to step in to act as a judge in a private matter:

*And someone in the crowd said to Him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the {family} inheritance with me.” But He said to him, “Man, who appointed Me a judge or arbiter over you?” And He said to them, “**Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not {even} when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions.**”
(Luke 12:13–15)*

Jesus would probably answer your question in much the same way He answered that man:

“Be on your guard against every temptation to hold on to this life; for not even when one has a healthy body does his life consist of his body.”

Rather than rudely dismissing your question concerning a living will, let me answer it this way: Do you believe that God requires you to seek medical care to prolong your life? Whether you said yes or no, you have answered your own question. As James plainly tells us, some things are not a matter of what is right and wrong for everyone, they are a matter of conscience—what each one of us believes is “right” for us:

*Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow, we shall go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.” Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are {just} a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, {you ought} to say, “If the Lord wills, we shall live and also do this or that.” But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. **Therefore, to one who knows {the} right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin.**
(James 4:13–17)*

I realize the Pretenders in the Church won’t agree with what I just told you. That’s because they *think* God somehow intended the Church (read “them”) to rule the world. That is, they seek to impose their distorted view of “godliness” on everybody else. As far as God is concerned, He knows you can’t take a pig out of the pigpen, dress him up, and make him a country

gentleman. All you end up doing is making a fool out of yourself and all who laud your effort. The unregenerate are just that—unregenerate. God certainly did not intend for the Church to become a nation by including every Pharisaic Pretender who lives in some particular geographic region and making them act like “Christians.” That was Constantine’s asinine contribution to the “Christian” mentality. (See “How the West Became ‘Christian’: Constantine and the Church,” *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 1994.)

The Truth is, those fools in the Church who want to impose their distorted notion of “godliness” on homosexuals and abortionists are headed down the same road that Jim Jones and David Koresh followed—only on a much grander scale. They want to force the unregenerate to act the way they *think* they should act. Satan absolutely loves that mentality. He fully plans to use it when he appears as the Antichrist.

As far as “taking another’s life” is concerned, that’s murder. But the way you phrased your question strikes me as being a lot like one of those “Have you stopped beating your wife yet?” questions. The question colors the answer. The Truth is, terminating extraordinary medical measures is not always a matter of “taking another’s life.” It is a matter of determining at what point arrogant men should stop striving against the inevitable and leave things in the hands of God the way they did in the old days. As is the case with a lot of other things in life, determining when that time has arrived is a matter of opinion. It is certainly not a matter of “faith,” as the more ignorant Pretenders in the Church would have us all believe.

Editor: While we are on the subject of life and health issues, we received a question from a subscriber who is frustrated by the way Satan manipulates the world, and his own personal life, through lies. The areas of concern raised by this individual pertain to health, nutrition, and finances because he recognizes that Satan perpetuates all kinds of lies in these areas (among others) that wreak havoc on people’s lives, including his own. His basic question is: What do you believe are some of Satan’s foremost lies that affect people’s health and financial well being these days?

Elijah: In the area of health, I would have to say the biggest lie has to do with the insidious belief that a visit to the doctor for a prescription can make everything

better. It can’t. Good nutrition and a whole lot of exercise will take a person a great deal further than any prescription drug that has been, or will ever be, developed. Every prescription drug has some sort of side effect. The same goes for herbal remedies. Some more than others. The only side effects of lots of exercise and healthy eating habits are sore muscles and a good night’s sleep. Furthermore, fruits and vegetables only sound bad. Actually, they taste a whole lot better once you stop eating processed foods.

If a person wants to remain healthy, he needs a healthy digestive system. That means he must have healthy eating habits. Unfortunately, a major problem caused by the American diet is the complete disruption of the digestive tract. Most of us are already suffering the effects of that by the time we turn twenty-one. But adults can regain a normal digestive tract fairly quickly by taking HCl tablets and probiotics. Those things not only cost less than prescription drugs, they also have few, if any, side effects. Doctors don’t know those things because they aren’t being taught nutrition. They are being taught how to dispense prescription drugs.

One of the most enlightening books I have ever read is titled *Dead Doctors Don’t Lie*, by Joel D. Wallach and Ma Lan. The title rather slyly implies that living medical doctors do lie, but the authors’ point actually has to do with the fact that the average lifespan of a doctor is only fifty-eight years—some fifteen years less than the rest of us. One would think they would live the longest if they actually had the secret to good health. They don’t. The Truth is, the shortest route to the funeral parlor goes right through the doctor’s office. As the authors of that book—one of them a veterinarian who once worked for the National Institute of Health—points out, it does not make much sense for medical doctors to insist (as they have for decades) that humans don’t need to take vitamin supplements when veterinarians have known all along that animals do.

Have you ever wondered why your dog or cat seldom gets sick? If so, consider this: Cat and dog food companies add nearly three times as many different vitamin and mineral supplements to their food products as do the companies that make baby formula. Does that make any sense? If you think not, then consider this sad fact: You most likely stopped consuming that supplemented food product quite some years ago. So what have you been eating since?

As for the lies of Satan that affect our financial well-being, there is actually only one: We don't "need" all the things he is constantly trying to get us to buy. We merely believe him when he tells us we "want" them. But nobody is going to change his behavior until he realizes Satan is trying to get him to jump off the Temple (*parabolically*) in the same way he did Jesus:

Then the devil took Him into the holy city; and he had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'HE WILL GIVE HIS ANGELS CHARGE CONCERNING YOU'; and 'ON {their} HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, LEST YOU STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.'" Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'" (Matthew 4:5-7)

My point is, every True Believer is, LIKE Jesus, a "son of God." That does not *mean* God will bail him out every time he gets into deep water—or decides to take a flying leap. If a True Believer gets into some predicament because he goes in thinking God will make it all work out, he is merely testing God. Since God does not like to be tested, my advice to that person is fairly straight and to the point. Stop.

Now we come to the proverbial fly in the proverbial ointment. If a True Believer has somehow gotten himself "unequally yoked" together with an unbeliever, Satan already has the inside track on him—and on his pocketbook. To say that person has an uphill run to the finish line would most likely be putting it mildly. The primary problem the True Believer faces in that situation is the control that Satan exerts over the "significant other" who is supposed to be pulling their share of the load. (Or, to use a better analogy, not punching holes in the bottom of the boat.) Unless I miss my guess, that is not going to happen.

How should a True Believer deal with an unruly partner? Pray for wisdom, and do whatever he deems best. If God intended for me or some other knucklehead to tell him how he should act in such a case, then his circumstance wouldn't really be a test, would it? Contrary to what imbeciles would have us all believe, God never gave anyone the answers to your test. If you want to insist He did, I have news for you: You don't want to take responsibility for your own actions.

Editor: This last question is also from a subscriber who has a question related to "the purity of the 'people of God.'" This person mentions the fact that Abraham obtained a wife (a "woman") for Isaac from among his relatives and that Isaac's son, Jacob, also went to a near relative, Laban (his mother's brother), and obtained two of Laban's daughters and their maidservants as his "women." Since it appears Abraham and Isaac were both concerned with maintaining some degree of "purity" in the family tree (by seeing that their sons took wives from among near relatives), why was this "purity" not tainted when four of Jacob's (Israel's) sons were born to maidservants? Also, years later when Joseph's two sons by an Egyptian woman were granted status as adopted sons of Jacob and given every right as sons of Israel, why did their inclusion in Israel not affect the "purity" of Israel? If the "women" that the sons of Israel "took" didn't have to be near relatives to produce "pure" offspring, why did Abraham and Isaac seem so concerned about the matter? Does any of this point to the fact that God intended all along to allow "Gentiles" to become members of Israel?

Elijah: The key phrase in your question is, "it appears." When it comes to understanding the *meaning* and *significance* of things recorded in the Scriptures, appearances are almost always deceiving. That's because the Prophets who wrote the Scriptures intentionally hid the *meaning* and *significance* of what they wrote. So what does that tell you? It should tell you there is no *significance* whatsoever attached to anything you asked. Anyone who reads their Bible should already know that a woman in the ancient Near East automatically became a member of "The House" of the man who "took" her as his "woman." That applied even to the sons of Israel "taking" a woman who was a foreigner:

"When you go out to battle against your enemies, and the LORD your God delivers them into your hands, and you take them away captive, and see among the captives a beautiful woman, and have a desire for her and would take her as a wife for yourself, then you shall bring her home to your house, and she shall shave her head and trim her nails. She shall also remove the clothes of her captivity and shall remain in your house, and mourn her father and mother a full month; and after that you may go in to her and be her husband and she shall be your wife. And it shall be, if you are not pleased

with her, then you shall let her go wherever she wishes; but you shall certainly not sell her for money, you shall not mistreat her, because you have humbled her.”
(Deuteronomy 21:10–14)

The only exception to that divinely approved practice was the prohibition imposed on the women living in the Promised Land when Israel invaded:

“When you approach a city to fight against it, you shall offer it terms of peace. And it shall come about, if it agrees to make peace with you and opens to you, then it shall be that all the people who are found in it shall become your forced labor and shall serve you. However, if it does not make peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it. When the LORD your God gives it into your hand, you shall strike all the men in it with the edge of the sword. Only the women and the children and the animals and all that is in the city, all its spoil, you shall take as booty for yourself; and you shall use the spoil of your enemies which the LORD your God has given you. Thus you shall do to all the cities that are very far from you, which are not of the cities of these nations nearby. Only in the cities of these peoples that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, you shall not leave alive anything that breathes. But you shall utterly destroy them, the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, as the LORD your God has commanded you, in order that they may not teach you to do according to all their detestable things which they have done for their gods, so that you would sin against the LORD your God.”
(Deuteronomy 20:10–18)

Now that you know God had no problem with foreign women becoming members of Israel by marriage, the question becomes, Where did all this “purity” nonsense come from? The answer is, it came from someone who was not a Prophet, had no insight whatsoever into *The Teaching*, but nonetheless assumed his pompous, pious pretense was all that God required:

In those days I also saw that the Jews had married women from Ashdod, Ammon, {and} Moab. As for their children, half spoke in the language of Ashdod, and none of them was able to speak the language of Judah, but the language of his own people. So I contended with them and cursed them and struck some of them and pulled out

their hair, and made them swear by God, “You shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor take of their daughters for your sons or for yourselves. Did not Solomon king of Israel sin regarding these things? Yet among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was loved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel; nevertheless the foreign women caused even him to sin. Do we then hear about you that you have committed all this great evil by acting unfaithfully against our God by marrying foreign women?”
(Nehemiah 13:23–27)

Moses mentioned only “the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite.” So where did the buffoon Nehemiah come up with the novel idea that his prohibition should be extended to “women from Ashdod, Ammon, {and} Moab”? You tell me; then we’ll both know. The Truth is, the Book of Nehemiah is a lot like one of those trick questions we used to see back in school. You have to be very careful to discern who is talking. (See “God Lives in a Three-Story House,” *The Voice of Elijah*®, January 1998.) So you better be sure you know how to read it. But let me give you a clue in case you want to try: Pharisees of every theological stripe love Nehemiah because they can easily identify with one of their own.

Now that I’ve dealt with the “purity” issue, let me just briefly touch on the reason why the Patriarchs did what they did. They were nomadic shepherds who had nothing in common with the agrarian people who inhabited the land of Canaan. Rather than “taking” a woman from an agrarian people who lived a little closer to them, they found it much less complicated to find one among their own kind a little farther away. Their actions had nothing whatsoever to do with maintaining racial “purity.” As you rightly point out, Abraham had a child by the Egyptian slave Hagar; four of the twelve sons of Israel were born to the two slave women Bilhah and Zilpah; and Joseph had two more by an Egyptian woman. I could even go on to mention Moses, who had children by a Midianite woman, but I won’t. (No need to now, since I just did.)

The point is, maintaining the racial “purity” of Israel has never been a concern with God. The only people who want to make it one are those who don’t understand the *meaning* and *significance* of the Canaanite *zonah* ritual and how the Prophets used that *parabolic imagery* to explain God’s plan for His People. ■