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Oh, So Many Four-Letter Words!

The doctrines emphasized by conservative Christianity just one hundred and fifty years ago have changed dramatically in the intervening years. From an emphasis on the wrath of God and the consignment of sinners to a horrifying eternity in hell, the Church has now come down to an emphasis on the uncondi-

tional love of God and the consignment of anyone who honestly believes in the wrath of God and a sinner's hell to the dunce's chair in the corner. From an emphasis on the necessity for True Believers to be holy in word and deed, we also have now arrived at the unhappy circumstance where the Church willingly accepts any-

one who comes in mouthing a few well-known, but worn-out, Christian clichés.

Satan has obviously sold a theological bill of goods to those who now claim to be the righteous defenders of the Truth of historic Christianity. The god of unconditional love preached throughout the Church today is the same god fabricated by liberal scholars late last century. At that time, conservative Christians vigorously rejected that particular view of God as a heretical innovation, arguing that such a god does not even exist. Yet here he is today as the only god proclaimed by most in conservative Christianity. Consequently, the present generation of "Christians" has no real knowledge of the God of wrath described in the Scriptures. That *means* a whole lot of people are in for a rude awakening on Resurrection Day.

The doctrine of an angry, vengeful God Who will eventually recompense the wicked prevailed in the Church for over eighteen hundred years. That was, in fact, the only God known to Christian Believers of former generations. That was the God preached by the great revivalists John Wesley and Charles Finney during The Great Awakenings. (See "Charles Finney: My Conversion to Christ," *The Voice of Elijah*, January 1992.) Fear of God's wrath prompted hundreds of thousands to cry out for mercy and become Christians during those great moves of the Holy Spirit.

Yet today, Pretenders in the Church know only the god of unconditional love.

See *Four-Letter Words!* on Page 5

On Fairy Tales and Holy Hell

What a piece of fiction! Pretenders actually believe there is but one Truth to be discovered in every area of knowledge *except* biblical theology. On the one hand, they admit the Scriptures are inspired, yet on the other, they maintain the Scriptures can *mean* whatever anyone wants to read into them. Isn't that a bit far-fetched? To any rationally-minded individual, the *meaning* of a literary work is determined by its author. So there must be but one Truth in the Scriptures—and hell to pay for the one who chooses not to believe it. The "doing theology" free-for-all is obviously a convenient fairy tale. But Pretenders love that constantly refined delusion because it allows them to say anything they consider even remotely feasible about the message of the Scriptures and go on merrily about their business. That business seems to be spreading rumors, lies, and misconceptions about the One Who abides forever. God never intended it to be this way. He sent His Son, Jesus Christ to live a holy life, submissive to the Father, suffering death on a cross to deliver the Elect of God. Jesus set an example for us to follow, just as the Apostle Peter said:

For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer [for it] you patiently endure it, this [finds] favor with God. For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting [Himself] to Him who judges righteously; and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.
(1 Peter 2:20–24)

See *On Fairy Tales* on Page 19



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M. H. Clay,
Executive Editor
Sara Brooks,
Editor

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All correspondence should be addressed to:

Voice of Elijah
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Dallas, TX 75228

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Letters to the Editor

In an open letter to all subscribers in the April issue, Larry Harper, the author of the articles you find in this newsletter, mentioned he was working on an annotated copy of the Early Church Father Hippolytus' *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist*. He said he would be happy to send a copy to anyone who would agree to contribute \$15 a month for the next year. Many of you have responded to that letter, and I thank you for your commitment to this ministry.

The good news is, Larry finished his work in the middle of May and the result is now in the hands of our regular contributors. The better news is, it's not a pamphlet; it's a 263-page book titled *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist!* The best news is, the book includes more than just Hippolytus' *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist*. It includes writings of the Early Church Fathers Polycarp and Irenæus, along with an account of the martyrdom of Polycarp as well. All of these documents are accompanied by Larry's own commentary in the form of footnotes to the text.

Now for the bad news Larry won't allow me to make it available, as he does his other books, for just a one-time contribution. He explained why that is in "Questions & Answers" in this issue. I refer you to that discussion.

Larry's decision concerning *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist* has presented me with a dilemma. It has also prompted me to use this column to speak to those of you who believe what you have read in the pages of this newsletter. If I begin to sound like a commercial, I don't mean to. I realize I don't have to "sell" you anything if you have already recognized the Truth in our publications. You know God is at work in this ministry. But you may not understand what our ministry is all about. That's why I want to make sure you don't miss *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*. After reading this one book, you should have no illusions at all about our message.

There are all kinds of books in bookstores today that are nothing more than fiction, speculation, or guesswork. Yet they sell because they are available everywhere. On the other hand, Larry has produced a coherent, rationally-based, logically-reasoned publication that I believe everyone should read. And he has absolutely refused to allow me to make it available to you for a one-time contribution. I have to honor his decision.

If it were up to me, I would readily have given every one of you a copy of *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist* because I believe it is the most important book (other than the Bible) you will ever read. But I can't. *The Voice of Elijah* doesn't have access to it because Larry simply will not sell it to anyone, even to me. He has said he will only give the book away, and then only to those subscribers who are willing to become regular contributors to this ministry. He has his reasons, and I realize he must fulfill his calling as he sees fit. That's why my only recourse is to urge you to become a regular contributor.

Let me explain why I feel the way I do. In 1978, I did a thorough study of the Book of Revelation and other Scriptures that many scholars have associated with the End of this Age and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. After months of reading books and commentaries, all the while studying the biblical text, I was overwhelmed with the diversity of interpretations available for any given passage of Scripture. By then, I had come to the conclusion that nobody had a clue as to the true *meaning* of those texts. So I gave up trying to understand them and trusted God that, when the time came for me to know, He would make their *meaning* known. I believe that time has come!

It was over eleven years ago, on a Monday night in early February, that I first heard the things some of you have been reading in these pages since late 1990. When I first heard about *The Teaching*, I was just as excited as many of you have been to learn there is a unified Gospel message hidden in the Old Testament. The things I heard that first night made perfect sense. Still, even though I have had opportunity to hear much of *The Teaching* over the years since, I have heard it only in bits and pieces. Larry was never able to tie it all together for me in one coherent whole until he started writing. For example, the unified presentation you can find in *Not All Israel Is Israel* wasn't available to me or to anyone else until many of you read it for yourselves at the same time I did this past February. In many ways, that book was just as informative to me as it was to you.

The more I have learned about *The Teaching*, however, the more impressed I am with how seamlessly its *parabolic imagery* meshes together into one over-all message. Larry calls it "a tapestry," and he constantly struggles with how to best separate its numerous interwoven strands so he can put them down for you in writing. I think you will concur he has done a decent job of explaining one of them in *Not All Israel Is Israel*. That is but one thread. There are dozens, if not hundreds, more.

One of the *parabolic images* that has intrigued me since the day I first learned of it is "the mother of harlots," Mystery Babylon, that is mentioned in Revelation 17:5 ff. (See "Is Iraq Mystery Babylon?" *The Voice of Elijah*, January 1991.) Perhaps my earlier study of Revelation quickened my interest in that one image in particular. Larry first explained to me the idioms and *parabolic images* that lie behind the Old Testament Prophets' message concerning the harlot in late 1981 or early 1982. Later he explained the *parabolic image* of the harlot in Revelation 17 and 18 was just an extension of that prophetic message. Since then, he has filled in the message concerning the harlot even more.

Earlier this year, when I read Hippolytus' *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist* for the first time (before Larry began his annotated version), I was astounded to find that, in his exposition of the Book of Revelation, Hippolytus explained how the image of the harlot derived from the same Old Testament passages Larry had pointed out to me. That was incredible! It was obvious Hippolytus taught exactly the same things Larry teaches, yet those are things the Church lost long ago. (See "The Protestant Confession: The Church Lost *The Teaching*," *The Voice of Elijah*, January 1992 issue.)

Imagine how I felt! Here was a man who had written sometime near the end of the second century, yet he was obviously speaking in the same *parabolic images* of *The Teaching* that God has called Larry to *restore* today. Think of it! I was reading a document almost eighteen centuries after it had been written, yet it referred to specific passages in the Old Testament Prophets whose *meaning* I already understood. And it agreed completely!

I thought I firmly believed what Larry had taught me just because it made perfect sense. I still do. But reading

Hippolytus' *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist* provided an absolute confirmation as to the Truth of *The Teaching* concerning the Old Testament Gospel of Jesus Christ that I learned from Larry. My first reading of that document is something I will never forget.

Hippolytus' *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist* is just one of several Early Church documents that are included in *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*. But it is unique in that it is one of the last written records of the Early Church that accurately records just a small part of *The Teaching* as it was revealed by Jesus Christ to the Apostles and handed down from one generation to the next in the Early Church. Therefore, Hippolytus is an excellent example of the somewhat measured success the Church had early on in carrying out its mission of discipling Believers. (See "Where Are Jesus' Disciples?" *The Voice of Elijah*, April 1991.) He was a third-generation disciple of the Apostle John, yet it is obvious he still understood much of the apostolic tradition.

The central theme of Hippolytus' work is the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The other works of Hippolytus, Irenæus, and Polycarp that Larry included in *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist* speak just as clearly about other things in *The Teaching* that relate to the End of this Age. The statements of these Early Church Fathers are invaluable in and of themselves. However, to top it off, in his footnotes to the text Larry comments on the *parabolic images* and idioms they use, the same images and idioms you've been reading about in this newsletter. It's an absolute feast!

When I read *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist* and digested Larry's accompanying commentary, I became totally convinced as to the imminence of the Return of Jesus Christ, the severity of the times that lie ahead, and the need for True Believers everywhere to prepare themselves for the *parabolic* storm that will otherwise destroy all who are unaware. Afterwards, I said to him, "Larry, everybody needs to read this book!" But he disagreed, informing me it is meant only for those who believe that what we are doing is of God. After reflecting on his reasons (See "Questions & Answers," in this issue), I understand more clearly now why everyone should **not** read this book. My prayer, however, is that you are one of those for whom its message is intended.

If you have recognized the Truth you have found through the ministry of *The Voice of Elijah*, I beg you to become a regular contributor. You need to read what Larry has written in this book. You can easily go down to the library and find the same translation of the Early Church Fathers he included in *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*. But there is information in his footnotes that you simply can't find anywhere else. Consider also that, if you have benefited from *The Teaching* you have found in this newsletter and other publications of The Elijah Project, others will benefit from what you give.

Larry has said repeatedly the best "advertising" we will ever have is other True Believers. He has also said we will succeed in our ministry only when those of you who un-

derstand and believe our message begin to tell others about us. Many of you have already done so. We know that because those to whom you have spoken or given our literature contact us from time to time, some of them excited to hear just the little bit they have already read. But Larry understands that True Believers will, one by one, identify themselves with this ministry and make his calling their own, just as I have done. If you are a True Believer, you can take the first step in that direction by becoming a regular contributor to ***The Voice of Elijah***. As a regular contributor, you will then be able to use the coupons included in *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist* to obtain additional copies.

I urge you to respond immediately. Time is running out. You'll be astounded by what you read in *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*, and I have no doubt God will bless you for giving. He promised to bless those who "give bread to the hungry and clothing to the naked." I believe that is exactly what *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist* is.

Please understand my situation. Voice of Elijah, Inc. is a non-profit corporation founded for the specific purpose of making the findings of The Elijah Project available to the public. I am the founder and president of Voice of Elijah, Inc. As such, I am responsible for, and oversee, all corporate operations. While this newsletter is currently the major outreach, it is but one of many planned or existing programs.

The Elijah Project, on the other hand, is a private research group headed by Larry Harper. Since he receives nothing from ***The Voice of Elijah***, he has no obligation to its constituency. He deliberately made the choice to remain separate from this organization several years ago because he knew his calling required nothing less.

Consequently, The Elijah Project is a totally self-supported endeavor that allows Larry the time he needs to do the researching, writing, and publishing of The Resurrection Theology Series, the articles for this newsletter, and other occasional publications such as *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist* and the forthcoming book, *The Mystery of Scripture*. ***The Voice of Elijah*** has been purchasing the only publication currently available, *Not All Israel Is Israel*, from The Elijah Project at cost. Therefore, Larry has not profited even from the contributions you have sent to obtain that book.

I should also mention that the work of Voice of Elijah, Inc. is performed by unpaid volunteers. That means every contributed dollar we receive is immediately plowed back into our effort to reach more people with our message concerning *The Teaching*. I point that out so you know every last penny of every contribution, no matter how small, goes directly into our efforts to reach others with our message.

When you become a regular contributor to ***The Voice of Elijah***, you will not only receive a copy of *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*, you will also receive ***The Voice of Elijah Update*** each month ***The Voice of Elijah*** is not published. The focus of ***The Voice of Elijah Update*** is current events as they apply to *The Teaching* and the End of the Age.

For instance, would you believe Ross Perot is going to be the next President of the United States? Perhaps that is obvious by the time you read this, but I'm writing this during the first week of June. I had a conversation with Larry back in late March or early April, not long after Mr. Perot said he would run for President if the people put him on the ballot in every state. He told me then that he was certain Ross Perot would be elected President this fall.

At that time, I thought what Larry said seemed more than a little far-fetched. Ross Perot's name wasn't even included in the polls. Since then I've changed my mind; not because of the recent attention Mr. Perot has received in the media, or because of his favorable standing in the polls, but because of what I read in the first issue of ***The Voice of Elijah Update***.

If you become a regular contributor now, I'll send that first issue of ***The Voice of Elijah Update*** to you immediately. Then you can read it for yourself and see what I mean. There are events happening week by week that are rapidly advancing our civilization toward the End of this Age. In ***The Voice of Elijah Update***, Larry intends to interpret those events for you as soon as (or, in some cases, before) they take place.

Having said all that, I want to leave you with a statement that occurs as a warning seven times in the second and third chapters of the Book of Revelation:

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

The visions recorded in the Book of Revelation were given to the Apostle John nearly two thousand years ago. In symbolic language, they speak specifically about events leading up to and including the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Yet those symbolic images have rendered the Book of Revelation the least understood book in the Bible. It is not mere coincidence that the warning, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" occurs in the one book with the most to say about the End of the Age. That warning is more relevant today than ever before. In light of what I've read in *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*, I believe the images in the Book of Revelation are soon going to be accurately understood by everyone "who has an ear." Consider Paul's words to Timothy:

It is a trustworthy statement:

For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him;

If we endure, we shall also reign with Him;

If we deny Him, He also will deny us;

If we are faithless, He remains faithful;

for He cannot deny Himself.

(2 Timothy 2:11-13)

God's Truth will prevail and accomplish its purpose today regardless of what you or I, as individuals, say or do for or against it. The unique characteristic of *The Teaching*

has always been its ability to stand on its own. That's because it is God's *Teaching* and "He cannot deny Himself." If you believe what you have been reading in this publication, it is because the Spirit of God within you (I am speaking to you who are truly born again) has quickened the Truth of *The Teaching* to you. Likewise, that Spirit is testifying to you that God is working through us.

It has become clear to me now just how little time remains for us to accomplish our work. Yet Daniel said "those who have insight" in these Last Days will be "many" (Dan. 12:3). We don't know how "many" that is, but we do know "many" more will respond to our message in exactly the same way "many" of you already have. And just like you, they will do so because they realize the time is near when Jesus will return and, as Larry likes to say, "We're going home!"

If you believe what you have read in past issues of *The Voice of Elijah*, you need to read *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*. I beg you, please tell me you'll stand with me. The outreach of this newsletter is my ministry to you. But I need your help in reaching others with the Truth. Reading *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist* has made me realize that, without the help of True Believers, I cannot possibly reach the "many" with *The Teaching* before the appearance of the Antichrist.

Let me reiterate what Larry said in his letter last issue. If you will pledge to contribute at least \$15 a month for one year, he will send you a copy of *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist* as soon as I receive your first check. Forget about *The Voice of Elijah Update* for now. **You need to read this book.** After you have read it, I believe you will recognize that the value of such insight far exceeds any contribution you could ever make to this ministry. Many of you may well be moved to increase your monthly contribution after reading it. Please do. However, I can promise you but one thing. The things you learn from reading what the Church Fathers have written will make the difference in whether you stand or fall spiritually in days to come. I only ask that you listen to what the Spirit is saying to you as an individual and respond accordingly. So,

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

Are you listening?



P.S. Many of you have already written expressing an interest in attending seminars. In light of recent developments, I asked Larry to let me know the status of planned seminars, whether or not they were still going to be offered. (See "Questions & Answers," in this issue.) Just before press time, he informed me he would agree to offer seminars here in Dallas for regular contributors provided they didn't cut too deeply into his writing schedule. That leaves a little room for me to maneuver on behalf of those of you who have asked. Let me know if you're still interested, and I'll pass the information along. Although he wants to offer them privately through The Elijah Project at no charge, I'll still be there to meet and greet you. But plan to be challenged to rethink everything you ever thought was settled. And please don't bring some beloved tradition expecting it to be confirmed. Square pegs don't fit in round holes.

Four-Letter Words!

From Page 1

They have no idea that the *Living* God requires specific things of those who are His Own. They actually believe that all they have to do to be saved is *say they believe* in Jesus Christ, and it will make them acceptable to God. That's why those who firmly believe in God's unconditional love are Pretenders. Their spiritual life consists of nothing but pretense and make believe.

But there are still those of you out there who, because of God's Holy Spirit within you, can see through Satan's deception! You are few and far between, but you know full well that something is desperately wrong with the Church. You just haven't been able to figure out exactly what it is. This article is for you. I want to tell you about some of those obscene four-letter words Pretenders won't *talk about* because they find them totally abhorrent. But those four-letter words get right to the heart of what's wrong with the Church today.

Take, for example, the word *fear*, as in the expression "*fear of God*." Horror of horrors! Pious, pompous Christian Pretenders would never deign to use such an obscene four-letter word in connection with God's name. It would demolish their pretense. Perhaps that is why they have extended their aversion to several other four-letter words as well. Sooner or later some of them will read this article. So let's ruin their day and talk openly about a few of those words they love to hate.

Fear of God

Everyone knows the *meaning* of the four-letter word *fear*. Everyone, that is, except Pretenders. To have *fear means* you are afraid of someone or something. Yet when Pretenders apply the word to God, it no longer *means* "fear." It suddenly *means* "reverence."

As a matter of fact, Pretenders have such an aversion to the word *fear* when applied to God that they even made sure "reverence" found its way into the dictionary as a synonym for *fear*—but only when it refers to God. That would seem to settle the issue. *Fear of God* must *mean*

“reverence for God;” it’s in the dictionary. But let’s not be too hasty. Dictionaries are human creations. Pretenders wrote that definition for the dictionary as a precautionary defense, to bolster their own viewpoint. So let’s look instead at historical facts and the Scriptures.

Until the middle of last century, the historic Christian view of God as a God of wrath prevailed. Consequently, God was a God to be both *feared* and *revered*. From the time of the Apostles until then, generation after generation of Christians believed God demanded obedience and would destroy all who failed to meet His specific requirements.

Even the Protestant Reformation focused on the appropriate actions to take for absolving oneself of sin. The Roman Catholic Church held that penance along with absolution by an ordained priest was necessary. Protestants taught that individual Believers could obtain forgiveness by simply going to God in prayer and repenting, humbly confessing personal sins. Still, both sides agreed that repentance, confession, and requesting God’s forgiveness were all necessary.

After Darwin published his theory of evolution, however, liberal theologians developed an *evolutionary* view of God in which He became a god of unconditional love who would never reject anyone. They believed the world would keep getting better and better, and eventually everyone would become a Christian because they would respond to a god of unconditional love.

At that time, conservative Christians rejected the liberal view of God. But unfortunately, over the years since, the notion of God as a god of unconditional love has gradually gained ground among conservative Christians. Consequently, few today take seriously the need for confession of sins and the corresponding need to ask God for forgiveness. Fewer still mention the possibility that anyone might spend an eternity in hell.

The unstated assumption of Pretenders is that their loving, accepting god will readily accept any and all unconditionally and will also forgive sins without confession. Consequently, the new-birth experience has been reduced to a simple prayer in which one states he has “accepted” God’s offer of salvation. No remorse or repen-

tance is considered necessary. Like the pious Pharisee that Jesus described in a parable, the newborn fakes produced by that prayer assume God will accept them just because they have condescended to grace Him with their sinner’s prayer:

*And He also told this parable to certain ones who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt: “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee, and the other a tax-gatherer. The Pharisee stood and was praying thus to himself, ‘God, I thank Thee that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax-gatherer. I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.’ But the tax-gatherer, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, the sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for **everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, but he who humbles himself shall be exalted.**”*
(Luke 18:9–14)

The “easy-believism” of Pretenders is a distortion of the clearly stated message of the Scriptures in which God not only requires, but also demands, sorrow and contrition for sins committed before He will bestow His Holy Spirit on the Believer. Knowledge of that Truth does not change the facts, however. The patented sinners’ prayer has produced a multitude of Pretenders who now actually believe they are the born-again Believers that God desires.

Those of you who are True Believers are in for an astounding surprise when you begin to see the pretense of Pretenders for what it is. Although your insight into their farce is a key factor in your own release from their delusion, as you begin to see the Truth, you will be amazed at how many Pretenders there are around you. Yet their sheer numbers pale in comparison to how firmly they believe that their relationship with a non-existent god of their own making will see them through.

In the last forty years in particular, Pretenders have tacitly branded the God

of wrath and the age-old doctrine of eternal damnation as doctrines of the lunatic fringe. Unfortunately, the adherents of “easy-believism” know little of Church history. They also forget what Jesus said:

*“And I say to you, My friends, **do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear the One who after He has killed has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him!**”*
(Luke 12:4–5)

Jesus was obviously *talking about* the old-fashioned *fear of God*. The meaning of the word *fear* in this passage is made clear by His reference to someone seeking to kill. Pure, unadulterated *fear*—not *reverence*—is the instinctive reaction in such a situation. It is just as apparent that Jesus was referring to the need for one to *fear* God, because only God has the authority to cast someone into hell.

It also should be evident to Pretenders from Paul’s admonition to the Philippians that *fear* really does *mean* “fear” when used with reference to God:

*So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your salvation with fear and trembling;***
(Philippians 2:12)

The meaning of the word *fear* in this passage is made clear by the fact that Paul refers to physical trembling. So let’s pursue this matter further. Maybe it will help us better understand why Pretenders hold so dearly to the lies that Satan has introduced into the Church.

Don’t be deceived, those lies are part of a delusion that is, for the most part, already in place. That delusion will have completely blinded all but a few by the time the Antichrist makes his appearance. According to the Apostle Paul, it will entrap anyone who chooses not to believe the Truth of *The Teaching* that is hidden in the Old Testament Scriptures:

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 2:8–12)

One should pay close attention to the fact that Paul says, “*because they did not receive the love of the truth, ... God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false.*” That God hardly sounds like the Pretenders’ god of unconditional love.

Fear and Obedience

When God appeared in the cloud on Mt. Sinai and proclaimed the Ten Commandments to the sons of Israel, they were terrified by His presence. At that time, Moses spoke to them concerning the role that *fear of God* should play in God’s relationship with Israel. Notice what he said:

And all the people perceived the thunder and the lightning flashes and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw {it}, they trembled and stood at a distance. Then they said to Moses, “Speak to us yourself and we will listen; but let not God speak to us, lest we die.” And Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid; for God has come in order to test you, and in order that the fear of Him may remain with you, so that you may not sin.” So the people stood at a distance, while Moses approached the thick cloud where God {was}.
(Exodus 20:18–21)

Moses told the sons of Israel they had no reason to *fear God* at that time because He had not come to destroy. Instead, His purpose was just to test them. But Moses also told them God wanted the *fear of Him* to remain with them *so that they would not*

sin. That puts the biblical understanding of the *fear of God* on a slightly different basis than that of mere *reverence*. But let’s take this further.

Moses said the purpose of the *fear of God* was to make those who *fear God* avoid sin. Since sin can be defined as disobedience to God’s law, we can rephrase that to say the purpose of the *fear of God* is to motivate obedience to God.

That brings up another four-letter word Pretenders try to avoid using—the word *obey*. Don’t even mention that four-letter word in the hearing of some Pretenders. If you do, they’ll launch into a harangue about the change that took place between the Dispensation/Covenant of Law and the Dispensation/Covenant of Grace. They’ll wax long and eloquent on the finer points of how the Law came through Moses and grace came through Jesus Christ, as though there was no grace under the Old Covenant or law under the New Covenant.

They should do a word study on the word *forgive* in the Book of Leviticus. Moreover, it is obvious to anyone who stops to think about it that the Ten Commandments must still have some applicability under the New Covenant. If not, why would James say this:

If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law, according to the Scripture, “YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF,” you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin {and} are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one {point,} he has become guilty of all. For He who said, “DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY,” also said, “DO NOT COMMIT MURDER.” Now if you do not commit adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so act, as those who are to be judged by {the} law of liberty. For judgment {will be} merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.

(James 2:8–13)

How could obedience to the Law have no further place under the New Covenant when James plainly says

Christians can be “convicted by the law as transgressors.” Additionally, why would John the Baptist clearly state there is necessity not just for belief, but also for obedience:

“The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”
(John 3:35–36)

It should also be remembered that the Apostle Paul, writing to Christians, emphasized the same point as well:

But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who WILL RENDER TO EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS: to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.
(Romans 2:5–8)

Pretenders want to do away with the need for obedience because they have chosen to believe they are on some sort of fast track to Heaven. They honestly (or dishonestly) believe their “faith” alone will save them. Unfortunately, that is not the case.

As I stated in an article in *The Voice of Elijah*, the content of one’s faith (belief) is everything. Belief in a lie will not save anyone. If it could, Muslims and Hindus would be saved by belief in their respective lies; and Christian missionary activity would be unnecessary. (See “The Demons Also Believe (Poor Devils!)” *The Voice of Elijah*, October 1991.)

Pretenders have chosen to believe a lie. Consequently, their “faith” cannot save them. But more than that, even if they believed the Truth, as Paul stated above, perseverance in faith is necessary if one intends to escape God’s wrath.

But that’s all beside the point. The fact is, Pretenders don’t understand the relationship between the Old and the New Covenant. So how can they be expected

to understand the role of *The Law of Moses* under the New Covenant? I have laid the foundation for an explanation of the relationship between the two covenants in the book *Not All Israel Is Israel*. I'll explain more concerning that relationship in the second volume of The Resurrection Theology Series, *The Inheritance of the Believer*.

Put simply, the Law defines sin. If the Law had been done away completely under the New Covenant, there could no longer be any sin. That is obviously not the case. So the Law must still play a role in defining what is and is not sin, even for Christians. The confusion arises in regard to how the Law does that.

Love and Obedience

Since *The Law of Moses* defines sin, anyone who avoids sins, as defined by that Law, *obeys* God. They do so, however, because they *love* God and want to please Him. But *love* is another four-letter word Pretenders don't fully understand because it too has been redefined. They take it to be just an emotional response to an external stimulus. Nothing could be further from the Truth.

Pretenders fail to understand that the covenant relationship between God and Israel defined the biblical *meaning* of the term *love*. *Love* is a legal term derived directly from ancient Near Eastern covenant terminology. In that context, its *meaning* depended on the status of the signatory to the covenant agreement to which it referred.

Since God is always the greater signatory to any covenant, for Him to "love" *means* He provides for and protects those who accept and comply with the terms of His covenant. On the other hand, for us to "love" God *means* nothing more than that we *obey* the stipulations that govern our covenant relationship to God. (See the bibliography of works relating to the study of *love* as covenant terminology in *Old Testament Covenant* by D.J. McCarthy, Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1972.)

Therefore, *love* is much more than emotion. True love consists not only in strongly felt emotion, it also carries with it emotion in action. The one who loves gives freely what the one they love requires. That has special *significance* in the True Believer's relationship with God.

God, because of His holiness, requires obedience from those with whom He has joined Himself in the Spirit. That obedience is required so that the *holiness* of His *Holy* Spirit within the Believer will not be defiled by that person's sinful condition. Consequently, those who *love* God freely give God what God requires. They *obey*.

Unregenerate Pretenders don't understand one basic fact that every True Believer assumes they do. That is, they don't understand a Believer has a responsibility to protect the holiness of God's Spirit within. But how could they comprehend that simple fact? The Spirit of God does not, and has never, dwelled in them. To them, *holy* is just one more four-letter word they try not to use. That's why they are Pretenders. The Psalmist accurately describes them this way:

Transgression speaks to the ungodly within his heart;

There is no fear of God before his eyes.

For it flatters him in his {own} eyes,

Concerning the discovery of his iniquity {and} the hatred {of it.}

The words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit;

He has ceased to be wise {and} to do good.

He plans wickedness upon his bed;

He sets himself on a path that is not good;

He does not despise evil.

(Psalm 36:1-4)

Knowing nothing of the *fear of God*, Pretenders are especially fond of quoting what the Apostle John wrote concerning the perfect *love* that casts out *fear*:

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. We love, because He first loved us.

(1 John 4:18-19)

Pretenders take this passage of Scripture to *mean* Christians should not fear God at any time, even when they knowingly sin. They condescendingly explain that those who *fear* God are not experiencing the highest and best relationship with God—which is a relationship based

on love, not fear. That is not an outright lie, but it is certainly a distortion of the Truth. Just three verses later John defines what he *means* by love for God. He clearly *means* nothing less than *obedience*:

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.
(1 John 5:3)

So a higher and better relationship with God is available; and it is a relationship based on love. Furthermore, perfect love, which is demonstrated by perfect obedience, does cast out fear. But Pretenders think they have somehow taken a shortcut to that relationship without producing the perfect obedience that will "cast out fear." Consequently, their higher and better relationship with God is nothing but pretense.

On the one hand, they confidently proclaim it is impossible for anyone to live a perfectly sinless life. Yet on the other, they claim to have attained that higher and better relationship to God—not understanding that relationship is based on perfect love, which is nothing less than perfect obedience.

Pretenders are playing a shell game with True Believers, helping their father Satan, the source of all lies, confuse the issue. But those True Believers who seek the wisdom of God will, before the End, see through the pretense of Pretenders. Just as Malachi prophesied, they will:

again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him.
(Malachi 3:18b)

Fear, Love, and The Teaching

You can't understand the True Believer's *love for God* unless you first understand how a *fear of God* motivates one to seek a relationship to God in the first place. Pretenders will vehemently deny it, but *fear* of God's wrath is the only thing that will move sinners to genuine repentance. People are too selfish to respond to God on any basis other than the selfish de-

sire for self-preservation.

Only after repentance and reception of the Holy Spirit can anyone respond to God with selfless *love*. That's because the Holy Spirit produces true love (Gal. 5:22). So *fear of God* is just the beginning of a process that can ultimately result in the higher and better relationship of love in which there is no fear. But that is possible only if the Believer strives to cultivate that relationship.

Admittedly, John does say, "perfect love casts out fear." But it should be noted that there must be fear of God in the first place before perfect love can cast it out. The author of the Book of Proverbs said it well:

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction. (Proverbs 1:7)

The "knowledge," "wisdom," and "instruction" in this verse are allusions to *The Teaching of Moses*—the Old Testament Gospel message concerning Jesus Christ. "The beginning of knowledge" of that Truth "is fear of the Lord."

It is impossible for anyone to accept

The Teaching without a deep-seated *fear of God*. So Pretenders, not having that *fear of God* themselves, consider it ridiculous that anyone would believe *The Teaching* ever existed. Paul had their aversion to the Truth of *The Teaching* in mind when he wrote:

For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written,

"I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE, AND THE CLEVERNESS OF THE CLEVER I WILL SET ASIDE."

Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not {come to} know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. (1 Corinthians 1:18–21)

Although Pretenders will reject the notion outright, an understanding of *The Teaching* concerning the Old Testament Gospel of Jesus Christ provides what the Church today is lacking. Only through

The Teaching can one experience the higher and better relationship with God that is based on the obedience of perfect *love*. Let's see how that is.

To govern the terms of His relationship with Israel, God made a treaty, a *covenant*, with them. The terms of the Old Covenant were recorded in the covenant laws of the Pentateuch—*The Law of Moses*. And it should be noted that the sons of Israel promised to *obey* those laws.

In *The Law of Moses*, God provided *parabolic imagery* that illustrates what the True Believer's relationship to God should be under the New Covenant. That New Covenant relationship is essentially the same relationship God offered *Corporate Israel* except for the way in which *The Law of Moses* functions. (See *Not All Israel Is Israel*, p. 183 ff.)

The True Believer is one who has accepted the terms of God's New Covenant. The terms of that covenant continue to be *The Law of Moses*, as we will see below, and the True Believer is still expected to *obey* that *law*. But there is a significant difference in how that is accomplished under the New Covenant. That difference relates to the activity of the Holy Spirit within the Believer.

As a pledge of the True Believer's ultimate *inheritance* under the New Covenant, God grants the indwelling presence of His Holy Spirit. That indwelling obligates the True Believer to *obey* the stipulations of the New Covenant so that he not grieve the Holy Spirit as Paul warned:

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. (Ephesians 4:30–32)

God's Holy Spirit within gives a new twist to the Believer's relationship with God under the New Covenant. Although the *law* of the New Covenant continues to be *The Law of Moses*, it is no longer a series of laws etched in stone or written on parchment. It is much, much more.

Through the agency of the Holy Spirit, God intends that True Believers

Image and Reality

The Law (of Moses)

1st Old Covenant

Type of Covenant:
Covenant of Works
Ratified at:
Mt. Sinai
Ratified with:
Corporate Israel

1st New Covenant

Type of Covenant:
Covenant of Works
Ratified at/by:
Baptism in Jordan/
Reception of Holy Spirit
Ratified with:
Jesus Christ

The Teaching (of Moses)

2nd Old Covenant

Type of Covenant:
Covenant of Faith (Belief)
Ratified at:
Mt. Sinai/birth
Ratified with:
Individual Israelites

2nd New Covenant

Type of Covenant:
Covenant of Faith (Belief)
Ratified at/by:
Baptism/
Reception of Holy Spirit
Ratified with:
Individual Believers

now have that covenant *law* written on their “heart,” as the writer of the Book of Hebrews, quoting the Prophet Jeremiah, knew full well:

*For finding fault with them, He says,
“BEHOLD, DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS
THE LORD,
WHEN I WILL EFFECT A NEW
COVENANT
WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND WITH
THE HOUSE OF JUDAH;
NOT LIKE THE COVENANT WHICH I
MADE WITH THEIR FATHERS
ON THE DAY WHEN I TOOK THEM BY
THE HAND
TO LEAD THEM OUT OF THE LAND OF
EGYPT;
FOR THEY DID NOT CONTINUE IN MY
COVENANT,
AND I DID NOT CARE FOR THEM, SAYS
THE LORD.
FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT
THAT I WILL MAKE WITH
THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL
AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD:
I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR
MINDS,
AND I WILL WRITE THEM UPON THEIR
HEARTS.
AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD,
AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE
AND THEY SHALL NOT TEACH
EVERYONE HIS FELLOW CITIZEN,
AND EVERYONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING,
‘KNOW THE LORD,’
FOR ALL SHALL KNOW ME,
FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST
OF THEM.
FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR
INIQUITIES,
AND I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS
NO MORE.”*

*When He said, “A new {covenant},”
He has made the first obsolete. But
whatever is becoming obsolete and
growing old is ready to disappear.
(Hebrews 8:8–13)*

As I explained briefly in *Not All Israel Is Israel*, *The Law of Moses* is also *The Teaching of Moses*—the Old Testament Gospel of Jesus Christ that is hidden within *The Law of Moses*. (See *Not All Israel Is Israel*, pp. 154, 183 ff., and 210.) That dual content is conveyed by the one Hebrew word *Torah*, a term which means both “law” and “teaching.” God’s use of

that term as a double entendre carries potent implications for True Believers who house the Holy Spirit.

Under the New Covenant, it is not *The Law of Moses*, but *The Teaching of Moses*, that is to be written on the “heart” of the Believer. That *Teaching*, in turn, determines whether an individual Believer’s actions will be judged as obedience or disobedience to God.

God intends that True Believers allow the Holy Spirit to etch a bit more of *The Teaching of Moses* on their “heart” each time they hear the Truth of *The Teaching* taught by one whom God has called to teach it. They do that by believing *The Teaching* when they hear it taught. Paul refers to that in the Book of Romans:

*For Christ is the end of the law for
righteousness to everyone who be-
lieves. For Moses writes that the man
who practices the righteousness
which is based on law shall live by
that righteousness. But the righteous-
ness based on faith speaks thus, “DO
NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART, ‘WHO WILL AS-
CEND INTO HEAVEN?’ (that is, to bring
Christ down), or ‘WHO WILL DESCEND
INTO THE ABYSS?’ (that is, to bring
Christ up from the dead).” But what
does it say? “THE WORD IS NEAR YOU,
IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR
HEART”—that is, the word of faith
which we are preaching, that if you
confess with your mouth Jesus {as}
Lord, and believe in your heart that
God raised Him from the dead, you
shall be saved;
(Romans 10:4–9)*

His point is, for Believers, the role of *The Law of Moses*—an external guide that defines transgression—has now been taken over by *The Teaching of Moses*, an internal word that is written on the “heart” when it is believed. He refers again to the contrast between the role of *The Law of Moses* under the Old Covenant and the role of *The Teaching of Moses* under the New when he writes:

*You are our letter, written in our
hearts, known and read by all men;
being manifested that you are a letter
of Christ, cared for by us, written not
with ink, but with the Spirit of the liv-*

*ing God, not on tablets of stone, but
on tablets of human hearts. And such
confidence we have through Christ
toward God. Not that we are ade-
quate in ourselves to consider any-
thing as {coming} from ourselves, but
our adequacy is from God, who also
made us adequate {as} servants of a
new covenant, not of the letter, but of
the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the
Spirit gives life. But if the ministry of
death, in letters engraved on stones,
came with glory, so that the sons of Is-
rael could not look intently at the face
of Moses because of the glory of his
face, fading {as} it was, how shall the
ministry of the Spirit fail to be even
more with glory?
(2 Corinthians 3:2–8)*

As Paul clearly states, “the ministry of the Spirit” in the Teacher, making him “adequate” to the task of teaching, and that same Spirit, writing *The Teaching* on the “heart” of the Believer, “gives life.” The Believer thereby becomes “a letter of Christ.” That is, he or she understands *The Teaching* concerning Jesus Christ and is able to not only explain it to others but also demonstrate its power by living an overcoming life.

Only an understanding of *The Teaching* can provide the abundant life of which Jesus spoke (John 10:10). It is a life free from sin, guilt, shame, and pretense, because the Believer who has greater understanding of *The Teaching* has greater freedom. The one who fully understands *The Teaching of Moses* will be totally free to obey *The Law of Moses*. Thus it is belief in *The Teaching* that enables one to overcome and attain perfect obedience. Notice I did not say, “free FROM *The Law of Moses*.” I said, “free TO OBEY *The Law of Moses*.” Jesus alluded to that when He said:

*“and you shall know the truth, and the
truth shall make you free.”
(John 8:32)*

There are some things from which *The Teaching* does free the Believer. Paul accepted the fact that some Believers, not fully understanding *The Teaching*, cannot do certain things because they consider them to be sin. These people labor under an unnecessary burden:

I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.
(Romans 14:14)

James also clearly indicates the conscience plays a critical role in determining what is and is not sin for the individual:

Therefore, to one who knows {the} right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin.
(James 4:17)

If you check the context of the quotation from Romans 14 above, you will discover that Paul is explaining the role of faith (belief) as it functions in relation to *The Teaching*. The more fully one understands *The Teaching*, the more freedom one has in Christ. That is so because *The Law of Moses* written externally on tablets of stone kills; but *The Teaching of Moses* written internally in the mind (heart) gives life. The one binds. The other sets free. *The Teaching* provides the power to live the overcoming Christian life Jesus talked about on one occasion:

*“I praise Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from {the} wise and intelligent and didst reveal them to babes. Yes, Father, for thus it was well-pleasing in Thy sight. All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son, except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father, except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal {Him}. Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. **Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and YOU SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. For My yoke is easy, and My load is light.**”*
(Matthew 11:25b–30)

In this passage Jesus is speaking parabolically about *The Teaching*—the Old Testament Gospel message concerning Him—that is hidden in *The Law of Moses*. It is the “yoke” of which He spoke. That is why He says, “Take My

yoke upon you, and learn from Me.”

Although *The Law of Moses* is still a “yoke” that obligates the Believer to obey, the hidden meaning of that Law, *The Teaching of Moses*, once “learned,” provides the power that allows the True Believer to “rest,” that is, stop striving to obey an external set of laws.

There is much more to the Scriptures than the “wise and intelligent” would ever suppose. Consequently, True Believers are the “babes” who are naïve enough to actually believe there is only one Truth to Scripture and, even more naïvely, to believe they have found it. In this generation, only the “babes” of whom Jesus spoke will respond to His invitation to learn *The (restored) Teaching*.

Before you can see the Truth, you must first understand there are multitudes of “Christians” around you who cannot identify at all with your *fear of God*. The god they worship would never send anyone to hell. Ask a few of them what they believe concerning God’s wrath and the possibility of their going to hell. The responses you get may surprise you.

If your new-birth experience with God resulted from your turning to God because you were afraid you would go to hell, you are part of a distinct minority. That does not mean you will automatically respond when you hear the Truth. Those who do that are an even smaller group of people within the larger group of those who fear God.

But you will never be able to understand the Old Testament Gospel of Jesus Christ without first having a profound fear of God. An understanding of that mystery has been reserved for those who will accept instruction because they are afraid of the punishment of God. The Psalmist said it best:

Who is the man who fears the LORD? He will instruct him in the way he should choose.

His soul will abide in prosperity, And his descendants will inherit the land.

The secret of the LORD is for those who fear Him,

And He will make them know His covenant.

(Psalm 25:12–14)

“*The Way*” the Psalmist has in mind in this passage is “*The Way*” of salvation that is described in detail in the Old Testament Gospel of Jesus Christ. That message is an important part of “the secret” (the mystery) he mentions. Those who are seeking to be instructed in the Truth of God’s *mystery* will soon find what they seek is again available to Believers. However, fools who want only to “walk” in a “path” illuminated by their own understanding of the Scriptural message will continue to “walk” in “darkness.”

The Truth of the Word was succinctly summarized by the author of Ecclesiastes at the conclusion of his sardonic treatise:

*The conclusion, when all has been heard, {is}: **fear God and keep His commandments**, because this {applies to} every person. **For God will bring every act to judgment**, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.*
(Ecclesiastes 12:13–14)

Pretenders will argue otherwise, but God will judge everyone according to deeds done, not according to some “profession of faith.” The Apostle Paul said it long ago, but they still refuse to listen:

because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who WILL RENDER TO EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS: to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.
(Romans 2:5b–8)

If you are seeking to overcome sin in your own life, you will find the key in *The Teaching*. I challenge you to seek God diligently and pray for the divine wisdom that makes it all possible. Don’t settle for less. *The promises* of God are for those who overcome (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21), not for those who merely aspire to overcome. The one who has ears to hear will hear. ■

Q & A nswers

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

Editor: Over the past few weeks, we've talked several times privately about your new book, *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*. I would like for you to explain for our readers why you won't allow me to make it available to *The Voice of Elijah* subscribers for a one-time contribution like we do your other books, *Not All Israel Is Israel*, and the forthcoming *The Mystery of Scripture*.

Elijah: It just seemed right at the time I guess. A lot of what you're asking pertains to what I said in the preface to *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*. Since April 1974, I've only gradually come to understand *what* God called me to do. Since 1982, I've generally understood *whom* I would eventually minister to. But until I read the words of Hippolytus and his Teacher, Irenæus, I had not the vaguest notion *why* God would have me do *what* He called me to do. Suddenly, while reading the works I included in *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*, I clearly understood not only *what* God wanted me to do, but also *why*. In that regard, the past two or three months have been a revolutionary experience for me. I'm not sure what to do about it though, because I still don't know the *how*, *when*, or *where* of my calling. But I'm learning.

Until I understand better what God has in mind, I intend to do what I've done for nearly twenty-seven years now. I'm going to try to follow the leading of the Spirit. I've failed at that in the past. Consequently, I made some huge miscalculations concerning God's calling. But in spite of that, I know I'm still fairly well on track. God has His "Way" of confirming that from time to time. Let-



ting me know *why* He called me was, for me, an amazing corroboration of a lot of what I already understood. Maybe that's why I decided to just give the book away. The time I spent writing *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist* was, in many ways, the most emotionally rewarding experience I've ever had. It didn't seem right for you to "sell" something that was so beneficial to me.

However, there are other reasons as well. While I was writing the letter for the April issue of *The Voice of Elijah* newsletter, appealing for contributions, I began to feel strongly that, for the outreach of *The Voice of Elijah* to succeed, it had to have the strong spiritual and financial backing of a small group of committed Believers. I believed then, and I still believe, that there don't have to be all that many who believe at this time. But those who do believe have to be convinced that this ministry is of God and be willing to join with us in prayer and support it financially.

Editor: What do you mean, "at this time?"

Elijah: I'm beginning to realize that you and I have not yet begun our ministry. We have only begun reaching out to others who will eventually stand shoulder to shoulder with us in ministry. There are specific events mentioned in the Scriptures that have to be fulfilled before the final outpouring of God's Spirit occurs and our ministry actually begins. I assume (and I emphasize "assume") that most of those who respond to our message will be new Believers who are reached after that outpouring begins. In the meantime, the Holy Spirit seems to be sifting those who currently claim to be Believers, trying to reach those True Believers whom He intends to use in ministering to new Believers.

You and I both know that most of those who claim to be "born again" have no idea what they are *talking about*. But a few do, and of those, some are honestly seeking God's will for their life. I believe those who are seeking to be used of God will be prompted by the Holy Spirit within them to let us know who they are, so we can begin preparing them for a ministry to new Believers when the outpouring of the Holy Spirit begins. That means you, as the Editor, have to provide some way for as many of your readers as possible to make a definite decision for or against what they have found in the pages of your newsletter and in the book, *Not All Israel Is Israel*. If they believe that what they have read is true, or if they believe

that what they have read might be true, you need to confront them with a situation where they can't just sit on the fence. You have to ask them outright, "Do you believe?" If they do, they will respond. If they don't, they won't. Then everybody benefits. Even those who don't believe can deal with the issue of why they don't believe and come out better for having done so.

Editor: *It won't be obvious to my readers, but you're talking about principles that are taught in the second message of the Old Testament, "The Way." Would you explain more about that?*

Elijah: Actually, I had in mind a combination of the second message, "The Way," and the third message, "The Light." When you are "walking in *The Light*," following *The Way*, you can clearly see all the different "ways" that people avoid making a decision to come to *The Light*, just as Jesus said. [Editor: He's referring to John 3:16–21.] Many of them hide in the theological confusion that exists down here. "I'm not qualified to decide" is their favorite expression. "Nobody really knows" comes in a close second. Pretenders like to hide in confusion. They feel secure in following the crowd—whatever crowd they choose to follow—and they think they are completely hidden. But those who have insight can clearly see their "nakedness." That's just *parabolic imagery*, but the upshot of it all is, people do their best to hide from God. They do that in all sorts of ways.

One of the most effective ways to hide from God is to "get religion." Those who choose that route can then say they "know" God while vehemently denying they are hiding from Him. Isaiah said such people have hidden themselves in a lie. [Editor: He's referring to Isaiah 28:15.] The most highly developed variation on the use of religion as a hiding place is played out by those who are the most desperate to hide. They become "religious fanatics." Some of these people delusionally believe God has "called" them to preach some specific message. You can normally recognize them because they seek security in numbers. They *need* other people to believe what they preach. To them, that provides confirmation for their belief. That's why they trot out the fact that lots of other people believe as they do. They forget what Jesus said about the "broad path" that leads to destruction and the few who "walk" the "narrow path." Satan uses their newly invented theories to add fuel to the fires of confusion so that all Pretenders gain additional cover they can use to conceal themselves. They feel confident that nobody knows the Truth, so they can believe whatever they want. The trouble is, you simply cannot flush that type of Pretender out of their hiding place because they firmly believe God has accepted them for their commitment to some specific doctrine—either of their

own or someone else's fabrication. That's why Jesus said, "If *The Light* within you is darkness, how great is that darkness." [Editor: Matt. 6:23]

Since Pretenders of all stripes fail to understand what God requires, yet they confidently believe something other than the Truth, Jesus called them "tares." They look like "wheat" plants in a lot of ways, but they aren't. That being the case, the best I could ever do for both them and the True Believers who will eventually come to believe *The Teaching*—the "wheat" they impersonate—is to find some way to push their "hot button" so that they lose interest in what I have to say and reject it. It's even better when they vigorously oppose it. Then they can be clearly seen by True Believers for what they really are.

All of this goes back to what I said before about knowing *who* God called me to minister to. I have no interest in those who are trying to use Christianity as a cloak to cover their "nakedness." True Christianity is not a religion; it is a relationship. It is much more than a specific *Teaching*; it is a Person—the *Living Word* of God—Who has hidden Himself in a *Teaching*. There is a *mystery* hidden in that concept that will eventually have to be explained. (I say that so that your readers understand the *meaning* is intentionally ambiguous.) But only those who have, as Paul said, taken that essential first step in the process of "putting on Christ" will benefit at all from its explanation. [Editor: He is referring to Galatians 3:27.] There are many things I teach that Pretenders should not, and if I can manage it, will not, hear. However, there are a few crafty ones who are so deeply hidden, even from themselves, that they will hear things they shouldn't. But when their filthy rags are finally seen by True Believers for what they are, they will be ushered out as well. [Editor: He's alluding to Matthew 22:1–14.] And here's the really amazing part. In the end, I won't have to do anything to ensure they lose interest. God will take care of that Himself.

Editor: *You should explain what you mean when you say "ensure they lose interest." You also mentioned pushing a person's "hot button" in order to do that. I doubt anybody would understand what you're talking about.*

Elijah: I'm not sure what to say. This is all new ground to me now. Earlier this year, I assumed I would be able to conduct seminars and workshops where I could interact with your readers personally. I understood the downside of that was the fact that Pretenders thrive on the interpersonal side of Christianity because they see their relationship with other "believers" as a remedy for their own lack of a relationship to God. But I also thought it necessary for me to in-

teract with them because I knew I could personally turn many of them away. But after completing *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*, I'm not sure we have time for such luxury. So I have to come up with some new tactics.

Editor: *You just said, "turn many of them away," and "some new tactics," meaning you deliberately set out to "ensure they lose interest," as you said before, but you still aren't explaining what I believe people need to know.*

Elijah: I'm getting there. It just takes me a while to put it together. Not that many would believe it anyway. Isaiah hit the nail right on the head when he said God's "ways" aren't our "ways." [Editor: He is referring to Isaiah 55:8-9.] You can explain to them what God intends to do and most still wouldn't understand. It's too different. It's just not the "way" we do things down here because we don't think that "way." How do you explain to people you're not trying to round them up and keep them in like some cult; you're actually trying to do the opposite—weed them out?

Maybe this will explain it. Remember what Jesus said about the four different types of people who hear *The Word*? [Editor: He's referring to the Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13:3-9 and its interpretation in verses 18-23.] Most people fall into the first category. They simply don't understand what they find in *The Voice of Elijah* and *Not All Israel Is Israel*, so very few of them have any interest in it. You've gotten letters from some of them. They've said specifically, "I don't understand." The great majority of your first-time subscribers fall in that category. Among them are those who don't renew their subscription when it expires, although I'm certainly not so simpleminded (Pretenders will probably claim that I am) as to believe that some of this type don't renew their subscription for some other reason.

The next category Jesus mentioned is much smaller. These people read the articles in your newsletter and what they read makes sense to them. They get excited about it and want to know more. But, like Jesus said, they have no "root" in themselves (that "root" is a *parabolic image*), so they don't take heed to what they hear. They just add it to what they already believe, and it loses its *significance*.

The third type of person Jesus mentioned hears, understands, and, I assume, also gets excited about what they read, but they let other things take precedence in their life. Since they fail to "cultivate" their understanding of *The Teaching*, the "weeds" take over and crowd out any thought of what they have heard.

Finally, there is the True Believer. This person hears, understands, rejoices in his or her understanding of *The Teaching* and tries to do what they understand God requires

of them. I have been called to minister to these people. And as far as is humanly possible, I intend to minister only to these people. I'll do whatever I can to be as obnoxious—and as irritating—as possible, so that Pretenders lose interest in what I have to say. People emote; and when they emote, they sometimes do things they have no control over. That being the case, you can, to some degree, make them do what you want them to do, even when it is not what they would ordinarily do. Unfortunately, people subconsciously use the same tactics to retaliate against their spouses in domestic disputes. The results are sometimes ugly. But I don't have to get anywhere near that level of emotional reaction to tell where a Pretender is. Most of them will reveal it without even realizing it because they don't think anyone can see. But an emotional nudge can elicit a lot from a Pretender.

All I have to do is find a person's particular "hot button" so that they let down their façade and reveal who they really are by reacting emotionally. If I can do that, God will put a hook in their nose and lead them away. They simply won't hang around. Their concern, after all, is hiding. If you get a little too close to where they are, they can sense it, and they're gone.

Something like what I'm *talking about* has apparently happened to George Bush over the past couple of years. Someone, or something, has pushed him too far emotionally, and he can't do what he needs to do to get reelected no matter how hard he tries. I believe God is leading him away from the Presidency because the time has come for Ross Perot. Ross Perot won't win the election as much as George Bush will lose it. I saw much the same thing happening with world leaders in the months leading up to the Gulf War. They couldn't have avoided that conflict if they had tried.

Understand what I'm saying. I don't claim to be called as an Apostle, a Prophet, an Evangelist, or a Pastor. [Editor: He's referring to the "gifts" God has given the Church that Paul mentions in Ephesians 4:11.] I do claim that God called me as a Teacher. I am not supposed to evangelize the world or start some new church somewhere. I have been called to *restore The Teaching* the Church lost, and to *Teach* that *Teaching* to all who want to learn what I teach. I don't claim to have the authority the Apostles had. However, there is one catch. Although God called me as just a lowly Teacher, I do have an authority with regard to what I teach. I have an authority to teach; and I have an authority not to teach. That simply *means* I can teach someone if I so choose, or I can choose not to teach them. As I understand my calling, the use or abuse of that authority is my responsibility. I'm still trying to learn exactly how to wield that authority, but I already know I am not supposed to teach certain things I understand about the Old Testament Gospel of Jesus Christ to those who

cannot show sufficient evidence that they believe what I teach. As Jesus said, "Don't cast your pearls before swine." [Editor: Matt. 7:6]

Editor: So how does that fit in with the fact that you talk about things openly in the articles you have written for this newsletter and in the book, *Not All Israel Is Israel*?

Elijah: There are some things I teach that God intends to be openly proclaimed as a "witness" against this generation. That includes the things I write for your newsletter and what I intend to publish in the first four volumes of The Resurrection Theology Series and *The Mystery of Scripture*. If anyone can read those first four volumes, your newsletter, or *The Mystery of Scripture*, and still disagree with what I teach, God will use their own words against them in the Judgment. If anyone reads what I write and rejects it, God will use their own rejection of it to condemn them.

The things I have to say in the first four volumes of The Resurrection Theology Series are open for all to read. While those four volumes will explain only the first of the seven messages that can be found in the Old Testament, they provide ample evidence for any one who is searching for the Truth. True Believers are searching, and they will find part of what they seek in those four volumes. They will find the remainder of what they seek in other publications I intend to produce over the next few years. While the articles I write for your newsletter and the books I have included in The Resurrection Theology Series provide, for True Believers, the foundation for understanding the six other messages of the Scriptures, they are nothing more than a witness against Pretenders who have no interest in knowing the Truth.

Editor: What about *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*? Where does that fit in?

Elijah: I honestly don't know. The past two to three months I've been wondering that myself because I don't see how it relates to the first three messages of Scripture, which I generally understand. So at this point, your guess is as good as mine. To me, it appears to be a bit of a curve ball God threw, just to see if I would react to it as I should. I can understand why He would do that. I've always had a distinct proclivity to be tentative when I should step up to the plate with confidence. When I finally stand before Him, it would be nice to discover I hit this one out of the park. I'll be content if He just intended it to confirm for me what my calling is. It certainly did that and a whole lot more. On the other hand, I realized while writing the commentary to the text of what the Early Church Fathers had written that *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist* is in-

tended primarily for those who believe what they have read in your newsletter. That's partly why I don't want it made available to one-time contributors. However, it occurs to me just now that maybe it wasn't meant for me as much as it was intended for them. If so, they can tell you what it *means*. I've lived with my calling so long I tend to think things like that are *meant* to teach me something. But God is dealing with a whole lot more people than just you and me now. So we better all get used to it.

There's also an interesting psychological aspect to this. Most of your subscribers have absolutely no idea where I'm coming from. They only know they aren't interested, so they don't renew their subscription. A small minority, on the other hand, understands immediately, and they want anything and everything you have to offer. Then there are those in the middle. They're not sure what I'm about, and they're not sure we're not just another one of those "cults" they've been warned to watch out for. So they tend to shy away too, but they want to know what's happening here because they're curious. The first group wouldn't be interested at all in *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*. The second group is definitely interested. In the third group are what I call the "fence-sitters." They aren't sure whether they are or aren't interested. Most of them are probably content just to read the newsletter. Many of them haven't even bothered to obtain and/or read *Not All Israel Is Israel*. They subscribe to your newsletter only because they can't be decisive and reject it outright.

This third group is what James called "double-minded." Their only hope, as he said, is to pray and ask God for wisdom. [He's referring to James 1:2-8.] If *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist* were available for a one-time contribution, they could rationalize that they were just "purchasing" it from you for their one-time contribution. They could do that without making any kind of psychological commitment as to whether or not they believe what we are doing is of God. But when you ask them to become a regular contributor, there's a hurdle there that most of them won't be able to overcome. By asking them to contribute to your ministry, you have presented them with a quandary. You have asked them to identify themselves with you and what they find taught in your newsletter. They can't reconcile that with their own refusal to make a commitment, so they will never hear any more than surface Truth.

Editor: You're saying that a lot of our current subscribers are never going to read what you have written in *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist* simply because they either aren't interested or can't decide whether what you write for this newsletter is true?

Elijah: I'm certain of it. Some of them are going to resolve their conflict by viewing this entire conversation as nothing more than a ploy to get them to contribute. Others are not going to contribute simply because we are *talking about* it openly. But it all goes back to what I said before. I realize I have to use different tactics to turn away those who should not hear. That's partly why I've decided to give away *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist* to the Monthly Contributors. Just the fact that it isn't for sale and they can't buy it will cause some of them to move on. I'm not a part of your organization, so I have no obligation to make it available to you or your subscribers. If one of your subscribers is willing to, by one simple action, say they believe in what you're doing enough to help you in your ministry, I'll send it out to them tomorrow. Otherwise, they can't have it. It's just one of the ways I intend to maintain some control as to whom I teach. God will work it out. I have absolute confidence that those to whom I have been sent will hear what they need to hear before the appearance of the Antichrist. Somebody will tell them. On the other hand, I'm just as confident those who reject our message one time will never again hear what they need to know to avoid the delusion.

Editor: *This approach seems a bit childish. It's sort of like saying, "I have it, and you can't get it." How would you respond to someone who said that?*

Elijah: You're right. It is childish. It's totally unsophisticated. But I won't bother apologizing for offending anyone's sense of propriety, because that's exactly what I intended to do. The things I do are going to turn away a lot of people because they are much too "sophisticated" for such things. It embarrasses them to be associated with it. It also makes some of them angry. I can hear them saying to themselves, "Who does this guy think he is? Why would anyone want to read what he has written?" But you have to overlook their "sophisticated" ignorance. They have no idea the "wrath of the Lamb" is hanging over their heads like a guillotine. [Editor: He's referring to Revelation 6:16.] Their nauseating "sophistication" prevents them from understanding that oxymoron. They still see Jesus Christ as the meek and gentle Person He was when He walked the hills of Judea, humble and submissive before God. They can deal with that individual. Jesus Christ is not God to them. He's a god in a box. But they fail to understand Jesus Christ is no longer bound by the law of God, unable to take vengeance on His enemies without sinning against His God. He is God unchained. As God, He is preparing to return to this Earth, taking full vengeance on all who have rejected the "path" of Truth in order to "walk" in a "path" illuminated by their own understanding. But they'll understand soon enough—when

understanding is nothing but terror. [Editor: He's referring to Isaiah 28:19.]

Editor: *I don't mean to cut you off in the middle of what I think could prove to be an exceptionally interesting tirade. But I do have a constituency. And they depend on me to move things along here. What are you going to do about all the commentaries and Bible study aids you have planned? Better yet, what about the video and audio tapes you intend to put together? And what about the seminars? Are they all cancelled? What about your translation of Scripture? You started that translation, along with a cross-referenced index of the idioms and parabolic images of Scripture, more than ten years ago. Will The Voice of Elijah be able to offer any of those things for one-time contributions?*

Elijah: Now you're way ahead of me. I really can't say. There are certain books I've already written a good deal of. I intend to just send a copy of those out to your regular contributors when I've finished. Those are things like *God Called, I Answered*, the book I'm writing about the experiences I've had with God since He called me in 1966. There is no reason to even let anybody else know those things are available. If your regular contributors want to obtain additional copies of those books and make them available to others as part of their own ministry for God, they can obtain them through one-time contributions to your newsletter. That's their choice, and I assume that when they contribute to *The Voice of Elijah* and give the books to others, their intention is to warn them about what they believe is coming. The commentaries? I doubt there's even a market for them beyond those who read and believe the first four volumes of *The Resurrection Theology Series*. They'll probably go out to some select few also.

I don't know what to do about all the rest. I guess we'll have to cross each bridge as we come to it. As far as seminars are concerned, I probably won't be doing those either. If I did, they would be for just a very few. I had a selfish motive for wanting to do them in the first place. I thought it would be nice to meet some of those who have come to believe *The Teaching*. But I dreaded having to do what I knew I would eventually have to do when the inevitable Pretender showed up. My fear was I would, as Jesus said, "uproot" a few True Believers at the same time I was pushing some Pretender to the point of openly identifying himself as a fraud. [Editor: He's referring to Matthew 13:29.]

Seminars aren't absolutely necessary. I can accomplish my calling more effectively through video tapes anyway. That won't be as gratifying to me personally, but I shouldn't be looking for personal gratification in

the first place.... Although, come to think of it, I'll probably have to hold at least one seminar per video tape just so we can film it anyway. So I guess I could give a few, well-planned seminars. I suppose if any of your regular contributors want to be a part of such things, they can let you know. I've been told some already have. It looks like it's going to take me several years to put together the next three volumes in The Resurrection Theology Series. I could communicate a rough draft of that material through seminars in the meantime. If God has people out there who really want to learn, I should be meeting their need. What I would actually prefer is to find ten or twelve Believers like yourself who are willing to dedicate themselves to mastering *The Teaching*. We could set up a school, teach Greek and Hebrew, do it right. Maybe down the road. Let me think about the seminar question for a while and pray about it.

Editor: *Okay. I'll bring it up to you later. Let me get back to the publishing issue. What about the income you could have made from selling all the books and video tapes you have planned? Publishing and selling your own books is a profitable business. People will buy almost anything today if you just advertise. If you give all those things away, there's not a whole lot of money in it for you. Can you really afford to give that up?*

Elijah: If I believe it's what God wants, I can't afford not to. But it's interesting that you bring that up. It's taken me a long time to learn what the Apostle Paul apparently understood from the start. He told Timothy that wanting to be rich creates its own temptations because the love of money is the root of all evil. [Editor: He's referring to 1 Timothy 6:9-10.] Think about it! Money isn't the problem; wanting it is. I know a lot about that. God is currently reminding me I've paid too much attention to money over the past several years.

Editor: *What do you mean by that?*

Elijah: Several years ago I started planning and working toward the day when I could *afford* to sit down and do nothing but write day after day. The key word there is "afford." That was a mistake. I should have spent my time studying and let the Lord worry about the future. Instead, I worked non-stop for nearly five years to get ahead financially. By the time I finally realized I was too concerned about providing for myself so I could *afford* to write, I was into investments that required more of my time than I intended to give. I know now that was the Lord's doing. He has been trying to teach me about the proper attitude toward money for several years now, and I haven't been listening as well as I should have. I'm still learning a lot of things, but I think the right view of money must be indeli-

bly etched somewhere in my brain. Although I have a tendency to make the same mistake more than once or twice, I would honestly rather live in a shack with the right perspective on money—provided it had electricity for my computer—than live in a mansion with the constant concern for the dollar.

Editor: *You mention your computer. I know you just bought a new one. Could you tell us how you plan to use it?*

Elijah: Earlier you asked about my translation of the Scriptures with a cross-referenced index to idioms and *parabolic images*. I started planning that way back in 1975 or '76. I began looking for a personal computer I could use to track the idioms and *parabolic images* of the prophetic message in the Spring of 1979 or '80, when the only thing I could find to buy was a Commodore Pet computer. That was more a toy than a tool. It had, I can't remember which, either 16k or 32k of main memory. I knew absolutely nothing about computers then, but when the Osborne portable computer came out a year or so later, I got one as soon as I could finagle it, thinking its 64k of memory would do the job for me. It was fairly obvious before very long that it wouldn't do the job, but I had no idea what would. It never occurred to me I would eventually end up owning a computer with a hundred times more memory and computing power before I found one that would actually do what I needed it to do.

I moved up the line from that Osborne, always thinking the next computer would be the one I could use to do what I knew I had to do to fulfill my calling. I've had at least one of just about every type of IBM personal computer made. I started with the PC, moved up to the XT, put an AT accelerator card in that one, then moved up to a 386. Last month I finally got the computer I started looking for fourteen years ago. It's the fastest desktop computer on the market right now, a 486-50 EISA with a one gigabyte hard disk that sounds, if you listen real close, like a '57 Chevy with glass packs. It's that "hotrod" I wanted but never had when I was in high school. It will do exactly what I plan to do—go through the Old Testament with a fine-toothed comb, finding, tracking, and indexing the idioms and images that conceal the Old Testament Gospel of Jesus Christ. With a copy of the Hebrew Scriptures and the Greek New Testament on disk, all it takes now is a few keystrokes, and I can do in just a few minutes what it took me days, if not weeks, to do before.

But I learned from my failure in that regard as well. Looking back now, I realize I've wasted a lot of time and money down through the years trying to do a lot of things before their time. I know now that, even when I know *what* God wants me to do, the timing—the *when*—of my

ministry is still in God's hands, and I won't be able to do anything until He wants it done. If I had known back then the things I learned while writing *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*, I'm sure I would have had several false starts on that one as well. I may have several even now. But God will work it out. I'm sure of that.

Editor: *What exactly do you look for when you go through the Scriptures? For instance, how did you come by the things you recorded in Not All Israel Is Israel?*

Elijah: The information in that particular book, with the exception of what pertains to the role of John the Baptist, came together gradually between 1974 and 1981. It started coming together while I was writing my Master's thesis in late April 1974. I had just finished identifying all the passages in Jeremiah and Ezekiel that are quotations of passages in the Pentateuch when I woke up at 3 o'clock one morning and realized I understood those two Prophets were saying the New Covenant would be ratified with individual members of Israel rather than with *Corporate* Israel as it was at Sinai. It didn't take much to see that Jesus Christ was the only individual in Israel Whom God had accepted as worthy of that New Covenant relationship. So I started looking around, trying to understand how other individual members of Israel could lose their position in Israel. That is, how they could be "cut off from Israel." Obviously, I didn't use that idiom when I started looking, but it wasn't long before it surfaced. The next spring I followed up some of the "loose ends" that were left hanging from that initial investigation. For the most part, however, the things I learned then are things I intend to put in the second volume of The Resurrection Theology Series, *The Inheritance of the Believer*.

Some of *Not All Israel Is Israel* was also the result of a strange experience I had while reading for my Ph.D. comprehensive exams in 1978. I was alone in my backyard one morning when I heard what seemed like an audible voice say, "Build a house' means 'raise up a name.'" At the time I was on a marathon schedule, reading articles and books to prepare for my exams, so who knows what that was all about. Maybe I was strung out on too much coffee. Whatever it was, that experience allowed me to fill in some of the remainder of *Not All Israel Is Israel*. But it also resulted in my understanding the meaning of the Hebrew idiom "build a house," which is the central focus of the third volume of the series, *House of Israel, Temple of God*. The idiomatic threads of the message of the Scriptures are so closely intertwined that once they start coming unraveled, there is always some loose end left dangling that you can follow up later. I know of at least a dozen other idioms that relate to those I already understand, but I have no idea how they relate.

Before I got this latest computer, I had to use a He-

brew concordance to ferret out all the passages where a particular idiom occurs so I could piece together the message bit by bit. With the computer, I can key in a Hebrew idiom and all the passages come out on the printer almost instantly. I still have to do the same background research necessary to get a handle on the meaning of the idiom and its accompanying *parabolic image*, but the computer does away with a lot of the time-consuming work. And now that I understand what the Prophets were doing, what they are saying becomes a whole lot easier to understand. It also helps when I find a new idiom used in a passage I already understand, because then its meaning is explained somewhat by the idioms and *parabolic imagery* I already generally understand. The cycle doesn't get a whole lot easier the next time through, however, because there are so many *parabolic statements* packed into the Prophets that I can't help but miss something no matter how closely I look. I'm amazed every time I find some new idiom or image tucked into a passage I thought was fairly straightforward.

I have to say one thing here, though, so that I don't leave your readers with the impression that I believe I'm the one doing what I do. I was being facetious before when I mentioned being "strung out on coffee." I firmly believe that was God intervening at a crucial point in time because I was stumped by a particular part of *The Teaching* that I couldn't understand. It isn't always so easy to see how God does what He does, but I know there is no way I could accurately trace the idioms and *parabolic images* of the Scriptures if He had not called me to do it. God exists, and He is working to prepare His people for the Return of Jesus Christ. He has a definite plan for the grand finale that is creeping up on us, and despite my own failings, His plan is right on schedule. True Believers will eventually have opportunity to come to know and understand the whole Truth—the one and only Truth—of the Scriptures. I don't yet understand the details of exactly how that will happen. But it will.

Editor: *Your certainty concerning that reminds me of other things you have told me you felt certain would happen. Every time I ask you how you know such things, you say the same thing—"I don't claim to be a Prophet." Knowing you as long as I have, I know that people who claim to speak for God is a sensitive issue with you. I also know you avoid that issue yourself by appealing to your calling as a Teacher. We don't have time now, but sometime I'd like to ask you about the things you write for The Voice of Elijah and The Voice of Elijah Update and how you feel about seeing things you've written or said come to pass in pretty much the way you've said they would. Maybe next issue we can. For now, I think we'll leave it at that. Thanks. ■*

On Fairy Tales

From Page 1

More than that, however, Jesus Christ provided His disciples with all they would ever need to enable them to follow His example. That included an accurate understanding of His *Teaching* concerning the Old Testament Gospel message. (See “Jesus Talks About the Mystery,” *The Voice of Elijah*, January 1991, and “Where Are Jesus’ Disciples?” *The Voice of Elijah*, April 1991.) The Apostle Peter mentioned that fact also in his second letter, stating flatly that the Apostles’ *Teaching* concerning the “coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” was not some “cleverly devised [fairy] tale”:

Therefore, I shall always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you {already} know {them}, and have been established in the truth which is present with {you}. And I consider it right, as long as I am in this {earthly} dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder, knowing that the laying aside of my {earthly} dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will also be diligent that at any time after my departure you may be able to call these things to mind. For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.
(2 Peter 1:12–16)

Peter goes on to state clearly that “one’s own interpretation” of Scripture cannot even be considered as valid. That is because the Prophets of old were prompted by the Holy Spirit to record the message they *received* from God. Therefore, since the Holy Spirit gave the Prophets insight into the Truth they hid in the Hebrew Scriptures, the Scriptures can have but one valid *meaning*. That is the *meaning* God intended when He spoke to/through the Prophets:

And {so} we have the prophetic word {made} more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day

dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is {a matter} of one’s own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.
(2 Peter 1:19–21)

Peter’s point is, the one true *meaning* of the Scriptures can never be attained by human thought processes as “one’s own interpretation.” He made that statement knowing Jesus had supernaturally revealed to him and all the other Apostles insight into the one true *meaning* of the Scriptures. (See “Gnostic Beliefs and Early Church Teaching,” *The Voice of Elijah*, October 1991.) But he then goes on to speak prophetically, saying he knew full well the Truth of what he and the other Apostles taught would be distorted by those who “introduce destructive heresies”:

But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned; and in {their} greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.
(2 Peter 2:1–3)

That doesn’t sound too promising for those today who proudly tender their “own interpretation” for your acceptance, does it? But wait! He gets even more vitriolic in his condemnation of the practice:

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment; and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; and {if} He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing {them} to ashes,

having made them an example to those who would live ungodly thereafter; and {if} He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men (for by what he saw and heard {that} righteous man, while living among them, felt {his} righteous soul tormented day after day with {their} lawless deeds), {then} the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge the flesh in {its} corrupt desires and despise authority. Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties,
(2 Peter 2:4–10)

The Truth of Peter’s prophecy cannot be doubted. The proliferation of Pretenders who proffered their “own interpretation” of the Scriptures presented the Early Church with its most pernicious threat. Eventually, the proponents of the biblical “interpretation” school of thought won out over those who sought to continue in the Apostolic Tradition. (See *The Mystery of Scripture*.)

Yet here we are today, some two thousand years later, and not many will even admit that corruption of the Truth of *The Apostolic Teaching* happened early on. Pretenders have long since taken the scholarly (and sometimes not so scholarly) presentation of their “own interpretation” of the Scriptures to new heights. In some circles it is almost an art form. No wonder they want to continue sidling down a variety of paths, each one illuminated by “the light” of their own understanding, glibly spouting off about things of which they have little, if any, real knowledge. And my, how they do love their fairy tales!

But God does not take lightly the rejection of *The Teaching* He provided the sons of Israel (through Moses) and the Church (through the ministry of the Apostles). Nor does He care much for the misrepresentation of His character and/or deeds, especially since He told us plainly more than once it angered Him. If anyone is so uninformed as to not know where that information can be found, I point you to the words of Zephaniah where he describes the activities of the “harlot”:

**This is the exultant city
Which dwells securely,
Who says in her heart,
“I am, and there is no one besides
me.”**

*How she has become a desolation,
A resting place for beasts!
Everyone who passes by her will
hiss
{And} wave his hand {in contempt.}
Woe to her who is rebellious and
defiled,
The tyrannical city!
**She heeded no voice;
She accepted no instruction.
She did not trust in the LORD;
She did not draw near to her God.
Her princes within her are roaring
lions,
Her judges are wolves at evening;
They leave nothing for the morning.
Her prophets are reckless,
treacherous men;
Her priests have profaned the
sanctuary.
They have done violence to the law.
The LORD is righteous within her;
He will do no injustice.
Every morning He brings His justice
to light;
He does not fail.
But the unjust knows no shame.
“I have cut off nations;
Their corner towers are in ruins.
I have made their streets desolate,
With no one passing by;
Their cities are laid waste,
Without a man, without an inhabitant.
**I said, ‘Surely you will revere Me,
Accept instruction.’
So her dwelling will not be cut off
{According to} all that I have
appointed concerning her.
But they were eager to corrupt all
their deeds.
Therefore, wait for Me,” declares
the LORD,
“For the day when I rise up to the
prey.
**Indeed, My decision is to gather
nations,
To assemble kingdoms,
To pour out on them My
indignation,
All My burning anger;
For all the earth will be devoured
By the fire of My zeal.”**
(Zephaniah 2:15–3:8)*****

Notice that Zephaniah recounts that God faulted the woman because she would not “accept instruction.” He is *talk- ing about* his provision of *The Teaching* and humanity’s rejection of it. Notice also how the message of Zephaniah concern- ing the role of *fear of God* in the accep- tance of *The Teaching* has been muted in verse 7 by the translation “revere” instead of “fear.” (See “Oh, So Many Four-Letter Words!” in this issue.)

Lest any should misunderstand the point of this passage, Zephaniah has—by his quotation of Isaiah 47:8 (“Who says in her heart, ‘I am, and there is no one be- sides me.’”)—clearly identified the woman whose judgment he describes. She is identified by the *parabolic image* the Prophets used to represent the “city” this Earth will become shortly before Christ returns. She is the Mystery Baby- lon—whose fate is described in Revela- tion 17–18. (See “Is Iraq Mystery Babylon?” *The Voice of Elijah*, January 1991, and also Hippolytus, *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist*, 36–43.) In agree- ment with the vision recorded there by the Apostle John, Zephaniah has also stated that the day will come when God will burn the “harlot” woman with fire. He says He will:

*“pour out on them My indignation,
All My burning anger;
For all the earth will be devoured
By the fire of My zeal.”
(Zephaniah 3:8b)*

Zephaniah made clear earlier in his work that the time of which he spoke is “the Great Day of the Lord” (Zephaniah 1:14). On that Great Day, God’s anger at those who misrepresent and distort the Truth will finally attain a brilliant white heat. When it does, He will lash out at His enemies in a burning rage. Only then will the full fury of the fiery indignation of God’s wrath as described by Zephaniah be revealed.

The Day of the Lord is speedily ap- proaching. It is a horrifying day when, as Zephaniah indicates, God will focus His wrath on those who have failed to “accept instruction.” That being the case, it is not surprising, in light of the theme he has maintained in his second letter, that Peter also mentions that event in his letter:

*This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stir- ring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior {spoken} by your apostles. Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with {their} mocking, follow- ing after their own lusts, and saying, “Where is the promise of His com- ing? For {ever} since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.” For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God {the} heavens existed long ago and {the} earth was formed out of water and by water, through which the world at that time was destroyed, be- ing flooded with water. But the pres- ent heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. But do not let this one {fact} escape your notice, be- loved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be de- stroyed in this way, what sort of peo- ple ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and has- tening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the ele- ments will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.
(2 Peter 3:1–13)*

It may have been slow in coming, but the Day of the Lord is almost here. Pre- tenders are roundly affirming that Jesus Christ will soon return, but they fail to mention the fiery end that awaits them. Why would they? They don’t believe in a

God of wrath. Consequently, the sad state of their own spiritual condition doesn't concern them. Inwardly they comfort themselves with the words, "Where is the promise of His coming?"

On the other hand, the approach of that Great Day is not entirely a comforting thought even to those who fear their God. They realize they too must pass through that fire. And they know they could experience the brunt of God's wrath if they fail to overcome. However, their fear motivates them to seek refuge in an intimate day-to-day relationship with their Lord. Consequently, they strive to overcome sin in their own life and will, therefore, emerge triumphant from that flame (See "Oh, So Many Four-Letter Words!" in this issue).

Theologically minded fools will never consider that the warnings found throughout the Scriptures might be *meant* for them. They comfort themselves with the thought that they "know God" and "have Jesus Christ in their heart." (Whatever that cliché *means* to them.) In truth they could not care less about God. Christianity merely provides a handy masquerade. Their true concern is not a relationship with God. It is for living life to its fullest every day.

I am speaking now to you who are True Believers. The Early Church Fathers clearly understood that Pretenders infiltrating the Church in their day were spreading false teaching—teaching that was a major threat to the spiritual life of True Believers. Unfortunately, even that small bit of truth was lost when Pretenders became the majority in the Church. You True Believers must realize Pretenders are all around you. They can be expected to dispute what they read here, and they will try to convince you it is not true because their father Satan "planted" them in the Church for that specific purpose.

The objective of Pretenders has always been to disrupt harmony by introducing false teaching, thus creating additional contention and controversy. They sometimes do that by dogmatically insisting others must accept their own opinion as true. Among them are those who love to argue about theological matters rather than living their own life according to the simple Truth of the Gospel. But their refusal to "accept instruction" makes them all the more easily identi-

able to those True Believers who are still seeking the Truth.

No matter what Pretenders do or say to the contrary, every morning's sunrise brings us one day closer to the dawning of the awesome ferocity of God's wrath. There can be little doubt it will appear to our own generation, so let's take a look at what we can expect.

While the initial revelation of God's burning wrath will result in the purgation, if not, in some sense, the total destruction of this realm, the continuance of that rage provides the mighty bellows that fan the fires of hell. That's because "fire" is just a *parabolic image* the Prophets used to describe the wrath of God that is, as the skeptics would so aptly put it, "hotter than hell." It should be. It provides the heat.

The Prophets repeatedly warn us that torment in the *parabolic* "fire" of God's wrath is all that lies ahead for those who reject His provision of salvation in this life. The *parabolic imagery* has its basis in the presence of God residing in the pillar of fire that illuminated "The Way" the sons of Israel traveled through the wilderness:

And the LORD was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.
(Exodus 13:21–22)

Even in that incipient form, the beneficial characteristics of that fire proved dangerously threatening to one who failed to recognize its distinct peculiarity. At the conclusion of the ceremonial consecration of the tabernacle, the fire of God's presence in the pillar consumed the sacrifices on the altar and mingled its fire with the fire already on the altar (Lev. 9:24).

Shortly thereafter, Nadab and Abihu, the priestly sons of Aaron, used fire from a source other than the altar to offer incense before the Lord. They had no time at all to contemplate their lack of respect for God's *parabolic* "fire." The fire of the Lord lashed out immediately, seeking to purify both them and the "strange fire" they had used in the priestly ritual:

Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. And fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD.
(Leviticus 10:1–2)

These two consecrated priests failed to recognize that the fire of God inhabiting the pillar and the fire that burned on the altar were different than every other fire. It was holy. That holy fire symbolized the essence of God, a God Who "dwells in unapproachable light" (1 Tim. 6:16a)—a God of pure, burning holiness.

The purifying characteristics of fire contribute to the emphasis on the holiness of God in the passages of Scripture that teach concerning His wrath. Fire consumes the unclean and impure elements that adhere to any metal passing through it. It sanitizes. That fact is pointed out by the law concerning ritual purification:

Then Eleazar the priest said to the men of war who had gone to battle, "This is the statute of the law which the LORD has commanded Moses: only the gold and the silver, the bronze, the iron, the tin and the lead, everything that can stand the fire, you shall pass through the fire, and it shall be clean, but it shall be purified with water for impurity. But whatever cannot stand the fire you shall pass through the water.
(Numbers 31:21–23)

Jeremiah elaborates on the *parabolic image* of the "fire" of God, linking it specifically to God's wrath. He states that Israel's rejection of God's Truth has kindled that eternal flame:

*For you have kindled a fire in My anger
Which will burn forever.*
(Jeremiah 17:4b)

Jeremiah insists also that the purpose of the "fire" of God is to purify *Corporate* Israel by purging from Him the unclean and unholy. However, he admits that those who reject *The Teaching*,

choosing instead to go “about as a talebearer,” will pass through the “fire” of God in an unholy state. Those who do so cannot be purified. Therefore, the refining process will continue in vain forever:

“I have made you an assayer {and} a tester among My people, That you may know and assay their way.”

All of them are stubbornly rebellious,

Going about as a talebearer.

{They are} bronze and iron;

They, all of them, are corrupt.

The bellows blow fiercely,

The lead is consumed by the fire;

In vain the refining goes on,

But the wicked are not separated.

They call them rejected silver,

Because the LORD has rejected them.

(Jeremiah 6:27–30)

The holiness of the fire of God, along with the purifying nature of fire in general, contribute to the *parabolic imagery* of the Prophets that describes the fires of hell. Hell is a holy place reserved for unholy souls whom God will forever seek to purify. Unfortunately, those who have held fast to their sin in this life, refusing to humbly and honestly seek purification through the blood of Christ, must endure the purifying process forever because they will never come clean.

The Prophets provide plenty of warning for those who are wise enough to pay attention. Zephaniah dedicates his entire oracle to the subject:

Near is the great day of the LORD,

Near and coming very quickly;

Listen, the day of the LORD!

In it the warrior cries out bitterly.

A day of wrath is that day,

A day of trouble and distress,

A day of destruction and desolation,

A day of darkness and gloom,

A day of clouds and thick darkness,

A day of trumpet and battle cry,

Against the fortified cities

And the high corner towers.

And I will bring distress on men,

So that they will walk like the blind,

Because they have sinned against the LORD;

And their blood will be poured out like dust,

And their flesh like dung.

Neither their silver nor their gold

Will be able to deliver them

On the day of the LORD’s wrath;

And all the earth will be devoured

In the fire of his jealousy,

For he will make a complete end,

Indeed a terrifying one,

Of all the inhabitants of the earth.

(Zephaniah 1:14–18)

Observe carefully the advice He gives those who seek to avoid God’s wrath in that Great Day:

Gather yourselves together, yes, gather,

O nation without shame,

Before the decree takes effect—

The day passes like the chaff—

Before the burning anger of the

LORD comes upon you,

Before the day of the LORD’s anger

comes upon you.

Seek the LORD,

All you humble of the earth

Who have carried out His

ordinances;

Seek righteousness, seek humility.

Perhaps you will be hidden

In the day of the LORD’s anger.

(Zephaniah 2:1–3)

The “gathering” the Prophet has in mind here is explained more fully elsewhere in the Prophets. It has nothing to do with a physical assembly in one place or another. True Believers in these Last Days may never have opportunity to meet one another in the flesh, but they will “know” one another just the same.

The *parabolic* “gathering” to which Zephaniah refers is something Pretenders will never be able to thwart by their infiltration tactics because it is a spiritual “gathering”—a coming together and becoming “one” again in the true Body of Christ as True Believers who have but “one Lord, one faith, one baptism” (Eph. 4:5). Such oneness is not possible by arranging some physical assembly. It is only possible through a common belief in *The (restored) Apostolic Teaching*.

Scoffers will mock and ridicule, Pretenders of all kinds will reject it outright, but that’s to be expected. They were never intended to be gathered anyway. The Prophets decreed their punish-

ment is what they have chosen. They will remain scattered. Forever.

It’s late. Multiplied millions of proud and arrogant Pretenders boldly claim their “Christian” guise replicates that of True Believers in Christ. However, their deceit is only surpassed by their folly. In spite of the confusion they purvey, those of you who have ears to hear will hear, even now. And God will respond to you—if you honestly turn to Him for direction—as He has always responded to those who seek Him in humility and contrition. Your “blindness” will be healed, and you will again “see” the Truth. Malachi said it would be so:

“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. And you will tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day which I am preparing,” says the LORD of hosts. “Remember the law of Moses My servant, {even the} statutes and ordinances which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel. Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD. And he will restore the hearts of the fathers to {their} children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse.”

(Malachi 4:1–6)

I pray that you are one of those whom God intends to gain insight and understanding from what you find written here before the End. I began this article by quoting Peter’s admonition that Believers should suffer injustice as Jesus did. As the Great Day of the Lord draws near, one would do well to heed his admonition. Suffering is never easy, but it is far better to suffer for Christ in this life than to suffer for your own folly in holy hell forever. ■

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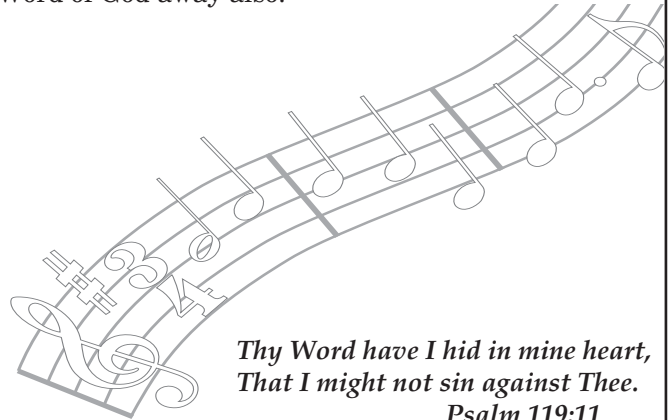
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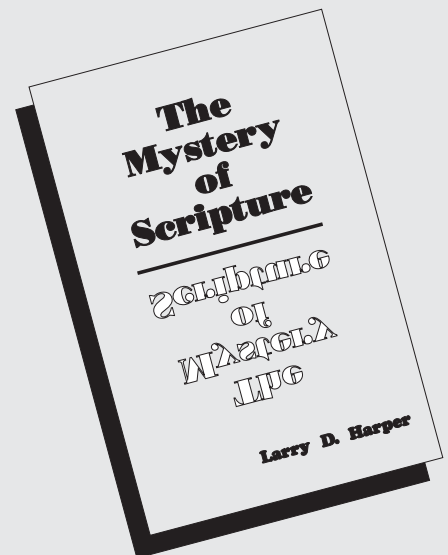
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