

In the Image and Likeness of God

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— Mesquite, Texas —

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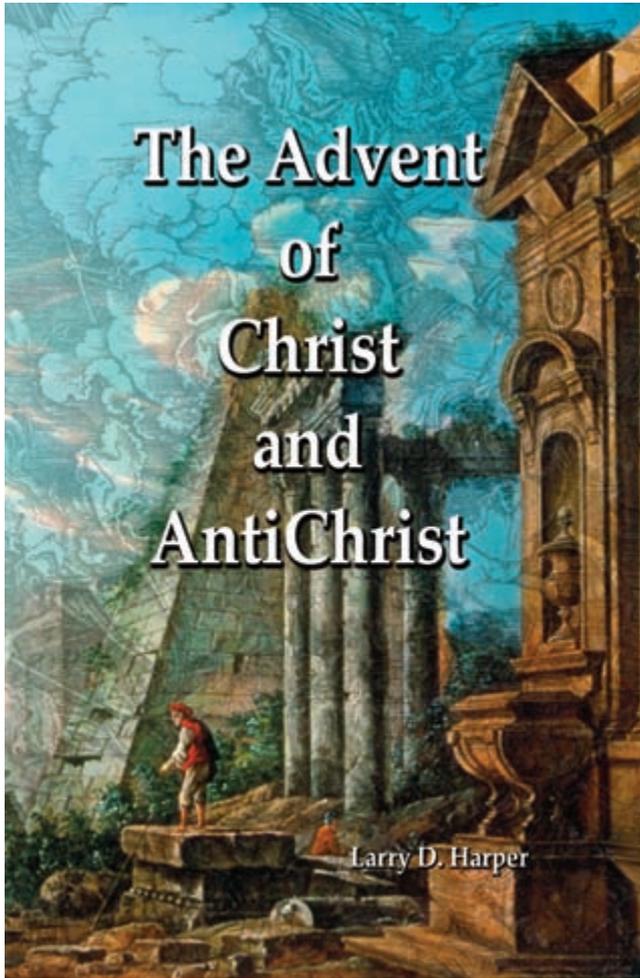
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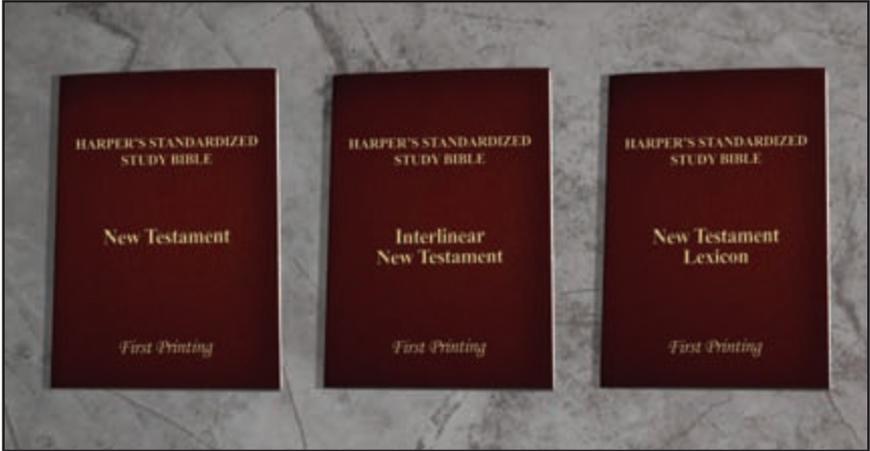


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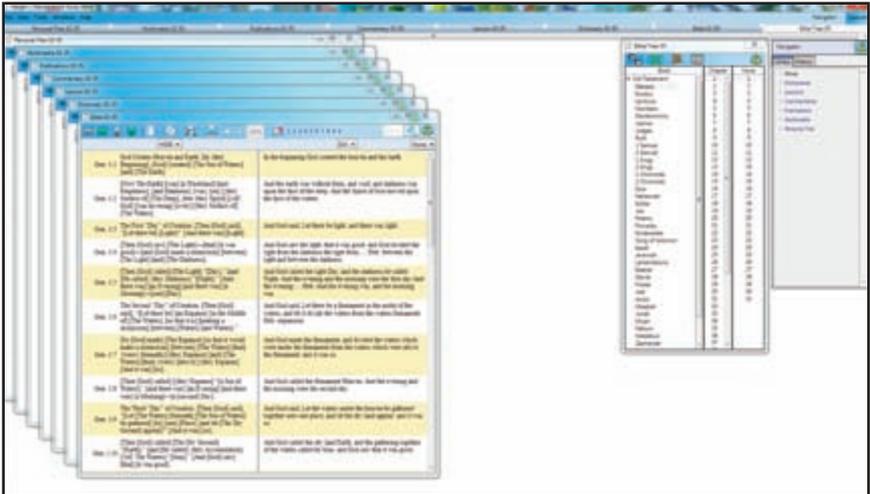
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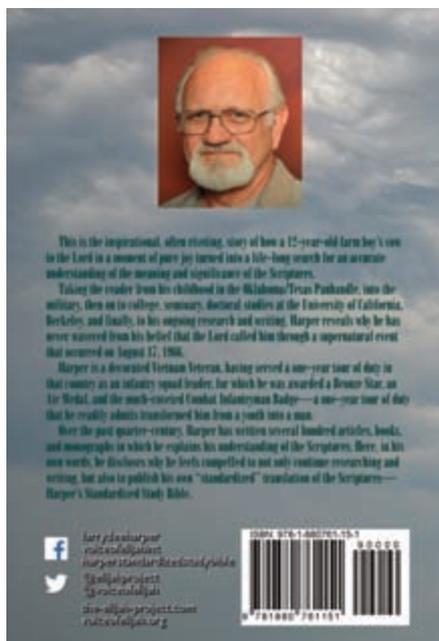
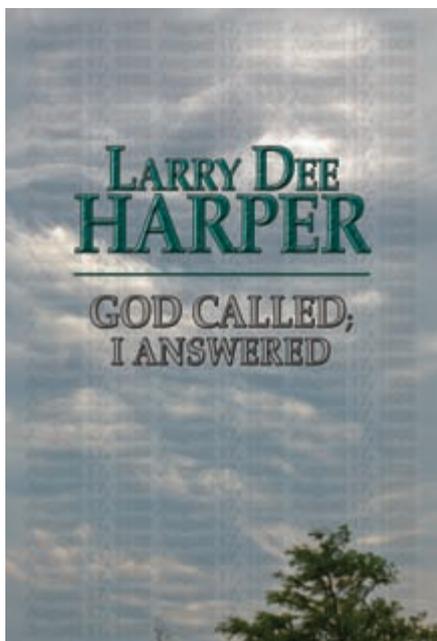


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IN THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS OF GOD

Introduction

The Pretenders who sanctimoniously warm the pews in the Church today all claim to be eagerly awaiting the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. I somehow doubt they are, but they certainly deserve the benefit of the doubt for the time being. Time will tell whether or not they are happy to see Him when He returns for His Own. In the meantime, the rest of us need to prepare for the inevitable. By that I *mean*, there are a few things that True Believers need to know before they are ready to face down the Antichrist. And—no matter how ridiculous this may sound to the majority—I have been called to explain them. So let's get to it.

Obviously, if you are not aware that God will require a certain level of insight into the Truth on the part of those Believers who are alive at the End of the Age, that is but the first of Satan's lies you must put aside.¹ However, you will need a little help to see past his other lies so that you can understand the Truth of *The Apostolic Teaching* that his agents distorted some 1800 years ago. You should begin by reading the article "Wanna Hear the Whopper the Liar Came Up

¹ See "That's Why He's Called AntiChrist!" *The Voice of Elijah*, April 1992.

With? (I Doubt You'll Believe It!)"² The Apostle Paul states the major premise of that article this way:

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

(2 Thessalonians 2:1–12)

If you did not know that God takes a dim view of folks who do not have enough “love of the truth” to continually examine what they believe to see whether or not it is true, perhaps you should reconsider your precarious position before it is too late. Unfortunately for the dolts that Paul describes in the passage above, God has already sent “a

² *The Voice of Elijah*, October 1996.

deluding influence” on this generation “so that they might believe what is false.” And a quick trip to the supermarket will disclose that Satan’s biggest lie provides the basis for a runaway best seller. All available evidence indicates that Satan has the vast majority who claim to be “Christian” soundly asleep under the influence of that lie. Moreover, he obviously intends to make sure they remain completely “under the influence” until the bitter End. But how bitter their End will be!

The one question you must answer—and answer you will, one way or the other—is whether you have enough “love of the truth” to honestly question all of your beliefs about God, even the ones you hold most dearly. Should you decide to undertake that quest, I warn you beforehand that the spiritual battles that lie ahead of you are going to be more intense than you could ever imagine. And you will only triumph over Satan’s delusion if you keep firmly focused on the purpose for which you are fighting:

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

(2 Corinthians 10:3–5)

It should be obvious from what Paul says that True Believers cannot do battle with the Liar without first gaining an accurate “knowledge of God.” After they have that information in their possession, God then requires them to protect their knowledge of the Truth by assiduously avoiding the “speculations” that Paul mentions. From that, it follows that if you don’t know the Truth about God in the first place, your battle with Satan has an already foregone conclusion. That is why God called me—to make sure that you have a fighting

chance. My specific task is to *restore* and explain the Truth of *The Apostolic Teaching* because *The Teaching* contains specific information that True Believers need to know so that they can see through Satan's lie and endure to the End.

What you do with the things I teach is up to you. My only obligation is to make them available to those who have ears to hear. The purpose of this and the other articles and books I write is not to "prove" the truthfulness of what I teach by arguing evidence like a trial lawyer. The hour is much too late for that. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob did not call me to waste valuable time debating theological doctrines with dullards whose faulty presuppositions concerning the nature and purpose of the Scriptures prevent them from understanding even the basics of *The Apostolic Teaching* the Church lost some 1800 years ago.³

Consequently, I am not going to lay out all the biblical evidence in a single coherent presentation that is intended to convince unbelievers as to the Truth of the Gospel. That is the task of the Evangelists God has called to preach the Gospel to this generation. Their continuing neglect in regard to their calling is fairly obvious to anyone who understands the Truth. But God expects them, not me, to correct their mistakes. I have more than enough to do just making sure I do not also fail.

As I have stated repeatedly over the past decade, I am a Teacher. My goal as a Teacher is first to *restore*, and then to explain, *The Apostolic Teaching* for the benefit of True Believers. That is, I have been called to teach those who have already understood and believed the simple Truth of the Gospel. I have no obligation whatsoever to try to convince anyone that what I teach is true. The Truth speaks for itself in the minds of those who have ears to hear. Therefore, the dimwits who are so completely enthralled by Satan's lie that they require more

³ See *The Way, The Truth, The Life*.

“proof” than what I provide will undoubtedly look elsewhere for the “truth” they seek. In so doing, they will only confirm the Truth of one simple verity:

*At that time the Feast of the Dedication took place at Jerusalem; it was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple in the portico of Solomon. The Jews therefore gathered around Him, and were saying to Him, “How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.” Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father’s name, these bear witness of Me. **But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand.**”*

(John 10:22–28)

I realize that what I teach will seem ludicrous to nearly everyone. After all, most “Christians” already know that *what* one believes is not all that important. What they consider most important is a goofy “form of godliness”⁴ in which church attendance plays the central role and an inane ability to gush “Christian” clichés with firm conviction runs a close second. So why would I even try to swim upstream against such an overwhelming flood of “conventional wisdom”? I am just one small voice articulating one of many diverse opinions in a vast wilderness of diverse opinions.

With that said, I am now going to show those who have ears to hear the Truth in regard to something that reveals one of Satan’s most pernicious lies for exactly what it is: abject stupidity. Be forewarned: If you choose to continue reading what I have written here, you will provide God the perfect opportunity to test your “heart” and thereby determine whether you really do have “the love of the truth” that He requires.

⁴ 2 Timothy 3:5.

(And the fools among us are already convinced that statement is completely ridiculous.)

Truth Agrees Completely, Lies Contradict

You may have read books or explored internet web sites—there are plenty of them—which seek either to point out or to explain what feeble-minded folks have identified as “the contradictions in the Bible.” If you have, you already know that one of the apparent “contradictions” over which believing Christians and unbelieving skeptics do battle involves Moses’ account of the creation of Adam and Eve. Skeptics are more than eager to point out the apparent “contradiction” in that account, while Christians valiantly seek to show why there is no contradiction at all.

An intriguing fact that quickly becomes apparent when one closely examines the ongoing discussion between these two opposing camps is this: The skeptics do not appear to understand fully the nature of the problem, and Christian apologists have not even come close to explaining why there is no valid contradiction. That is because, as is quite often the case with regard to biblical study, both sides approach the debate from exactly the same perspective, and in this case the basis for their perspective is one of Satan’s greatest lies. Therefore, in this article I am going to explain a simple Truth that Satan has concealed from skeptics and Christians alike. Then you will have opportunity to see (if indeed you have eyes to see and ears to hear) why there is no contradiction at all in the biblical account.

In the first chapter of the Book of Genesis, Moses presents the following account of how God created the Earth, the plants, the fish, the birds, the animals, and “the man”:

Then God said, “Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear;” and it was so. And God called the dry land earth, and the gathering of the waters He

called seas; and God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, {and} fruit trees bearing fruit after their kind, with seed in them, on the earth;" and it was so. And the earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit, with seed in them, after their kind; and God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

(Genesis 1:9–13)

Then God said, "Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens." And God created the great sea monsters, and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind; and God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

(Genesis 1:20–23)

Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind;" and it was so. And God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. And God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

(Genesis 1:24–28)

As you can see, Moses clearly intended the account in Genesis 1 to be a chronological account. So let's go through it

carefully just to make sure we understand the specific order in which the stated events occurred. Moses tells us the following events occurred in the order in which they are listed:

On the third “day” of Creation:

Dry land appeared out of the water.

Vegetation—both plants and trees—sprouted.

On the fifth “day” of Creation:

God created the fish.

God created the birds.

On the sixth “day” of Creation:

God created the animals.

God created “the man” in His image and likeness.

In my summary of the events that occurred on the sixth “day,” I intentionally used the rubric “the man”—which is what the original Hebrew text actually *means*—rather than “Adam,” which is just a *transliteration* of the Hebrew word ‘*adam*. I did that so that it would be easier for you to see what Moses actually *meant* when he used that word.

Educated folks—scholars—tend to forget that even in the Creation Account the Hebrew word ‘*adam* is a generic term for “man” rather than a proper name which can only be attached to the one man they call “Adam;” so ordinary laymen sort of fall into that same pit by default. Therefore, it will be helpful if you keep one simple Truth in mind when you read the Scriptures: The Hebrew designation *Ha’Adam* (that is, “the man”) does not necessarily refer to the same “man” in every instance where Moses uses it. If you want to insist that it does, be my guest. You will only reveal yourself to be exceedingly stupid and close-minded.

Moses sometimes uses *Ha’Adam* (“the man”) with the general sense of “mankind,” as he does in the following passage:

Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose. Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore {children} to them. Those were the mighty men who {were} of old, men of renown.
(Genesis 6:1–4)

In all four instances where I have bolded and underlined "men" or "man," the Hebrew text actually says *Ha'Adam*, that is, "the 'Adam,'" clearly referring to "the man" mentioned in Genesis 2, the "man" from whom Moses tells us all other "men" descended. Keep that in mind; you definitely need to understand the *significance* of that peculiarity if you want to understand the Scriptures. Moses and the other Prophets of Israel sometimes refer to the descendants of the first Adam—that is, to all of mankind—as "the man." That is just another of the many techniques they used to conceal the *meaning* and *significance* of the things they wrote about "The Man" Jesus Christ.⁵

Now that we have looked at what Moses wrote in the first chapter of Genesis, let's examine the account he gives in the second chapter. The order of the events listed in that chapter *appears* to be diametrically opposed to the order given in Chapter 1:

This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made earth and heaven. Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth;

⁵ See "He's Coming in Clouds of Glory (Whatever That Means)" *The Voice of Elijah*, January 2001 and "Questions & Answers," *The Voice of Elijah*, July 2001, for an explanation of those things.

and there was no man to cultivate the ground. But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground. Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. And the LORD God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
(Genesis 2:4-9)

Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die." Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him." And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought {them} to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. And the man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh at that place. And the LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man.
(Genesis 2:15-22)

It would probably be best if you go through that account carefully just to make sure you have the order of events it describes firmly fixed in your mind. Only then will you be able to see how that order disagrees with the order presented in Chapter 1. After you have done that, it should be obvious to you that if you want to understand the Truth, you must be

willing to set aside any preconceived notions that the two accounts are describing the Creation of the same “man.” They are, but not in the way that most people think. And therein lies the reason for Satan’s lie.

The Truth Is Right in Front of You

The following list of events follows the same order as the events presented in Genesis 2:

Chapter 2:

Dry land has already appeared.

No vegetation has yet sprouted.

God created the first Adam from the ground.

God created vegetation.

God created birds.

God created animals.

God created the woman “Eve.”

Now, compare the order immediately above with the order of events that were given in the first chapter of Genesis:

Chapter 1:

On the third “day” of Creation:

Dry land appeared out of the water.

Vegetation—both plants and trees—sprouted.

On the fifth “day” of Creation:

God created the fish.

God created the birds.

On the sixth “day” of Creation:

God created the animals.

God created “the man” in His image and likeness.

It does not take a genius, a rocket scientist, or even a person of more than average intelligence to see that the order of events is not the same. Therefore, the first fact you need to

accept if you want to be intellectually honest is this: The account in Genesis 2 begins with a description of circumstances that existed only on the third “day” of Creation. That is immediately obvious to anyone who tries to reconcile the two accounts:

Chapter 1:

On the third “day” of Creation:

Dry land appeared out of the water.

Vegetation—both plants and trees—sprouted.

Chapter 2:

Dry land has already appeared.

No vegetation has yet sprouted.

God created the first Adam from the ground.

God created vegetation.

Genesis 2 plainly tells us God created the first ‘Adam after dry ground had appeared out of the water, but *before* any vegetation had sprouted. Any moron who wants to argue otherwise has to explain away the fairly straightforward statement Moses makes as to why no vegetation had yet appeared on the Earth:

For the LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth; and there was no man to cultivate the ground.

(Genesis 2:5b)

I’m not saying the obvious *meaning* of that text cannot be explained away to the satisfaction of close-minded simpletons who want to go on believing Satan’s lie. I’m just saying that there is no need for them to be so absurdly creative. Why not just let the plain *meaning* of the text stand as it is written? Moses can only be describing a time on the third “day” of Creation *after* dry ground had appeared out of the water and *before* any vegetation had sprouted when he says this:

Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

(Genesis 2:7)

Moses goes on to tell us that *after* God created the first 'Adam, He then made vegetation sprout from the same "ground" He used to form the first 'Adam:

*And the LORD God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed. **And out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.***

(Genesis 2:8–9)

Don't be dense! Moses obviously intends us to understand that the first 'Adam was "formed ... of the dust of the ground" on the third "day" of Creation, *after* dry ground had appeared and *before* any vegetation had sprouted. Knowing that, you should be able to see that the remainder of the account in Genesis 2 is nothing more than a recapitulation of events that occurred on the fifth and sixth "days" of Creation:

Chapter 1:

On the third "day" of Creation:

Dry land appeared out of the water.

Vegetation—both plants and trees—sprouted.

On the fifth "day" of Creation:

God created the fish.

God created the birds.

On the sixth "day" of Creation:

God created the animals.

Chapter 2:*Dry land has already appeared.**No vegetation has yet sprouted.**God created the first Adam from the ground.**God created vegetation.****God created birds.******God created animals.***

If you want to refute my understanding of Genesis 2, consider this: You have to explain why Genesis 1 says “the man” that God created in His image and likeness was created *after* the fish, birds, and animals, whereas Genesis 2 plainly says God created “the man” *before* He created the birds and animals in an attempt to find a “helper” for “the man.” That is no easy task, to be sure. But if someone wants to go on believing Satan’s lie, I’m certain they are up to it. And those who have insight into the Truth can only stand by and marvel at their ignorance.

You may have noticed that my listing of the events described in Genesis 1 did not include the last creative act that God completed on the sixth “day” of Creation: The Creation of “the man” in His image and likeness. That is because—contrary to the monstrous lie that the agents of Satan successfully implanted in the Early Church⁶—that event is not even mentioned in Genesis 2.

The account Moses gives in Genesis 2 clearly describes the Creation of “the man” we normally call “Adam.” That much, at least, is readily understood. What is not understood at all today is the fact that the account in Genesis 1 is describing the Creation of the Second “Adam,” *The Man* that God created in His Own image and likeness when He resurrected Him from the dead. If you want to read a description of how God created that “man,” you have to read the rest of the Hebrew and Greek

⁶ See my ongoing commentary on Early Church literature in *The Voice of Elijah Update*.

Scriptures. That's because Jesus Christ is the only "man" that God has thus far created in His Own image and likeness, although there soon will be other members of "the man" Adam who join Him in that absolutely incredible experience.

A Second Lie to Cover Up the First

There, you now have in your possession the first bit of insight into the Truth concerning God's Creation of "the man" in His Own image and likeness. Your insight into the complete Truth regarding that event will ultimately reveal Satan's lie for exactly what it is—utter nonsense. So let's keep going.

The insight that Moses intended his reader to take away from his description of the Creation of the Second *'Adam* is not at all difficult to understand, provided one is willing to let go of Satan's lie. That lie depends—in large part—on the idiotic notion that the Scriptures can only be understood *literally*.⁷ That's why Satan has worked unceasingly to instill that particular bit of nonsense into the mind-set of as many Evangelical Christians as possible over the past two centuries. I have already shown you what you need to know to see through that lie.⁸ So now let me stir up a bit more controversy in the narrow minds of nitwits who believe that lie but are too intellectually lazy to even consider the Truth.

The seven "days" of Creation are not *literal* 24-hour "days." They are instead *parabolic* "days." That is, they are *parabolically* LIKE days, but are actually the "times" or "ages" referred to in passages like these:

"And whoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age, or in the {age} to

⁷ See "Did You Mean That Literally?" and "The Origen of Folly" in *The Voice of Elijah*, January 1993.

⁸ See "Wanna Hear the Whopper the Liar Came Up With? (I Doubt You'll Believe It!)" *The Voice of Elijah*, October 1996.

come."

(Matthew 12:32)

*Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel's sake, but that **he shall receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life.**"*

(Mark 10:29–30)

*Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, **according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, {leading} to obedience of faith; to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.***

(Romans 16:25–27)

*Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, **not of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden {wisdom,} which God predestined before the ages to our glory; {the wisdom} which none of the rulers of this age has understood;** for if they had understood it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.*

(1 Corinthians 2:6–8)

Anyone who has the ability to keep an open mind should be able to see that Moses never intended us to understand the seven "days" of Creation as seven *literal* 24-hour days. He plainly tells us the Earth was not separated from Heaven until the second "day" of Creation and that it did not fall into orbit around the sun until the fourth "day." So why would anyone think he was reckoning time by a cosmic order that he plainly knew did not even exist until God was half-

way through the Creation process? He wasn't. He was instead providing a subtle clue that the "days" in his account should be understood *parabolically*. That is, each "age" is LIKE a "day" in that it has a time of *parabolic* "darkness" followed by a time of *parabolic* "light."

For several years now, I have been showing how Satan used Pretenders to introduce lies into the Early Church during the last half of the second century.⁹ The goofy notion that the seven "days" of Creation are *literal* rather than *parabolic* was a key part of Satan's distortion of the *parabolic imagery* of *The Apostolic Teaching*. Nevertheless, until well into the third century, mainstream Church leaders like Irenæus and Hippolytus knew full well that the "days" of Creation were *parabolic* "days." Even the idiot Origen and his imbecilic student Clement of Alexandria concur that the statements of the Scriptures should not always be taken *literally*. Their only mistake was in assuming Church leaders should interpret the Scriptures for themselves rather than just *handing down The Apostolic Teaching* they had *received*.

A statement I quite frequently quote to show how the leaders of the Early Church thought is the following from a work by Irenæus, in which he *parabolically* explains how the first Adam died on the sixth "day" of Creation:

Now he died on the same day in which he did eat. For God said, "In that day on which ye shall eat of it, ye shall die by death." The Lord, therefore, recapitulating in Himself this day, underwent His sufferings upon the day preceding the Sabbath, that is, the sixth day of the creation, on which day man was created; thus granting him a second creation by means of His passion, which is that [creation] out of death. And there are some, again, who relegate the death of Adam to the thousandth year; for since "a day of the Lord is as a thousand

⁹ See my ongoing commentary on Early Church literature in *The Voice of Elijah Update*.

years," he did not overstep the thousand years, but died within them thus bearing out the sentence of his sin.

Whether, therefore, with respect to disobedience, which is death; whether [we consider] that, on account of that, they were delivered over to death, and made debtors to it; whether with respect to [the fact that on] one and **the same day on which they ate they also died (for it is one day of the creation)**; whether [we regard this point], that, with respect to this cycle of days, **they died on the day in which they did also eat, that is, the day of the preparation, which is termed "the pure supper," that is, the sixth day of the feast, which the Lord also exhibited when He suffered on that day;** or whether [we reflect] that he (Adam) did not overstep the thousand years, but died within their limit,—it follows that, in regard to all these significations, God is indeed true. For they died who tasted of the tree; and the serpent is proved a liar and a murderer, as the Lord said of him: "For he is a murderer from the beginning, and the truth is not in him." (John 8:44)¹⁰

Some of the statements made in that passage are rather difficult to understand if you are not thinking in terms of the same *parabolic imagery* Irenæus had in mind. He is referring to the Creation of the Second "man" through the death of Christ on the sixth "day" of Creation when he says this:

The Lord, therefore, recapitulating in Himself this day, underwent His sufferings upon the day preceding the Sabbath, that is, the sixth day of the creation, on which day man was created; thus granting him a second creation by means of His passion.

In another context, Irenæus says the following about the length of the Creation process. As is obvious to anyone who understands the *parabolic imagery* of *The Teaching*, when he mentions the activity of the Antichrist and the *parabolic* "har-

¹⁰ Irenæus, "Against Heresies," Book v, Chap. xxiii, in Roberts and Donaldson (eds.), *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (1867), Vol. 1.

vest" which will take place at the end of the sixth "day," he is describing events that occur immediately before the Creation of *The Man*, that is, the Body of Jesus Christ, in the image and likeness of God on that "day":

He says also:

"And he will cause a mark [to be put] in the forehead and in the right hand, that no one may be able to buy or sell, unless he who has the mark of the name of the beast or the number of his name; and the number is six hundred and sixty-six,"

(Revelation 13:16–18)

that is, six times a hundred, six times ten, and six units. [He gives this] as a summing up of the whole of that apostasy which has taken place during six thousand years. For in as many days as this world was made, in so many thousand years shall it be concluded. And for this reason the Scripture says:

"Thus the heaven and the earth were finished, and all their adornment. And God brought to a conclusion upon the sixth day the works that He had made; and God rested upon the seventh day from all His works."

(Genesis 2:2)

This is an account of the things formerly created, as also it is a prophecy of what is to come. For the day of the Lord is as a thousand years; and in six days created things were completed: it is evident, therefore, that they will come to an end at the sixth thousand year. And therefore throughout all time, man having been moulded at the beginning by the hands of God, that is, of the Son and of the Spirit, is made after the image and likeness of God: the chaff, indeed, which is the apostasy, being cast away; but the wheat, that is, those who bring forth fruit to God in faith, being gathered into the barn. And for this cause tribulation is necessary for those who are saved, that having been after a manner broken up, and rendered fine, and sprinkled over by the patience of the Word of God, and set on fire [for purification], they may be fitted for the

royal banquet. As a certain man of ours said, when he was condemned to the wild beasts because of his testimony with respect to God: "I am the wheat of Christ, and am ground by the teeth of the wild beasts, that I may be found the pure bread of God."¹¹

One should keep in mind that the Early Church Father Irenæus, the man who wrote those things, is recognized today by leading scholars as "by far the most important of the theologians of the second century."¹² It should be obvious to anyone who has insight into *The Teaching* that Irenæus is speaking in terms of some extremely specific *parabolic imagery*. What is not so obvious is the fact that the Prophets and Apostles used that same *parabolic imagery* to describe what the death of the first "man" and the resurrection of the Second "Man" will be LIKE. *Parabolically speaking*, the first and Second Adam will die together, at the same time, at the End of this Age. And only a "remnant" of "the man" will be resurrected in the image and likeness of God.¹³

Irenæus' mind-set is clearly one in which the six "days" of Creation are not yet complete. As he plainly says, the Creation Account "is an account of the things formerly created, as also it is a prophecy of what is to come." What he *means* by that is this: The Creation Account contains both history and prophecy.¹⁴

¹¹ Irenæus, "Against Heresies," Book v, Chap. xxviii, in Roberts and Donaldson (eds.), *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (1867), Vol. 1.

¹² Johannes Quasten, *Patrology I*, p. 288.

¹³ See "He's Coming in Clouds of Glory (Whatever That Means)" *The Voice of Elijah*, January 2001.

¹⁴ See "The Holy Bible: What Is It? What Does It Mean? Who Wrote It? When and Why?" *The Voice of Elijah*, April 1997; "Questions & Answers," *The Voice of Elijah*, January 1998; "I Tell You What: Odds Are, You'll Never Beat God at His Shell Game," *The Voice of Elijah*, October 1998; "They Got God at a Fire Sale Price (and a Whole Lot More Than They Bargained For)—Part I," *The Voice of Elijah*, April 1999; "Questions & Answers," *The Voice of Elijah*, October 1999.

The history part of the Creation Account describes the first five “days” of Creation and the Creation of the animals on the sixth “day.” The prophecy part is what Moses said about God creating “the man” Jesus Christ in His Own image and likeness immediately before resting on the seventh “day.” That had not yet happened when Moses explained why God intended to create Jesus Christ in His image and likeness. But that information is not news to the participants in The Next Step program. I explained Moses’ use of the Hebrew “prophetic perfect” to them several years ago.

You may be better able to take on the *parabolic* mind-set of the Prophets and Apostles if you keep in mind what the Apostle Peter said about the renewal process that will usher in the seventh “day” of Creation. He plainly warns us to beware of the faulty understanding of those who will seek to distort the *parabolic imagery* of *The Apostolic Teaching* in our own generation:

*This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring 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, following after their own lusts, and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? 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, being flooded with water. But the present 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, beloved, 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 destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements 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)

In the Image and Likeness of God

Satan has most folks in the Church today so firmly convinced that the first Adam was created in the image and likeness of God that they will never stop to consider how stupid their belief in that lie actually is. Those poor dupes are probably just as equally convinced by the lie that every son of Adam is born a child of God. If they would only stop to think for a moment, the Truth could not be more obvious: Those two beliefs contradict each other. A child of God must be one who has been born in the image and likeness of God. If that description already applies to everyone born in the image and likeness of the first Adam, what in the world is the *parabolic image* of the new birth all about?

If you want to continue on under the influence of Satan's lie, answer me this: What do you think Paul is *talking about* in the following passage:

But someone will say, "How are the dead raised? And with what kind of body do they come?" You fool! That which you sow does not come to life unless it dies; and that which you sow, you do not sow the body which is to be, but a bare grain, perhaps of wheat or of something else. But God gives it a body just as He wished, and to

*each of the seeds a body of its own. All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one {flesh} of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fish. There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the {glory} of the earthly is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable {body}, it is raised an imperishable {body}; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. **If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual {body.}** So also it is written, “The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL.” The last Adam {became} a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. And just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

(1 Corinthians 15:35–53)

Where do you think Paul got his understanding of the things he explains concerning the “first man” and the “second man”? Well, he certainly didn’t make them up. He got them from the revelation he had been given into the *meaning* and *significance* of what Moses and the other Prophets of Israel wrote. Paul understood that Moses describes the Creation of the “first man” from the dust of the ground in Genesis 2:4–25

and the Creation of the “Second man” in the image and likeness of God in Genesis 1:26–29. That is what he is *talking about* when he says this:

The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. And just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

(1 Corinthians 15:47–49)

Don’t be a fool! (I won’t go as far as Paul and say, “You fool!” just because you did not understand these things already.) Every living thing bears the image and likeness of the one who gave it birth. If that weren’t so, alley cats would bear grizzly bears and tadpoles would grow up to be eagles. Paul’s point is, logic alone should tell anyone who has heard *The Apostolic Teaching* that God will *parabolically* “give birth” to the children of God, that is, to creatures who bear His image and likeness, through the resurrection of the righteous. In the meantime, True Believers have only been *parabolically* “conceived” by *The Woman* in the image and likeness of God. That is what John *means* when he says this:

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is.

(1 John 3:2)

Even those who can’t agree with my explanation of the obvious *meaning* of what Paul says concerning the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15 should still be able to see that he is making a distinction between the image of the first Adam and that of the Second. The image the first Adam passed down to us is “the image of the earthy.” The image that God bestowed on the Second Adam—the resurrected Body of Jesus Christ—is “the image of the heavenly.” And that, in turn, should tell

anyone who has ears to hear that the first Adam was not created in the image and likeness of God.

The mind-set that stands behind what Paul writes is this: The Second Adam, Jesus Christ, became the firstborn Son of God when He was resurrected from the dead in “the image of the heavenly,” that is, in the image and likeness of God. That explains why Satan has lied to us concerning the Creation of “the man” in the image and likeness of God. He does not want us to understand that this Creation is not yet complete. That is, he does not want it known that God is still hard at work on this, the sixth “day” of Creation, engendering True Believers in His Own image and likeness through the simple Truth of the Gospel message. Unfortunately for him, the cat is already out of the bag. (That’s an idiom.)

Satan has also lied to us in regard to *parabolic imagery* that tells us as long as Jesus Christ lived in the flesh He was (legally) the Son of David, not the Son of God. That was because God *parabolically* “gave” a son to David through the virgin, Mary.¹⁵ And, as the Scriptures plainly state:

And Onan knew that the offspring would not be his; so it came about that when he went in to his brother’s wife, he wasted his seed on the ground, in order not to give offspring to his brother.

(Genesis 38:9)

Christ did not become the (legal) Son of God until He was resurrected in the image and likeness of God. But that bit of information is completely beside the central point I seek to make here. I merely mentioned it because it is an essential element in the *parabolic imagery* of *The Apostolic Teaching* that the agents of Satan managed to distort completely through the stupidity of philosophical speculation. That *parabolic imagery*

¹⁵ See “The Sad, Sordid History of The People of God,” *The Voice of Elijah*, July 1996, and “So Why Would a Nomad ‘Build a House’ and Settle Down?” *The Voice of Elijah*, October 1997.

explains God's purpose in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ in terms of an ancient custom called "levirate marriage." I explained some of those things in *The Isaiah Seminar*, the full text of which has only been made available to those who attended. My hope is that situation can be rectified in the near future.

The Foundation That God Laid

In the remainder of this article, I intend to explain how God is accomplishing the final act of Creation so that you can be one of those resurrected in the image and likeness of God at the End of this "age." The only point I have made so far is, the image of God is what the "sons of God" will bear after the resurrection of the righteous, not what the sons of Adam currently bear. For evidence in support of that view, we need not rely solely on what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15. He *talks about* these things in a few other passages as well. You should examine those passages carefully just to make sure you understand the Truth. Take a look at this one:

Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, {and} being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

(Philippians 2:5–11)

Satan gets commentators so caught up in trying to explain what Paul *meant* when he said Jesus Christ "emptied

Himself” that they completely overlook the obvious. If the first Adam had been created in the image and likeness of God, there would be no need for Christ to be “made in the likeness of men” since He would have already carried an image and likeness that was common to both God and men.

If Adam was created in the image and likeness of God, Paul’s statement concerning the incarnation of Jesus Christ makes no sense—unless, of course, you want to argue that Christ did not bear the image of God before He “emptied Himself.” But Paul plainly says He “existed in the form of God” before He was “made in the likeness of men.” So I guess all those folks who want to go on believing Satan’s lie—that the sons of Adam already bear the image and likeness of God—will just have to add another layer of nonsense to his delusion so they can go on secure in the belief that they already know the Truth. The Prophet Isaiah *parabolically* describes the result of their irrational behavior this way:

*Therefore, hear the word of the LORD, O scoffers,
Who rule this people who are in Jerusalem,
Because you have said,
“We have made a covenant with death,
And with Sheol we have made a pact.
The overwhelming scourge will not reach us
when it passes by,
For we have made falsehood our refuge and
we have concealed ourselves with deception.”*
*Therefore thus says the Lord GOD,
“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone,
A costly cornerstone {for} the foundation, firmly placed.
He who believes {in it} will not be disturbed.
And I will make justice the measuring line,
And righteousness the level;
Then hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies,
And the waters shall overflow the secret place.*

*And your covenant with death shall be canceled,
 And your pact with Sheol shall not stand;
 When the overwhelming scourge passes through,
 Then you become its trampling {place.}
 As often as it passes through, it will seize you.
 For morning after morning it will pass through,
 {anytime} during the day or night.
**And it will be sheer terror
 to understand what it means."**
 (Isaiah 28:14–19)*

In that passage, Isaiah is *parabolically* describing the fate of those in his day who were ignorantly rejecting the Truth of *The Teaching of Moses* just so they could go on doing whatever they wanted to do. But his words apply equally as well to the imbeciles in any generation who hear and reject that same Truth.

The last statement in the passage above will make a bit more sense if you keep in mind the *parabolic imagery* of *The Teaching* in which Jesus Christ is the *Living Word* of God. That is, He is referred to *parabolically* as *The Teaching* that He believes. Just as the Prophet Isaiah says, the one "who believes {in it} will not be disturbed." But for those who reject the Truth of that *Living Word*, "it will be sheer terror to understand what it means" when it is too late for them to do anything to change the outcome.

When the Prophet Isaiah refers to Christ as the "costly cornerstone" that God laid in the foundation of His "house," he is speaking *parabolically* in terms of God's family as a "house." Isaiah's use of that particular *parabolic image* is based on the fact that it was not uncommon in his day for both types of "houses" to be "founded" by the sacrifice of a firstborn son. That is, a Canaanite father would sometimes sacrifice his firstborn son in hopes that the gods would grant him even more sons (that is, a larger "house") because of his sacrifice. Likewise, some of the more religious types in Canaanite society

would begin laying the foundation for a *literal* house by sacrificing a son and placing his remains in or under the first (“chief”) cornerstone. That is why the psalmist describes the “founding” of the (eternal) “house of Israel/God” this way:

*The stone which the builders rejected
Has become the chief corner {stone}.
This is the LORD's doing;
It is marvelous in our eyes.
(Psalm 118:22–23)*

Common sense will tell you that if you want to be a “stone” in the “house” (family) that God is currently in the process of “building,” you must first be engendered (notice I did not say “born”) in the image and likeness of God. Then you must continue to grow in that image and likeness until you reach full term and *The Woman* “gives birth” to the “house” of God. That growth process is what the Apostle Peter is *talking about* in this passage:

Therefore, putting aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. And coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected by men, but choice and precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For {this} is contained in Scripture:

*“BEHOLD I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE,
A PRECIOUS CORNER {stone},
AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM
SHALL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.”*

This precious value, then, is for you who believe. But for those who disbelieve,

*“THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED,
THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER {stone,}”*

and,

“A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE;”

for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this {doom} they were also appointed. But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR {God’s} OWN POSSESSION, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY.

(1 Peter 2:1–10)

Peter’s plainly stated goal is to admonish his readers concerning their obligation to continually add to their knowledge of *The Apostolic Teaching* that they “may grow in respect to salvation.” As you probably noticed, he not only quotes what Isaiah says about those who believe—and the fools who reject—Jesus Christ, the *Living Word of God*, he also quotes what the psalmist said. He is obviously speaking in terms of the same *parabolic imagery* that those two Prophets used when he refers to individual Believers as “stones” in the *parabolic* “house” of God. My point in quoting what Peter says is to warn you that if you do not heed his admonition, the divine “seed” of “the Word” that was “planted” in you when you first heard and believed the Gospel will never produce the result God intended:

“Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, the evil {one} comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road. And the one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word, and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no {firm} root in himself, but is {only} temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away. And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world,

and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit, and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty."

(Matthew 13:18–23)

The Image and Likeness of God

The Apostles routinely refer to Jesus Christ—*The Apostolic Teaching*—as the image of God (which is also *parabolically* the “Glory” or “Light” that God is). But folks today don’t understand the *parabolic imagery* the Apostles are using. Therefore, they have no alternative but to go on believing the philosophical goofiness that Satan palmed off on the Early Church through Origen and his ilk.¹⁶ However, Satan’s lie will no longer confuse those who are able to see the *parabolic imagery* of *The Teaching* that stands behind what the Prophets and Apostles have written. As Paul indicates in the passages I quoted above and in the following passage, Christ took on the image and likeness of the *invisible* God when He was resurrected from the dead as the Firstborn Son of God:

For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. And He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation. For by Him all things were created, {both} in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created by Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

(Colossians 1:13–17)

Paul’s statements in that passage would seem to be fairly easy to comprehend, but they aren’t. That is because he doesn’t

¹⁶ See “The Origen of Folly,” *The Voice of Elijah*, January 1993.

bother explaining an essential *parabolic image* he assumes True Believers already have firmly fixed in their mind. The point that he makes is obvious. The “visible and invisible” parts of this Creation were all brought into being by Jesus Christ. The not-so-obvious basis for what he says is this: Jesus Christ took on “the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation” when He arose from the dead. He is now, therefore, *The Light of The Apostolic Teaching*, which is what “delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son.” John explains the *parabolic imagery* this way:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

(John 1:1–5)

The author of the Book of Hebrews summarizes the essence of that passage like this:

*Now faith is the assurance of {things} hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old gained approval. By faith we understand that **the worlds were prepared by the word of God**, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.*

(Hebrews 11:1–3)

There is one other small bit of Truth that one needs to know in order to understand what the Apostles had in mind when they wrote things like that: We are not the fleshly body in which we now live. Rather, *we are*—as I have repeatedly told you—*what we believe*. The same applies to Jesus Christ. He is the Truth of *The Teaching* that He believes. In His case, however, He began His existence in this Creation as the *Living Word of God* that God spoke when He said, “Let there be

light.”¹⁷ Then, after having existed in that “form of God” for ages, the pre-incarnate Jesus Christ “emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, {and} being made in the likeness of men.”¹⁸ By that, Paul merely *means* Christ began His life in the flesh just like every other baby—with no knowledge of *The Teaching* He had been before He “emptied Himself.”

Unlike most of the sons of Adam, Jesus Christ was granted complete insight into the Truth of the *Living Word* of God when He was baptized by John. During His temptation in the wilderness, He subjected Himself completely to the Truth of that *Living Word*. After He was crucified, the power of the *Living Word* brought Him back to life in the same *invisible* “form of God” He had before He “emptied Himself.” The Apostle Paul reminds us the *Living Word* of God will do exactly the same thing for all those who firmly believe it:

But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

(Romans 8:11)

Obviously, to fully understand Paul’s point concerning the role that the “Spirit” of Christ plays in the resurrection of the righteous, one needs to understand what I have explained over the years concerning the Greek word commonly translated “spirit.” It is rather difficult to get totally inside the mind-set of the ancient Greeks in that regard; but the basics are relatively easy to understand. Jesus summarizes those things this way:

“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.”

(John 6:63)

¹⁷ Genesis 1:3.

¹⁸ Philippians 2:7.

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me."

(John 14:6)

In those verses, Jesus is speaking in terms of the *parabolic image* in which *The Teaching* He believed and taught is the same *Living Word* of God that He is. His point is, the only way anyone can attain life—that is, be created in the image and likeness of the *invisible* God at the resurrection of the righteous—is through complete belief in and identification with *The Teaching of Moses* that He understood and believed.¹⁹

Don't misunderstand me. I am just affirming the claims of the Protestant Reformers. As they plainly state, salvation is by faith alone. But that is faith in the sense of *what* you believe, not faith in the sense of *that* you believe. After all, everybody believes something about God. But only those who believe the Truth will be saved. If it were otherwise, the missionary and evangelistic outreach of Protestant churches would be totally unnecessary. As every Evangelical Christian knows, the purpose of evangelism is (supposed to be) to preach the Truth concerning Jesus Christ and the plan of salvation to those who have not heard so that they may have opportunity to participate in the resurrection of the righteous. That is exactly what the Apostle Paul has in mind when he says this:

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

¹⁹ See *The Way, The Truth, The Life*.

*eagerly for {our} adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one also hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it. And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for {us} with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to {the will of} God. And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to {His} purpose. **For whom He foreknew, He also predestined {to become} conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.***
(Romans 8:18–29)

Be Transformed Into His Image

If you think being “conformed to the image of His Son” is something that is going to happen to you all at once at the resurrection of the righteous, you had better reexamine your beliefs in that regard. They are clearly based on an extremely faulty presupposition. The Truth is, God expects you to prove your faith in the Truth of *The Teaching* by allowing yourself to be “transformed” into the image and likeness of the One Who is the *Living Word of God*. And you are supposed to do that while you still have time to “show what you know” to the Almighty God rather than to the morons and misfits you might otherwise seek to impress with your amazing theological “knowledge”:

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 living 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 adequate in ourselves to consider anything 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 Israel 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? For if the ministry of condemnation has glory, much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory. For indeed what had glory, in this case has no glory on account of the glory that surpasses {it.} For if that which fades away {was} with glory, much more that which remains {is} in glory. Having therefore such a hope, we use great boldness in {our} speech, and {are} not as Moses, {who} used to put a veil over his face that the sons of Israel might not look intently at the end of what was fading away. But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ. But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart; but whenever a man turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, {there} is liberty. **But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.**

(2 Corinthians 3:2–18)

In that passage, Paul is *talking about* the incredible power that the *Living Word of God*—that is, the “glory” (“light”) of *The Apostolic Teaching* that Jesus Christ is—has to “transform” the True Believer into the image and likeness of God. If you have never participated in that truly amazing experience, it is only because you have never heard and believed the Truth of the Gospel. (I’m mocking those who cannot see.) The sad fact is, some folks are able to see that Truth; some aren’t. In the case of those who cannot—because they will not—see the Truth, it is as though a veil covers the Gospel so that the amaz-

ing, blazing “glory” (“light”) of that Truth is beyond their grasp. As the Apostle Paul puts it:

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, “Light shall shine out of darkness,” is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

(2 Corinthians 4:3–6)

In case you did not catch Paul’s allusion to what Moses wrote in Genesis 1:3, let me be the first to point it out:

Then God said, “Let there be light;” and there was light.

(Genesis 1:3)

Think about it: Life of any kind—either physical or spiritual—is impossible without light. Any fool who succumbs to the moronic impulse to contradict that statement obviously does not even know what light is. But that is another topic entirely. The *parabolic imagery* that Paul has in mind when he alludes to Genesis 1:3 provides the basis for the “riddle in a mirror” I have mentioned on various occasions.²⁰ According to that *parabolic imagery*, the Creation of True Believers in the image and likeness of God through their belief in *The Light of The Teaching* is nothing more than the inaugural event in an entirely new Creation process:

²⁰ See “There Is Nothing More Amazing Than Dead Men Walking (in The Way)” *The Voice of Elijah*, January 2000; “Questions & Answers,” *The Voice of Elijah*, April 2000; “Questions & Answers,” *The Voice of Elijah*, October 2000; “He’s Coming in Clouds of Glory (Whatever That Means)” *The Voice of Elijah*, January 2001; “Questions & Answers,” *The Voice of Elijah*, April 2001; Two Agreements Made: One a “Covenant,” the Other a “Testament,” *The Voice of Elijah*, January 2002.

But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

(2 Peter 3:13)

If you want to “see” the same Truth that Peter “saw” when he said that, just keep in mind the *parabolic image* in which True Believers are resurrected not as separate individuals but as “one body” in Jesus Christ—the One Who has already entered a new Creation as *The Light of The Teaching* just as He entered this Creation as that same *Living Word of God* when God said “Let there be light.” As for those of you who have no idea what I am *talking about*, it might help if you keep in mind the fact that *parabolic imagery* does not describe what reality actually is. It merely uses comparisons (parables) to tell us what that reality is LIKE.²¹

Do You Have What God Requires?

There is only one requirement that God has laid on those who seek to participate in the resurrection of the righteous: They must demonstrate—in this age—an intense, burning desire to bear the same image and likeness of God that the righteous will bear in the age to come. That is, they must constantly seek to master the Truth of *The Teaching* that Jesus Christ is so that it transforms them (internally) into the same image and likeness that He bears:

If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. For it is on account

²¹ See *The Way, The Truth, The Life*.

*of these things that the wrath of God will come, and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, {and} abusive speech from your mouth. **Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its {evil} practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.***
(Colossians 3:1–10)

In his letter to the church at Rome, Paul describes the transformation of the “inner man” as a “renewal” that goes on in the mind of the one growing in a knowledge of the Truth:

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

The Greek verb that has been translated “transformed” in that passage is the same verb that we saw translated as “transformed” in this one:

*Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, {there} is liberty. **But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.***
(2 Corinthians 3:17–18)

If you are able to understand the *parabolic imagery* I have explained in this and all the other articles and books I have written, you should already be able to understand why Matthew and Mark used the same Greek verb that is translated “transformed” in those two passages to describe what happened to Christ in the following two passages as well:

And six days later Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and brought them up to a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.

(Matthew 17:1–3)

And six days later, Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John, and brought them up to a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; and His garments became radiant and exceedingly white, as no launderer on earth can whiten them. And Elijah appeared to them along with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus.

(Mark 9:2–4)

In describing the “transformation” of True Believers into the image and likeness of God, the Apostle Paul used exactly the same verb that Matthew and Mark used to describe the transfiguration of Jesus. He did that because he knew that he was *parabolically* describing precisely the same phenomenon. I am not saying that your physical body will suddenly take on its resurrected form as a result of your knowledge of the Truth. But if you believe the *parabolically stated* Truth of the Scriptures that is fully explained in *The Apostolic Teaching*, it will certainly “transform” your “inner man” into the same image and likeness of the “glory” (light) of God that Jesus Christ assumed temporarily on the Mount of Transfiguration and permanently on the morning of His resurrection. But to understand how that is, you first need to know that *you are what you believe*.

Unfortunately, there are some “Christians” today who have already “been enlightened” and “tasted the good word of God and powers of the age to come” who will nevertheless reject the Truth of *The Teaching* because somewhere along *The Way* they have allowed themselves to be “blinded” by one of

Satan's many lies. Consequently, they will not seek to be "transformed into the same image from glory to glory" (2 Cor. 3:18). That is, they will refuse to be "transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:2) and "renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him."²² Their fate will not be pretty. The author of the Book of Hebrews provides the following *parabolic* description:

For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and {then} have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God, and put Him to open shame. For ground that drinks the rain which often falls upon it and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from God; but if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned.
(Hebrews 6:4-8)

That just about says it all. In conclusion, I can only concur with what he says next:

But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way. For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints. And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.
(Hebrews 6:9-12)

²² Colossians 3:10.