



THE VOICE of ELIJAH

Restoring the hearts of the fathers to the children

Believing Nonsense Just to Justify More Nonsense

It is said that the Scriptures both of the law and of the prophets were translated from the dialect of the Hebrews into the Greek language in the reign of Ptolemy the son of Lagos, or, according to others, of Ptolemy surnamed Philadelphus; Demetrius Phalereus bringing to this task the greatest earnestness, and employing painstaking accuracy on the materials for the translation.

For the Macedonians being still in possession of Asia, and the king being ambitious of adorning the library he had at Alexandria with all writings, desired the people of Jerusalem to translate the prophecies they possessed into the Greek dialect.

And they being the subjects of the Macedonians, selected from those of highest character among them seventy elders, versed in the Scriptures, and skilled in the Greek dialect, and sent them to him with the divine books.

And each having severally translated each prophetic book, and all the translations being compared together, they agreed both in meaning and expression.

For it was the counsel of God carried out for the benefit of Grecian ears. It was not alien to the inspiration of God, who gave the prophecy, also to produce the translation, and make it as it were Greek prophecy.

Since the Scriptures having perished in the captivity of Nabuchodonosor, Esdras, the Levite, the priest, in the time of Artaxerxes king of the Persians, having become inspired in the exercise of prophecy restored again the whole of

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Published quarterly by
Voice of Elijah, Inc.

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Volume 20, Number 2
April 2009

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P.O. Box 2257
Rockwall, TX 75087-2257

Subscription rates:
(1 year, U.S. Funds)

U.S. \$24.00
Canada \$30.00
Abroad \$42.00

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Larry Dee Harper
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A Note From the Editor

Not All Israel Is Israel, Second Edition

For all of you who have been waiting patiently for the second edition of *Not All Israel Is Israel*, I have some very good news for you! The Elijah Project has received a scheduled delivery date of June 9, so you can expect a shipping date somewhere around mid-June for backordered and replacement copies. All current Next Step and Monthly Contributors will receive a replacement copy as well. Thank you all for being patient while *Not All Israel Is Israel* went through the recent editing process. As I've said all along, I am certain you will find that it was well worth the wait. What Larry said in January 1992 is as valid today as it was then:

... those who respond positively to what they find in Not All Israel Is Israel, if they believe what they read, have an obligation to the Spirit of the Living God within them to learn more about the Gospel of their Lord Jesus Christ that is hidden in the Hebrew Scriptures. They also have an obligation to help The Voice of Elijah® reach out to others who are still seeking the Truth. They owe me nothing. To the contrary, I have been entrusted with an obligation to teach those True Believers who want to learn what I teach. In that respect, I owe them... But those who want to understand what I teach will let it be known when they are ready to be taught. When they do, I'll teach. Until then I'll just keep doing what I've been doing, researching and writing.
"Questions & Answers," The Voice of Elijah®, January 1992

Website Additions

How one approaches mastering The Apostolic Teaching is a matter of personal preference. Some prefer starting with the first issue of *The Voice of Elijah®* and reading through the newsletters chronologically from October 1990 to the current issue, then from the first *The Voice of Elijah® Update* chronologically through to the current issue. Others start with the books or the audio recordings. For those of you who prefer to start with the Premier issue of *The Voice of Elijah®* (October 1990) and read through each issue chronologically, you can now find the first seventeen issues posted on the VOE website, in The Reading Room. Having these issues and several other articles available online gives the reader ample opportunity to get a "taste" of The Apostolic Teaching.

Once an individual has read through the online articles, they then have enough information to make a decision regarding our ministry. Those who see the Truth in what is presented online will be eager to learn more. Those who don't, won't. Those who treasure the Truth will support the outreach of our ministry to ensure others have the same

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opportunity they have had to learn the Truth. Those who don't, won't. It is as simple as that.

The information posted on our website provides the first level of instruction we offer. Many move on from there to become contributors by subscribing to this quarterly newsletter. From there, the more dedicated become Monthly Contributors—financially supporting *The Voice of Elijah*® with contributions each month to further our mission.

The Reading Room

Here's a peek into a few of the things you can read about in The Reading Room on our website:

"Where Are Jesus' Disciples?" *The Voice of Elijah*®, April 1991: This article explains the distinction between preaching and teaching, and why the Church has not made true disciples for Jesus Christ.

"Did Jesus Leave a Will?" *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 1991: One of my personal favorites, this article explains how Jesus was in possession of a "treasure" that He bequeathed in His oral will to anyone who would believe the Truth. It is all right there in Scripture. This article examines Matthew's account of Jesus making His will. It is a must-read for anyone who wants to understand how True Believers can inherit the promise.

"Oh, So Many Four-Letter Words!" *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 1992: This article discusses the biblical meaning of three four-letter words that have been completely redefined by the Pretenders in the Church—*fear*, *obey*, and *love*. This article explains why none of these three can be attained without a knowledge of the Truth because they are produced by "faith" (belief) in the Truth.

Many folks are quick to say that they have received instruction directly from the Lord. "God told me" is a common phrase in "Christian" circles these days. "Mystics, Meatballs, and the Marvelous Works of God," *The Voice of Elijah*®, April 1993, describes how the Holy Spirit does and does not work within True Believers. The Believer's responsibility to protect God's Spirit is also addressed in this article.

"The Origen of Folly," *The Voice of Elijah*®, January 1993 (no, it isn't a typographical error) discusses the abandonment of the parabolic understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures the Early Church understood and handed down. "Counterfeiters, Con Artists (and the Consummate Consumer)" *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 1993, makes the point that the best counterfeit is the one that looks just like the real thing. It goes on to describe how Satan has crafted a counterfeit Christianity by changing the meaning of a few key words. "Satan's Fools Are Satan's Tools," *The Voice of Elijah*®, April 1994, exposes the "Christian philosopher" Søren Kierkegaard's "leap of faith" for the nonsense it is.

The articles I have mentioned here provide a bare-bones introduction of *The Voice of Elijah*® to our new subscribers. In addition to these articles, the "Questions & Answers" articles in each of these newsletters provide answers to questions submitted by both subscribers and critics of *The Voice of Elijah*®.

In Closing

I could go on and on about the content of our newsletters and the importance of understanding the Truth of The (restored) Apostolic Teaching simply because I feel very strongly about the importance of the mission of *The Voice of Elijah*® and the role it plays in the call God has placed on Larry Harper's life. As we head into the teeth of these Last Days, our mission to reach True Believers with the Truth is becoming increasingly urgent with each passing day. As a contribution-based nonprofit organization, you alone help us fulfill our mission. Your one-time and monthly contributions ensure that our outreach programs continue to reach True Believers every day. And with the abundant content we now have available, we will continue "restoring the hearts" of True Believers until the End—with your help.

In Him,

Marcia Woody

Some Things Burn; Some Don't

One of the most pernicious lies that Satan has ever disseminated among True Believers can be summed up in the ridiculous phrase “end of time.” He was working that angle among the Jews long before Christ died, so it should not be surprising to find he intends to make full use of it here at the End of the Age. Like everyone else, I thought in those terms myself until I came to understand not only *the promise* but also *what was promised*. (See *In the Image and Likeness of God* and *The Inheritance of the Believer*, Volume 1.) That is, I could not see through Satan’s lie until January 1995, when I was finally able to understand God began creating the final species of creatures when He resurrected Jesus Christ in His Own image and likeness just as He *promised* He would in this passage:

*Then God said, “Let Us make a man in Our image, according to Our likeness, so that they may have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the Sea of Waters and over the domesticated animals and over all the Earth and over all the crawling things that crawl on the Earth.” And God will create “the Man” in His image. In the image of God He will create Him; male and female He will create them. Then God will **ble**ss them; and God will say to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the Earth, and subdue her; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the Sea of Waters, and over every living thing that crawls on the Earth.”*
(Genesis 1:26–28) —my interim translation

When I “saw” the Truth that Moses carefully concealed in that passage, I was immediately able to “see” Jesus Christ is the only Man ever created in the image and likeness of God. I could also “see” one of Satan’s lies

for exactly what it is—abject stupidity. You know the one I *mean*: The completely asinine assertion assimilated and asseverated by the equally asinine assistants of Satan who, with all assiduity and assumptive assurance, not only assent to his assurgent assertions (to assuage an assortment of sins that will never be assoiled) but also assail all simple logic and reason by assiduously asserting the assuasively assumed assertions of the Donkey—the one assigned to eternal damnation for making such an ass of himself in this Age.

(I offer my sincere condolences to all who find the assembled assonance assaultive, I’m just trying to get my soapbox warmed up. So if this and the previous paragraph survives the final edit, it will only be because at my age one sometimes needs to pause and reflect on life’s simple pleasures. If you want to get the true effect of the assibilation, just read the text out loud.)

My point is, this Creation is only now approaching the “end” of the creation process. So, if one cannot “see” the lie that consists in the ridiculous belief that Adam was “*The Man*” created in the image and likeness of God, one will never be able to “see” the End of the Age is not the end of time. It is actually the beginning of an entirely New Age—God’s Eternal Sabbath. The lie that the End of the Age is also the end of time goes all the way back to at least 250 B.C., when the Jews translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek—thereby creating the Septuagint. And their belief in that lie can be found most prominently displayed in their translation of this passage:

*“In that **time** Michael, the great prince who stands over the sons of your people, will stand; and there will be a time of distress that hasn’t been seen since there was a nation*

until that time. In that **time** your people (everyone found written in the scroll) will be set free. Many will awaken from sleeping in the dust of the ground. These? To life of **'olam**! But these? To reproach and repulsion of **'olam**. Those who have insight will enlighten like the One enlightening the expanse, and those who lead 'The Many' to a declaration of not guilty like the stars to **'olam** and beyond. But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal up the scroll, until an End **Time**. Many will go seeking and the knowledge will increase." Then I, Daniel, looked; and Look! Two others were standing: One on this bank of the river; one on that bank of the river. And He said to a man dressed in linen (who was above the waters of the river), "How long until the end of the incomprehensible things?" Then I heard the man dressed in linen (who was above the waters of the river). He raised His right hand and His left hand to the Sea of Waters, and He swore by the life of the **'olam** that {it was} for "a festival, festivals, and a half." When finished, He will have broken the strength of the people of holiness; all these will be completed. Now I had heard, but I couldn't understand. So I said, "My Master! What is the culmination of these {things}?" But He said: "Go, Daniel! Because the words are locked up and sealed until an End **Time**. Many will be purified, made white, and refined. The guilty will condemn {themselves}, and all those who are guilty will not understand. But those with insight will understand."
(Daniel 12:1–10) —my interim translation

It should be obvious to any *rational* person that if you want to understand the New Testament, you have to start with an understanding of the Old Testament. I only mention that simple Truth because it is obvious that most "Christians" today have somehow managed to completely overlook it. I assume that is because they want to hide themselves in the totally *subjective* belief that "it's true only if I believe it's true."

The Truth is, in the passage above, the messenger mentions "*time*" on four separate occasions. In two instances, it is part of the expression "End Time," which raises the logical question: "End Time of what?" To which a simpleton might respond, "'The end of the incomprehensible things' that Daniel mentions," and he would be right. But there is much more than that to the "End Time" that Daniel describes. And the key to understanding lies in knowing why the messenger mentions **'olam** four times in his explanation of the events that will occur in an "End Time."

The Age of "The Burning"

Several years ago, I explained a few things that you needed to know about "The Burning"—that is, the Hebrew term **'olam** that the messenger uses four times in Daniel 12:1–10. (See "Questions & Answers," *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 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; "The Forecast," *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 2001.) Since that time, the things I told you may not have held all that much *significance* to you, and you may have even thought my translations a bit silly when I transliterated the Hebrew term **'olam** rather than attempting to translate it. Well, the *time* has finally come for me to start translating the term *literally*. But first, I have to show you a bit more of what you need to know about "The Burning." Maybe then you will realize "The Burning" has everything to do with the "End Time" to which Daniel refers.

The most important thing you need to know about "The Burning" is the peculiar way in which the Jews translated the Hebrew term **'olam** when they translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. That Hebrew term (**'olam**) occurs somewhere around 440 times in the Hebrew Scriptures. In the vast majority of those instances, the Jews translated it with either the Greek noun *aion* or the Greek adjective *aionios*—depending on whether they took the Hebrew term **'olam** to be used as a noun or an adjective. And that is where the *parabolic image* of "The Burning" gets very interesting.

You see, the Greek noun *aion* is the source of the English term *æon*. That is, an *aion* designates a very long *span of time*, which is why it is ordinarily translated as "age" or "forever" in the New Testament. But what I just told you is only the first of many things you need to know about this Greek term, so get it firmly fixed in your mind: The noun *aion* designates a *span of time*; and the adjective *aionios* describes something that is "everlasting" or "eternal." But to understand how they are used in the Greek New Testament, one needs to take into account how the Jews used them in the Greek Old Testament. As I have just told you, they use both the noun *aion* and the adjective *aionios* to translate the Hebrew term **'olam**, which *means* "Burning."

In case you missed the *significance* of that statement, let me put it this way: "The Burning" (the **'olam**) does

refer to an "Age." The "Age" to which it refers is a very long *span of time*. It is, in fact, "eternal"; and that "eternal Age" will begin just as soon as this present "Age" ends. That is, the "Age" of "The Burning" is the seventh "day" of Creation, which begins when the "Age" in which we are now living—if you can call our miserable existence "living"—ends, as the Prophet Malachi knew full well. He describes the coming "Age" of "The Burning" in this passage:

*"Look! I am going to send My messenger, and he will prepare a 'Way' in front of Me. And suddenly, the Lord—Whom you are seeking—will come into His 'Temple.' But the messenger of the covenant—{to} whom you are a delight—Look! He is going to come," says His Supreme Majesty. "But who is going to endure the day of his coming? And who is going to stand when he appears? Because he is like a smelter's fire and like laundrymen's lye. And he will sit as a smelter and one who purifies silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi. Then he will refine them like silver and like gold, so that they may be those who bring a cereal offering to His Majesty in a declaration of not guilty. Then the cereal offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to His Majesty—like the days of 'olam and the years of Qedem. Then I will draw near to you for judgment; and I will quickly become a witness against the sorcerers and against the adulterers and against those who swear to a deception and against those who exploit the wage-earner, the widow, or the fatherless, and turn away a stranger, and do not fear Me," says His Supreme Majesty. "Because I am His Majesty; I have not changed! But you, sons of Jacob, are not complete! Since the days of your fathers you have turned aside from My statutes, and you have not guarded {them}. Return to Me and I will return to you," says His Supreme Majesty. "Yet you say, 'How can we return?' Should a man rob God? Because you are robbing Me! Yet you say, 'How have we robbed You?' The tithe and the **terumah**! You are cursed with a curse, yet you—the whole nation—are robbing Me! Bring all of the tithe into the granary so that there may be something consumable in My 'House.' And if you test Me now in this," says His Supreme Majesty, "I will open the windows of the Sea of Waters, and I will empty out a **blessing** for you until there is no more need. Then I will rebuke for you the one who 'eats,' so that he cannot destroy the 'fruit' of 'The Ground.' And 'the vine' in 'the field' will not be 'barren,'" says His Supreme Majesty. "Then all of the Gentiles will **bless** you, because you will be a delightful land," says His Supreme Majesty. "Your words against Me have been powerful,"*

*says His Majesty. "Yet you say, 'What have we spoken against You?' You said, 'Transporting God is not worthwhile,' and 'What profit is {it} that we have done His guard duty, and that we have "walked" in gloom—away from the presence of His Majesty? So now, we are going to **bless** those who are arrogant. Those who do something to become guilty will not only be "built," they will also test God and get away {with it}!' Then those who fear His Majesty will speak—each to his neighbor—and His Majesty will pay attention and hear. And a scroll of remembrance will be written before Him for those who fear His Majesty and for those who think about His "Name." "And they will be Mine," says His Supreme Majesty, "on the 'Day' when I make a possession, and I will spare them just as a man spares his son who serves him. And you will again see {the difference} between one who is not guilty and one who is guilty—between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him. Because, Look! **The 'Day' is coming, burning like a firepot; and all who are arrogant and all who are acting deceptively will be chaff. And the 'Day' that is coming will set them on fire,**" says His Supreme Majesty, "so that neither root nor branch will be left to them. But for you who fear My 'Name' a 'Sun' of a declaration of not guilty will arise, and healing is in Her 'wings.' And you will go out and jump around like calves from a stall. And you will tread on those who are guilty {like grapes} because they will be ashes under the soles of your feet in the 'Day' that I am making," says His Supreme Majesty. "Remember The Teaching of Moses, My servant, which I commanded him in Horeb—statutes and judgments for all Israel. Look! I am going to send Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful 'Day' of His Majesty. And he will restore the heart of the fathers to their sons and the heart of the sons to their fathers, lest I come and strike the Earth with a ban."*

(Malachi 3:1–4:6) —my interim translation

My point in showing you what Malachi says about "The Burning" that will begin at dawn on the seventh "day" of Creation lies in the fact that it is a generally held belief that both Daniel 12 and Malachi 3–4 are referring to the End of this Age. So now that you are aware of what those two Prophets have said about the seventh "day" of Creation, which is "The Burning"—that is, "the 'olam"—I need to explain a bit more about how the Jews translated the Hebrew term 'olam into Greek. Only then will you be able to understand how the Hebrew term 'olam, which actually

means "burning," came to refer to the coming "Age"—the seventh "day" of Creation.

As I have already mentioned, the term *'olam* occurs about 440 times in the Hebrew Scriptures. The two most frequent expressions in which it occurs can be *literally* translated as "to *'olam*" and "until *'olam*" as I have until now. But a fairly good case can also be made that the Jews knew *'olam* always has the definite article absorbed into the preposition in the first instance. That is, they knew the Hebrew text actually says "to *the 'olam*." That supposition is bolstered by the fact that, in the second instance, *'olam* sometimes has the definite article. So the Hebrew text clearly says "until *the 'olam*." Therefore, one could easily argue that *'olam* should be understood as having the definite article in the preponderance of cases and be translated as "The Burning" rather than "a Burning." But in both cases the biblical text clearly refers to an event that begins at a specific point in time and continues on indefinitely from there.

If the things I have just told you are true—and indeed they are—one can readily understand why the Jews would translate the Hebrew prepositional phrase "to *'olam*" as "into the *age*" and the prepositional phrase "until *'olam*" as "until the *age*." Furthermore, they translated a unique expression that is used mainly by the psalmist as "into the age(s) of the age(s)." When those two variations of the Hebrew expression occur in the New Testament, they are normally translated into English as "forever and ever." The Truth is, when Jesus and the Apostles mention them, they know they refer to the coming "Age" of "The Burning."

By this time, the scoffers among us are yawning and saying, "So what?" Therefore, for your benefit—not theirs—I am going to explain the *significance* of what I just told you. Maybe then you will "see" how all of these various images fit together neatly in one *parabolic image* that explains why "The Burning" wrath of God is even now closing in on the inept leaders—political, religious, and educational—of this "Age" who are shaping the mind-set of the world in which we now live into the image of the lies they believe.

In the time of Christ, the Jews spoke both Greek and Aramaic (a sister language to Biblical Hebrew). But the importance of the Greek language in the everyday life of the Jews can be seen in the fact that the Apostles—with the possible exception of Matthew, who may have written his Gospel in Hebrew—wrote the New Testament in Greek. Consequently, it should

not be surprising to discover that Jesus and the Apostles most often quoted or paraphrased the Greek translation they found in the Septuagint rather than crafting their own translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. So guess what they did when they found the Greek translations of the Hebrew term *'olam* that I explained above: Did they quote the Greek translation verbatim, or did they craft their own translation of the Hebrew Scriptures?

If you guessed Jesus and the Apostles who wrote the New Testament quote the Septuagint phrases verbatim, you guessed correctly. They also use the Greek noun *aion* and the Greek adjective *aionios* to refer to the same *parabolic image* of "The Burning" that resides in the Hebrew term *'olam*. What that *means* is, you can find the Hebrew term *'olam* securely hidden in the Greek New Testament. It stands completely concealed behind the Greek noun *aion* and the Greek adjective *aionios*. Jesus and the Apostles knew it was there, but translators today have no idea *why* the Jews did *what* they did when they made the Septuagint translation. So they have even less insight into the fact that the Apostles were just quoting phrases as they found them in the Septuagint. And they definitely don't know they were actually referring to the *parabolic imagery* that stands behind those phrases. So modern translators blithely continue to translate the Septuagint phrases generally, in spite of the fact that they carry an amazing *meaning* and *significance*.

Let's take a look at some of the places where the Greek phrases I mentioned occur in the New Testament. Maybe then you will understand how "The Burning" came to be understood as the coming "Age"—that is, as the "Age" that begins when this present "Age" ends, the "Age" which is the seventh "day" of Creation.

"The Burning" Fires of Hell

The one thing that absolutely distinguishes the Blessed from the Cursed—the Redeemed from the Damned—is faith. Not faith (belief) in the sense of *that you believe*, but faith (belief) in the sense of *what you believe*. Those who believe the Truth have *chosen to believe* the Truth, so God will allow those who believe the Truth to live forever in "The Light" of the Truth they have *chosen to believe*. Those who believe a lie have *chosen not to believe* the Truth, so God will not allow them to live in "The Light" of the Truth they have *chosen not to*

believe. Instead, they will be forced to live in "The Darkness" of the ignorance in which they have chosen to remain. And therein lies the Judgment that God has already pronounced against those who freely choose not to "see" (believe) "The Light" of the Truth of The Teaching, just as Jesus said:

"For the {Living} God loved the world so {much} that He gave His only engendered Son, so that everyone who believes into Him might not perish, but might have eternal life. For the {Living} God did not send the Son into the world so that He might judge the world but so that the world might be saved through Him. The one who believes into Him is not judged; but the one who does not believe into Him has been judged already, because he has not believed into 'The Name' of the only-begotten Son of God. But this is 'The Judgment': That 'The Light' has come into the world, and the men loved 'The Darkness' rather than 'The Light,' for their works are evil. For all the one who is doing bad things hates 'The Light,' and he does not come to 'The Light' so that his works won't be exposed. But the One who is doing the Truth comes to 'The Light' so that His works might be made known, because they have been worked in God."

(John 3:16–21) —my interim translation

In that passage, Jesus is referring to a parabolic image that is based on a fundamental fact of physics: Light is released whenever and wherever something is burning. Sunburn comes from overexposure to light produced by the elemental burning that occurs in the sun. But I know from experience that one can get just as bad a burn from standing too close to the molecular burning of a bonfire for too long. Facts are facts: Photons are photons. So it really doesn't matter how they get to you; when they do get to you, you will know they got to you. You probably already knew what I just said, but what you may not have known is this:

*Watch it! Lest you reject the One speaking. For if those who rejected the divine warning on Earth will not escape, much more we who repudiate the One from Heaven Whose voice shook the Earth then, but now He has **promised**, saying, "YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN." But the "YET ONCE MORE" is pointing out the transformation of the things*

*being shaken, as of created things, so that the things which are not shaking may remain. Therefore, having **received** an unshakeable kingdom, let us hold on to favor, through which we may acceptably serve the {Living} God with godly fear and awe, for OUR {Living} GOD IS ALSO A CONSUMING FIRE.*

(Hebrews 12:25–29) —my interim translation

In that passage, the author of the Book of Hebrews is referring to the things God has planned for the End of the Age. He mentions the fact that God is "a consuming fire" only because that is the most awesome event that will occur when this present Age ends. God Himself—in the Person of Jesus Christ—is going to reveal Himself in a sudden blaze of Glory. And that event is going to make permanent the distinction that already exists between the Blessed and the Cursed—the Redeemed and the Damned. Jesus talked about that distinction at some length on the following occasion:

And the disciples, having come, said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" And responding, He said to them: "You have been given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of the Heavens, but to them it has not been given. For whoever has, to him will be given, and he will have excess; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. For this reason I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they do not see, and hearing, they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them, the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled which says:

*'HEARING, YOU WILL HEAR,
AND YOU WILL NOT UNDERSTAND;
AND SEEING, YOU WILL SEE, AND YOU WILL NOT PERCEIVE.
FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DIMWITTED,
AND WITH THEIR EARS THEY BARELY HEAR.
AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES
SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT PERCEIVE WITH THEIR EYES,
AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS,
AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN,
AND I WOULD HEAL THEM.'*

*But your eyes are **blessed**, because they see, and your ears, because they hear. For truly I say to you that many Prophets and upright men longed to perceive what you see, and they did not see, and to hear what you hear, and they did not hear."*

(Matthew 13:10–17) —my interim translation

To understand what Jesus says when He continues, it is absolutely essential that you keep in mind the context in which He was speaking. His disciples asked Him why He spoke to the crowds in parables. In answer to their question, He begins *talking about* the distinction that exists between those who are able to hear and understand the Truth of the *Living Word* of God and those who are not able to hear and understand the Truth of that *Living Word*. To make His point, He tells the Parable of the Sower:

*"You, therefore, hear the parable of the Sower: Whenever someone hears the Word of the Kingdom and does not understand, the Evil One comes and steals what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown beside 'The Way.' But what was sown on rocky places? This is the one who hears the Word and immediately **receives** it with joy; and he does not have a root in himself, but is transitory. So when tribulation or persecution occurs because of the Word, he immediately falls away. But what was sown among thorns? This is the one who hears and understands the Word, and the cares of the Age and the deception of its riches crowd out the Word, and it becomes unfruitful. But what was sown on the good soil? This is the one who hears and understands the Word, who does, indeed, bear fruit and produces—the one a hundred, the other sixty, and the other thirty."*

(Matthew 13:18–23) —my interim translation

Again, it is absolutely essential that you keep in mind the context in which Jesus is speaking. He is continuing to *talk about* the distinction that exists between those who are able to hear and understand the Truth of the *Living Word* of God and those who are not able to hear and understand the Truth of that *Living Word*. To make His point even more emphatically, He tells His disciples the Parable of the Tares:

He put another parable before them saying: "The Kingdom of Heaven has become like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while the men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and left. But when the wheat grass sprouted and made grain, then the tares also became apparent. And the slaves of the master of the house said to him: 'Lord, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Therefore, from where does it have tares?' And he said to them, 'A hostile man has done this!' So his slaves say to him, 'Do you want us therefore to go out and collect

them?' But he says: 'No, lest collecting the tares you should uproot the wheat at the same time. Let them both grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, "First collect the tares and tie them into bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my granary."'"

(Matthew 13:24–30) —my interim translation

When Jesus explains the Parable of the Tares to His disciples, He provides a bit more insight into the coming "Age" of "The Burning," which He rather slyly calls "The Fire." His point is, God is going to *make a permanent distinction* between the Blessed and the Cursed at that time:

*Then, leaving the crowd, He went into the house. And His disciples came to Him saying, "Explain for us the parable of the tares of the field." So He, answering, said: "The One Who sows the good seed is the Son of 'the man,' and the 'field' is the world. The 'good seed'? These are the sons of the Kingdom, but the 'tares' are the sons of the evil {one}. The 'enemy' who sowed them is the devil. The 'harvest' is an end of an age, and the 'reapers' are messengers. **Therefore, just as the tares are collected and burned with fire, thus it shall be in the End of the Age. The Son of 'the man' will send His messengers, and they will collect out of His Kingdom all 'stumbling blocks' and those who do 'the lawlessness,' and they will throw them into the furnace of 'The Fire.' There will be wailing and grinding of teeth there. At that time, THE INNOCENT WILL SHINE LIKE THE SUN in the Kingdom of their Father. Let the one who has ears hear.**"*

(Matthew 13:36–43) —my interim translation

In quoting Daniel 12:3, Jesus is alluding to what Daniel says about "The Burning" that will begin at the End of this Age. But to understand what Jesus has in mind, it is absolutely essential that you focus on the context in which He is speaking. His disciples asked Him why He spoke to the crowds in parables. In answer to their question, He is continuing to *talk about* the distinction that exists between those who are able to hear and understand the Truth of the *Living Word* of God and those who are not able to hear and understand the Truth of that *Living Word*. That is, He quotes Daniel 12:3 because He is referring to what Daniel said about the End of the Age, when those who have insight into the Truth the Prophets hid in the Scriptures

will understand the End of the Age is upon them and those who don't have insight won't understand that simple fact:

*Now I had heard, but I couldn't understand. So I said, "My Master! What is the culmination of these {things}?" But He said: "Go, Daniel! Because the words are locked up and sealed until an End Time. **Many will be purified, made white, and refined. The guilty will condemn {themselves}, and all those who are guilty will not understand. But those with insight will understand.**"*

(Daniel 12:8-10) —my interim translation

After Jesus alludes to what Daniel said about the End of the Age, He then goes on to impress on His disciples the tremendous value that God places on those who choose to listen to the Truth and believe it:

"The Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure box hidden in 'the field,' which a man, finding, hid. And from the joy of it, he goes and sells all—whatever he has—and he buys that 'field.' Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a Man—a Merchant—Who is seeking fine 'pearls,' but having found one expensive 'pearl,' departing He sells all—whatever He has—and buys it."

(Matthew 13:44-46) —my interim translation

Finally, Jesus concludes His explanation of why He speaks in parables to those who are not able to understand the Truth and believe it. He again does so by referring to the coming "Age" of "The Burning" as "The Fire":

*"Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a 'dragnet' which was cast into the 'sea' and gathered some of every kind. When it was filled, they pulled it onto the seashore and, sitting down, they collected the good ones into containers, but they threw the bad ones outside. Thus it shall be in the End of the Age: **The messengers will come out and separate the evil ones from the midst of the innocent, and they will throw them into the furnace of 'The Fire.'** There will be wailing and grinding of teeth there."*

(Matthew 13:47-50) —my interim translation

If you were paying close attention to what Jesus said about what is going to happen at the End of the

Age, you already know He has twice described "The Fire" of God's wrath that will be revealed at that time. He says it is a place where "there will be wailing and grinding of teeth." He uses that phrase on several other occasions, and each time it occurs, it discloses He is *talking about the End of the Age*:

*But as He was entering Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, begging Him and saying, "Your Majesty, my servant has been confined in the house paralyzed, being tormented terribly." And He says to him, "I am coming; I will heal him." And responding, the centurion said to Him: "Your Majesty, I am not worthy of You coming under my roof; but You just say the word and my servant will be healed. For I am also a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go!' and he goes, and to another, 'Come!' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this!' and he does." But hearing, Jesus was amazed and said to those who were following {Him}: "Without doubt I say to you, I have not found such great belief with anyone in Israel! **And I say to you that many will come from the rising and the setting and recline to eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven. But the sons of the Kingdom will be cast into the outer darkness, and there will be wailing and grinding of teeth there.**"*

(Matthew 8:5-12) —my interim translation

Were you able to "see" why Jesus mentioned circumstances that will prevail at the End of the Age? He is amazed by how strong the centurion's belief is. So He contrasts the centurion's belief with the lack of belief that will exist among "the sons of the Kingdom" at the End of the Age. Keep that in mind. You are going to see that same train of thought in every instance where Jesus talks about the End of the Age using the phrase "there will be wailing and grinding of teeth." Take a look at this one:

And responding, Jesus again spoke to them in parables, saying: "The Kingdom of Heaven has become like a man—a king—who made a wedding feast for his son. And he sent his slaves to summon those who had been invited to the wedding feast, and they did not want to come. Again he sent other slaves saying: 'Say to those who have been invited: "Look! I have prepared my dinner! My oxen and the fattened cattle have been sacrificed and everything is ready! Come to the wedding feast!"' And those who paid no

attention went away, one to his own "field," another to his business. But the remainder were seizing, mistreating, and killing his slaves. And the king became angry and—sending his armies—destroyed those murderers and burned their city. At that time, he said to his slaves: 'The wedding is ready, but those who have been invited were not worthy. Therefore, go to the intersections of the highways, and invite as many as you find to the wedding feast.' And those slaves—going out into the highways—gathered all they found, both evil and good, and the wedding was filled with guests. But when the king came in to greet the guests, he saw there a man not dressed in wedding clothes. And he says to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' But he was silent. **At that time, the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot and throw him out into the outer darkness.' There will be wailing and grinding of teeth there. For many are called, but few chosen.**"

(Matthew 22:1–14) —my interim translation

In that passage, Jesus is *parabolically* depicting the Gospel as an "invitation" to a "wedding feast." But the "wedding feast" He describes is nothing more than a *parabolic* depiction of a legitimately called Teacher teaching *The Teaching* to those who have responded to the Gospel. His point is, most who hear the "invitation" of the Gospel will reject it, but there will also be a few witless whiners who make it into the "wedding feast" without stopping to "put on" the proper "attire." In saying that, Jesus is speaking *parabolically* about True Believers "putting on" the Truth of *The Teaching* as though it were a robe, just as the Apostle Paul does in the following two passages:

For we know that when our earthly "house" of the "tent" is torn down, we have a "building" from God—an eternal "building" not made with hands—in the heavens. **For in this one we do indeed groan, deeply desiring to "clothe" ourselves with our "housing"—the One from Heaven. So if we are "stripped," we will not be found "naked." For indeed we do groan—being burdened—while in this "tent," because we do not want to be "stripped," but to be "clothed," so that "The Death" might be swallowed up by "The Life."** But the One Who prepared us for this very thing is God—the One Who gave us the down payment of the "Spirit." Therefore, always being confident and knowing that when {we are} at home in the body, we are away from the Lord. For we are

"walking" through belief, not through what is seen.
(2 Corinthians 5:1–7) —my interim translation

But the Scripture has imprisoned everyone under sin, so that **"The Promise"**—from "The Belief" of Jesus "Anointed"—might be given to those who believe. But before "The Belief" came, we were held in custody under law, being confined in "The Belief" that was destined to be revealed. Therefore, "The Law" had become our tutor in "an Anointing," so that we might be declared not guilty from belief. But "The Belief" having come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through "The Belief"—in "The Anointing" of Jesus. **For as many of you as have been "baptized" into "an Anointing" have "clothed" yourselves with "an Anointing."**
(Galatians 3:22–27) —my interim translation

Just to make sure you understand the *parabolic* imagery to which Paul is alluding, I should tell you "The Death" refers to the same thing as "The Darkness" that Jesus mentioned. That is, it is ignorance of the Truth of the Living Word of God—*The Teaching*. Likewise, "The Life" refers to the same thing as "The Light" that Jesus mentioned. It is the Truth of *The Teaching*.

On the final occasion in which Jesus uses the phrase "there will be wailing and grinding of teeth," He actually uses it twice. Unfortunately, when most people read what Matthew wrote about the End of the Age, they focus on the more sensational aspects of what Jesus says rather than focusing on the fact that He is *talking about* the need for True Believers to continue believing the Truth of *The Teaching* so that they are not deceived by the lies disseminated by false teachers:

And Jesus, having come out of the Temple, was leaving; and His disciples approached to point out to Him the construction of the Temple. But responding, He said to them: "Do you not see all these things? Without doubt, I say to you, not one stone here will be left on {another} stone which will not be torn down." **But while He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, His disciples approached Him privately, saying: "Tell us! When will these things be? And what is the sign of Your coming and the End of the Age?" And responding, Jesus said to them: "See that no one deceives you. For many will come in 'The Name' I have, saying, 'I am the Messiah,' and they will deceive many. But you are going to hear of wars and reports of wars. See that you are not disturbed, for**

this must occur. But the End is not yet. For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and famines and earthquakes will be in various places. But all these things are the beginning of labor pains. Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all of the nations because of 'The Name' I have. And then many will be caused to stumble, and they will deliver one another up, and they will hate one another. And many false prophets will be raised up, and they will deceive many. And because 'the lawlessness' will increase, the love of 'The Many' will grow cold. But the one who holds out to the End, he will be saved. **And this Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a witness to all of the nations. And then the End will come. Therefore, when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION—the one told of by Daniel the Prophet—standing in a holy place (let the reader understand), then those in Judea should flee into the mountains; the one who is on the roof should not go down to get things out of his house, and the one who is in the field should not turn back to get his coat. But woe to those who are pregnant and those who are nursing in those days! But pray, so that your flight is not during 'rainy season' or on 'Sabbath', for then there will be a great tribulation—such as has not occurred from the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will occur. And if those days had not been shortened, no flesh would have been saved. But because of those who are chosen, those days will be shortened. Then, if anyone should say to you, 'Look! Here—or there—is the "Anointed" {One}!' don't believe {it}. For many false anointed {ones} and false prophets will be raised up; and they will do great signs and wonders so as to deceive, if possible, even those who are chosen. Look! I have told you beforehand. Therefore, if they say to you, 'Look! He is in the wilderness!' don't go out. 'Look! In the inner rooms!' don't believe {it}. For just as the ray of light comes out from sunrise and shines until sunset, thus will be the coming of the Son of 'the man.' Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will be gathered. But immediately after the tribulation of those days, THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS GLOW, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from Heaven, and the powers of Heaven will be shaken, and then the sign of the Son of 'the man' will shine in Heaven, and then all the tribes of the Earth will be cut off, and they will see the SON OF 'THE MAN' COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN with power and great glory. And He will send His messengers with A GREAT TRUMPET, and**

THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER those who are His chosen ones from the four winds—from one end of Heaven to the other. But from the Fig Tree learn the parable: When His branch at last has become tender and is putting forth leaves, you know that summer is near. Likewise also you, when you see all these things, you know it is near—at the door. Without doubt, I tell you that this generation will not pass away until all these things occur. Heaven and Earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away. **But concerning that day and hour no one knows, neither the messengers of Heaven nor the Son, but the Father only.** For just as the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of 'the man.' For as they were in those days—the ones before the Flood—eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the Flood came and took them all, so will be the coming of the Son of 'the man.' Then two {men} will be in the field, one man will be taken and one left; two {women} grinding at the mill, one woman will be taken and one left. Therefore, keep watch, because you don't know what day your Lord is coming. But this you do know: That if the master of the house had known on what watch the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and not allowed his house to be broken into. For this reason you also be ready, because the Son of 'the man' is coming in whatever hour you do not think."

(Matthew 24:1–44) —my interim translation

The point of what Jesus says in that passage can be put succinctly this way: Those who don't *understand and believe* the Truth of *The Teaching* at the End of the Age will not realize what is happening until it is too late for them to escape their fate. But those who do *understand and believe* the Truth need to be extremely careful that they are not being deceived by one of Satan's many lies. Therefore, Jesus slyly alludes to the fact that, just to make sure True Believers are not deceived, God is going to call someone to provide them the parabolic "food" they will need to endure to the End of the Age. The question is:

"Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom the Lord put in charge of His house slaves, to give them the food at the right time? That slave is **blessed** if his Lord comes and finds him doing so. Without doubt, I tell you that He will put him in charge of all His possessions. But if that evil slave should say in his heart, 'My Lord is taking a long

time!' and should begin to beat his fellow slaves, yet eat and drink with those who get drunk, **the Lord of that slave will come on a day he doesn't look for and at an hour he doesn't know, and He will dismember him and give him a place with the hypocrites. There will be wailing and grinding of teeth there.**"

(Matthew 24:45–51) —my interim translation

What Jesus says in that passage should give every True Believer good reason for pause. It should also be a warning to all those who mistakenly assume one should slow down and smell the roses (an idiom). You know the philosophy: Take a slow walk in the park; kick back (an idiom) and take it easy (another idiom). My personal philosophy in regard to this life is this: The seventh eternal "day" of Creation will provide sufficient time for me to rest. In the meantime, I have more than enough work to do preparing True Believers for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. And Jesus has just described anyone who is stupid enough to say that spectacular event couldn't happen tomorrow. When it does, pity the poor fools who said it never would. "The Burning" they are too dumb to dread will have just begun:

*This is now, beloved, a second time I am writing a letter to you, in which I am awakening in you—by recollection—the understanding tested by "daylight," for you to be reminded: (1) of the words spoken beforehand by the holy Prophets, and (2) of the commandment of the Lord and Savior {spoken} by your Apostles. Knowing this first: That in the final days mockers will come mocking, following their own desires and saying, "Where is **The Promise**' of His Coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, everything remains just as from the beginning of Creation." For they wish this to be hidden: That heavens were long ago, and Earth was put together from water and through water by the {Living} Word of God, through Which {Living Word of God} the then-existing world, having been flooded by water, was destroyed. But at this time, the heavens and the Earth are held in reserve for fire by His Word, being preserved for a Day of Judgment and destruction of the ungodly men. But don't let this one thing be hidden from you, beloved: That one "day" with His Majesty is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one "day." His Majesty is not delaying **"The Promise"**—as some consider delay—but He is waiting patiently for you, not wanting any to be*

*destroyed, but all to make room for repentance. But the Day of His Majesty will arrive like a thief in which {Day} the heavens—roaring—will pass away. But elements—being made to burn—will be untied; and Earth—even the works {of God} in it—will be discovered. With all these things being untied in this way, of what sort ought you to be in holy behavior and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the Day of the {Living} God? Because of which {coming}, heavens—being burned—will be untied, and elements—being made to burn—will become liquid. But according to **"The Promise"** He has {made}, we are waiting for a new heavens and a new Earth in which a declaration of not guilty resides.*

(2 Peter 3:1–13) —my interim translation

The old adage "better safe than sorry" certainly applies in this case. But unfortunately, the majority of our species will prove they are just about as sensible as a slug. Speaking of *sensible*, immediately after Jesus forthrightly declares a most unhappy fate could easily overtake the one He calls a "faithful and *sensible* slave whom the Lord put in charge of His house slaves, to give them the food at the right time," He launches into another parable in which He *parabolically* depicts that same "faithful and *sensible* slave" teaching *The Teaching* to those True Believers who are "*sensible*" enough to prepare themselves for "The Burning" in advance:

"At that time, the Kingdom of Heaven will be like ten virgins who, having taken 'The Lamps' they had, went out to meet the Bridegroom. But five of them were foolish and five sensible; because the foolish, having taken 'The Lamps' they had, didn't take olive oil with them. But the sensible took olive oil in containers along with 'The Lamps' they had. When the Bridegroom took a long time, everyone became drowsy and was sleeping. But at midnight there was a shout: 'Look! The Bridegroom! Come out to meet {Him}!' At that time, all those virgins arose and put together 'The Lamps' they had. But the foolish said to the sensible, 'Give us some of your olive oil, because "The Lamps" we have are being extinguished!' But the sensible responded, saying: 'No! There won't be enough for us and you! Go to the dealers instead, and buy for yourselves!' Yet when they went away to buy, the Bridegroom came; and those who were ready entered into the wedding feast with Him, and the door was shut. But later the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord! Lord!

Open for us!' But He responded and said: 'Without doubt, I tell you! I don't recognize you!' Therefore, stay awake, because you don't know the day nor the hour!" (Matthew 25:1–13) —my interim translation

After He says that, Jesus continues His rather lengthy description of circumstances that will prevail at the End of the Age with a dire warning to those who have already *received* a little bit of the Truth. He tells them they had best be diligent to act on the basis of the Truth they have *received* so that His Truth *parabolically* becomes even greater. Otherwise, they, too, will be forced to submit to "The Burning":

*"For just like a man who is leaving home, He 'called' His slaves and He 'delivered' His possessions to them. And to one He gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one—to each according to his own ability. And He left home. Immediately going, the one who 'received' the five talents invested them and gained another five. Likewise, the one with the two gained another two. But the one who 'received' the one, going away, dug up earth and hid the 'silver' of his Lord. But after a long time, the Lord of those slaves comes and 'takes up a word' with them. And coming, the one 'receiving' the five talents brought five other talents, saying: 'Your Majesty, You "delivered" five talents to me. Look! I gained five more talents.' His Lord said to him: 'Well done, good and believing slave! You were believing on the basis of a little, I will put you in charge of much. Enter the joy of your Lord.' And coming, the one with two talents also said: 'Your Majesty, You "delivered" two talents to me. Look! I gained two more talents.' His Lord said to him: 'Well done, good and believing slave! You were believing on the basis of a little, I will put you in charge of much. Enter the joy of your Lord.' But when the one who had received one talent approached, he said: 'Your Majesty, I knew You—that You are a hard man, "reaping" where You did not "sow" and "gathering" where You did not "scatter." And being afraid, I went and hid Your talent in the Earth. Look! You have what is Yours!' But responding, his Lord said to him: 'Wicked and lazy slave! You knew I "reap" where I did not "sow" and "gather" where I "scattered" nothing. Therefore, you should have put My "silver" with the moneychangers; and coming, I would have obtained what is Mine—with interest. Therefore, take the talent from him and give it to the one who has ten talents.' **For to all who have, it will be given; and they will be made to abound. But from the one who does***

not have, even what he has will be taken from him. And throw that worthless slave out into the outer darkness. There will be wailing and grinding of teeth there."

(Matthew 25:14–30) —my interim translation

Now, I don't know about you, but those things scare me. That's because I am not so stupid as to say they could never happen to me. Therefore, I do my best to be diligent in regard to the things God has called me to do. But if you want to *arbitrarily assume* the things Jesus said do not pertain to you, or if you want to even more *ignorantly think* God does not have just as stringent requirements that you must meet, you really should check your inbox. You certainly have another think coming. I just hope you "get it" (an idiom) before the End of the Age.

Immediately before "The Burning" begins, God is going to *make a careful distinction between* the Blessed and the Cursed. So careful, in fact, that if you are not just as careful about what you *choose to believe*, you might not escape that raging inferno:

*"But when the Son of 'the man' comes in 'The Glory' that He has—and all the messengers with Him—then He will take His seat on the throne of His Glory. And all the nations will be brought together before Him, and He will separate them from one another just as the shepherd separates the sheep from the he-goats. And He will make the sheep stand on His right, but the he-goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right: 'Come! You who have been **blessed** by My Father, **inherit** the Kingdom prepared for you from the world's foundation. For I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat. I was thirsty, and you gave Me a drink. I was a stranger, and you "gathered" Me in; naked, and you clothed Me. I was ill, and you took care of Me. I was in prison, and you came to Me.' Then those declared not guilty will respond to Him, saying: 'Your Majesty, when did we see You hungry, and provide for You; or thirsty, and give You a drink? And when did we see You—a stranger—and we "gathered" in, or naked, and we clothed? And when did we see You ill, or in prison, and we came to You?' And the King will respond and say to them, 'Without doubt! I say to you, as much as you did for one of these, the least of My brothers, you did for Me.' Then He will also say to those on His left: 'Go away from Me, you who are cursed, into "The Fire"—"The Burning"—the one prepared for the Accuser and his*

messengers. For I was hungry, and you did not give Me to eat. I was thirsty, and you did not give Me a drink. I was a stranger, and you did not gather Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; ill and in prison, and you did not take care of Me.' Then they will themselves also respond, saying, 'Your Majesty, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and we did not serve You?' Then He will respond to them, saying, 'Without doubt! I say to you, as much as you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for Me.' And these will go away into a 'Burning' punishment, but those declared not guilty into a 'Burning' life."

(Matthew 25:31-46) —my interim translation

I debated whether I should translate the last two occurrences of the adjective *aionios* as "eternal"—which is the meaning it has in secular Greek—or as "Burning"—which is what it refers to in the Septuagint. It is quite obvious which one I chose. The reason for that choice came down to this: If you understand the parabolic imagery in regard to the "eternal" nature of "The Light," you can see how "The Burning" completely encompasses the concept of "eternal." Unfortunately, the reverse is not always true.

"The Burning" Will Make a Distinction

As is the case with most things, there is a whole lot more to "The Burning" than readily meets the eye (an idiom). It is not my purpose here to explain those things. My point is to show you the New Testament is talking about a concept that comes directly out of the ancient Canaanite/Hebrew mind-set. As I have explained on other occasions, that concept inheres in the belief that this Creation periodically goes through a renewal by fire—a "Burning." That concept is clearly on display in this passage from Zephaniah:

The Word of His Majesty which was to Zephaniah, son of Cushi, son of Gedaliah, son of Amariah, son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah, son of Amon, king of Judah:

*"I will most definitely remove everything
From the face of 'The Ground,'" declares His Majesty.*

"I will remove man and beast.

I will remove the birds of the Sea of Waters,

Even the fish of the sea,

Even the 'stumbling-blocks' along with the guilty.

*And I will cut off 'the man' from the face of
'The Ground,'" declares His Majesty.*

*"Then I will stretch out My hand against Judah,
And against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.*

*And I will cut off "The Remnant" of the Ba'al
from this maqom,*

The name of the idolatrous priests along with the priests.

Even those who bow down on the roofs

to the host of the Sea of Waters,

Even those who bow down swearing {loyalty}

to His Majesty but swearing by their 'king,'

Even those who have turned back

from following His Majesty,

Even those who have not sought His Majesty

and have not inquired of Him."

Be quiet before my Master, His Majesty!

Because the "Day" of His Majesty is near,

Because His Majesty has prepared

a {communal} sacrifice.

He has sanctified those He invited {to the feast}.

"And on the 'Day' of His Majesty's sacrifice,

I will levy against the princes, the sons of the 'king,'

Even against all who 'clothe' themselves

in foreign 'clothing.'

Then I will levy against those who step

over the threshold in that 'Day,'

Those who fill 'The House' of their Master

with violence and deceit.

And on that 'Day,'" declares His Majesty,

"A crying voice from the Fish Gate,

A wailing from the Second District,

A great crash from the hills.

Wail, you inhabitants of the Hollow,

Because all the people of Canaan have ceased.

All who weigh silver have been cut off!

And in that time,

I will search Jerusalem with lamps,

And I will levy against the men

Who are congealing on their lees,

Those who are saying in their heart:

'His Majesty won't do good,

But He won't do evil!'

But their hayil will become plunder,

And their 'houses' desolate.

When they build houses, they will not inhabit;

When they plant vineyards,

they will not drink their wine."

The great "Day" of His Majesty is near!

Near, and moving very quickly!
 The sound of the "Day" of His Majesty is bitter
 A **Gibbor** will raise a war-cry there.
 A "Day" of fury is that "Day,"
 A "Day" of distress and affliction,
 A "Day" of devastation and desolation,
 A "Day" of darkness and gloominess,
 A "Day" of a cloud and thick fog,
 A "Day" of **shophar** and **teruah**
 Against the enclosed cities,
 Even against the high corner towers.
 Then I will impose stress on "the man,"
 And he will "walk" like those who are blind,
 Because they sinned against His Majesty;
 So their blood will be poured out like dust,
 And their bowels like dung.
 Neither their silver nor their gold
 Will be able to deliver them
In the "Day" of the fury of His Majesty,
When all the Earth will be consumed
by "The Fire" of His jealousy.
 Because a completion—
 Indeed a terrifying one—
 He will make of all the inhabitants of the Earth.
 (Zephaniah 1:1–18) —my interim translation

That passage is obviously meant to be a wake-up call for the Redeemed. But what Zephaniah says next should be a strident warning to anyone who still has ears to hear:

Gather yourselves together!
 Even you Gentiles be gathered!
 Don't grow pale
 When a decree has yet to give birth—
 Like chaff—to a "Day" of fury
 When the burning anger of His Majesty
 has not yet come upon you,
 When the "Day" of His Majesty's anger
 has not yet come upon you.
 Seek His Majesty,
 All you meek of the Earth
 Who have acted on His judgment.
 Seek a declaration of not guilty!
 Seek humility!
 Perhaps you will be hidden
 In the "Day" of His Majesty's anger.
 (Zephaniah 2:1–3) —my interim translation

There are some who will adamantly insist it is impossible for True Believers to "gather" any way other than *physically*. Not so. Those who are "one" in the "Spirit" of the *Living* God will discover the "gathering" Zephaniah mentions is something far greater than dimwittedly collecting dead bodies each Sunday. Some things beg for words adequate to describe them. But I am not responsible for the fake-front "building" that all those pulchritudinous pulpit parrots have erected on "sand." I am only responsible for what little I contribute to "The House" that God is "building" on a "Rock":

And I, Brothers, was not able to speak to you all as spiritual but as fleshly—as babies in "an Anointing." I gave you all "milk" to "drink," not "food"; for you were not yet able. But now you are still not yet able, for you are still all fleshly. For where jealousy and strife are in you, are you not all fleshly and "walking" like a man? For when someone says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not men? What therefore is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you all believed, and as His Majesty gave to each one. I "planted," Apollos "watered," but the {Living} God causes "growth." For this reason neither the one who "plants" is anything, nor the one who "waters," but the {Living} God Who is causing the "growth." Now the "planter" and the "waterer" are "One"; but each will **receive** his own "pay" according to his own "labor." For we are God's "helpers"; you are God's "Field," God's "Building." In accordance with "The Favor" of the {Living} God which was given to me, I "laid" a "Foundation" like a wise "master builder," and another is "building." But let each beware how he "builds." For it is in no way possible to "lay" a "Foundation" other than the One "laid," which is Jesus "Anointed." Now, if anyone "builds" on the "Foundation" with "gold," "silver," "precious stones," "wood," "hay," "straw," **the "work" of each one will become evident; for "the Day" will clearly show, because it is revealed by a "Fire." And "The Fire" will assay of what sort each one's "work" is.** If anyone's "work"—what he has "built"—remains, he will receive "pay." If anyone's "work" is burned up, he will suffer loss, but will himself be saved, yet even so as through "Fire." Do you not know that you all are a "Temple" of God, and the "Spirit" of the {Living} God dwells in you? If anyone harms the "Temple" of the {Living} God, the {Living} God will harm that one; for the "Temple" of the {Living} God is holy, which is what you all are.
 (1 Corinthians 3:1–17) —my interim translation ■



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

As disaster rapidly descends on Planet Earth, just remember this: Judgment begins with those who rule "The House" of God. Maybe the Prophet Jeremiah will help you "remember" what happens to the Church as Mystery Babylon rapidly dissolves into total chaos:

For this is what His Majesty, the God of Israel, said to me: "Take this cup of the wine of wrath from My hand, and make all the nations to whom I am sending you drink it. When they drink, they will stagger and become insane because of the sword that I am going to send between them." So I took the cup from the hand of His Majesty and I made all the nations to whom His Majesty sent me drink: Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, and her king and her princes—to give them to ruin, to desolation, to hissing, and to a curse like this day; Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and his servants, and his princes, and all his people—even all the mixed race; and all the kings of the land of Uz; and all the kings of the land of the Philistines—even Ashkelon and Gaza and Ekron and the remnant of Ashdod, Edom, and Moab, and the sons of Ammon; and all the kings of Tyre, all the kings of Sidon, and the kings of the coastlands that are beyond the sea; and Dedan and Tema and Buz, and all who cut the sides {of their hair}; and all the kings of Arabia, and all the kings of the mixed race who dwell in the desert; and all the kings of Zimri; and all the kings of Elam; and all the kings of Media; and all the kings of the north, the ones near his brother and the ones far off; and all the kingdoms of the Earth which are on the face of "The Ground." But the king of Sheshach {Babylon} must drink after them.

"Then you must say to them, 'This is what His Supreme Majesty, the God of Israel, has said: "Drink and get drunk, then vomit and fall. But you will not get up again because of the sword that I am sending between you."' But if they refuse to take the cup from your hand to drink, then you must say to them, 'This is what His Supreme Majesty has said: "You will most definitely drink! Because, Look! I am beginning to do something evil in the city over which My Name is called, and will you be held innocent? You will not be held innocent because I am summoning a sword against all the inhabitants of the Earth," declares His Supreme Majesty.' So you must prophesy to them all these words; and you must say to them:

*'His Majesty will roar from high above.
Even from His holy habitation He will grant His voice.
He will roar with a mighty roar against His flock.
Like those treading {grapes}, He will respond
To all the inhabitants of the Earth.
An uproar will come on the end of the Earth,
Because His Majesty has an indictment
against the nations.
He is going to judge all flesh.
Those who are guilty? He has given them to the sword,'
declares His Majesty."*

This is what His Supreme Majesty has said:

*"Look! An evil is going out
From nation to nation.
Even a great storm has been stirred up
From the remote parts of the Earth.
And the slain of His Majesty in that day will be
From the end of the Earth to the end of the Earth.
And they will not be lamented,
And they will not be gathered,
And they will not be buried.
They will be like dung on the face of 'The Ground.'
Wail, you 'shepherds,' and cry out.
Roll around, you 'nobles' of the flock,
Because the days of your slaughter and dispersion
{of the flock} have been filled.
And you will fall like a valuable vessel.
A place to flee from the 'shepherds' will perish,
Even an escape from the 'nobles' of the flock.
The sound of the outcry of the shepherds,
Even the wailing of the 'nobles' of the flock,
Because His Majesty is destroying their 'pasture.'
Then the abode of their 'peace' will be silenced
Because of the heated nostrils of His Majesty."
(Jeremiah 25:15–37) —my interim translation ■*



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

Editor: One of our contributors asked a question in regard to something you said about Jacob handing down the promise to all twelve of his sons. In *The Inheritance of the Believer, Volume 1*, you mentioned Jacob “putting God in a bind” when he did that. Would you tell us a little more about this? Why did Jacob not pass the promise down to just one son as his father and grandfather had done before him? Is this part of a parabolic pantomime that God orchestrated in connection with what you stated in the July 1991 newsletter that under Roman law it was traditional to divide the estate into twelfths, or was this Jacob’s idea?

Elijah: You hit the nail on the head (that’s an idiom) when you mentioned Roman law in regard to estates being divided into twelve parts. That *parabolic imagery* very definitely pertains to *the inheritance of the promise* and *what was promised* by the twelve *parabolic* “tribes” of Corporate Israel—the Body of Jesus Christ. But don’t forget to remember that the Levites are the thirteenth *parabolic* “tribe” of Corporate Israel, and Moses specifically states the Levites will have no part in *the inheritance of the Promised Land*. Most folks overlook that part of the *parabolic imagery*.

Unfortunately, you bent the nail—that’s not an idiom; it’s just a bit of silliness intended to provoke those sons of the devil who love to criticize—when

you inferred Jacob might have been conducting a *parabolic pantomime*. So now you have to pull the nail out and start all over with a new nail. Nothing in what Jacob did in dividing up *the promise* was a *parabolic pantomime*.

The primary reason why a Roman citizen divided his estate into twelve parts was to make it impossible for his legal heirs—that is, any disinherited member of his immediate family—to contest it. Jesus not only did that, He also *disinherited* the members of His family so that He could *hand down the promise* to the twelve Apostles and still allow His family members to *inherit the promise* under the terms He stipulated in His *oral* will. That formality was necessary to meet the peculiar requirements of the Roman legal system. (See “Did Jesus Leave a Will?” *The Voice of Elijah®*, July 1991.)

The point of everything I have told you about the Last Will and Testament of Jesus Christ is this: When Jesus made the *oral* will in which He designated His *heirs*, he made it possible for Gentiles to *inherit the promise* from Him so that they would be eligible to *inherit what was promised* when the End of the Age arrived and the time came for *the fulfillment of the promise* in regard to male and female Believers being made in the image and likeness of God.

I was just being facetious when I said Jacob “put God in a bind” by dividing up *the promise*. That is about as ridiculous as thinking a mouse could pin an elephant and hold him down for the count. The point of what I said was, God could not *fulfill the promise* until it was unified and once again in the possession of just one person, which is precisely what happened when Jesus Christ became Corporate Israel—the *Heir of the promise*.

As far as what Jacob might have been thinking when he divided up *the promise*, there is no way to know for certain *why* he did *what* he did because Moses doesn’t tell us; and he also doesn’t tell us what God had in mind. But his silence in regard to the latter does let us know Jacob was not conducting a *parabolic pantomime*. If Jacob’s actions had been part of a *parabolic pantomime*, Moses would have explicitly told us God instructed Jacob to do what he did.

My personal belief in regard to what Jacob did when he *handed down the promise* to his sons is based on his actions in other situations. If you read Moses’ account of Jacob’s life very carefully, you will find that Jacob was a selfish and self-centered individual who

repeatedly made decisions based on his own wants and desires rather than what was best for the members of his family—specifically his sons. For example, he demonstrated such absolutely blatant partiality toward Joseph that his other sons did not hesitate to sell Joseph into slavery. But the favoritism Jacob showed in that regard was a direct result of his inability to treat Leah, Zilpah, and Bilhah fairly. So I personally believe Jacob divided up *the promise* so that he could show partiality to Joseph once again by giving *the blessing* to Joseph's sons. But if you think what Jacob did in parceling out *the promise* was a mistake, you obviously don't understand why Paul uses the phrase "fullness of the Gentiles" in this passage:

*Therefore, consider the benevolence and severity of God: On those who fell, severity, but on you, the benevolence of God—if you remain in the benevolence; otherwise, you will also be "cut off." But they themselves, if they do not remain in their unbelief, will be "grafted in"; for the {Living} God is able to "graft them in" again. For if you were "cut off from" that which is, by nature, a "wild olive tree" and were, against nature, "grafted into" a "Cultivated Olive Tree," how much more will those, who are by nature, be "grafted into" their own "Cultivated Olive Tree"? For I do not want you, brothers, to be ignorant of this mystery—so that you are not "sensible" in yourselves—that a **hardening {which derives} from {some} members of Israel has come into being until the "fullness of the Gentiles" comes in.** And in this way "all Israel" will be saved, just as it is written:*

*"THE DELIVERER WILL COME OUT OF ZION;
HE WILL TURN AWAY THOSE WHO ARE UNGODLY
FROM JACOB.*

*AND THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM,
When I take away their sins."
(Romans 11:22–27) —my interim translation*

If you know your Bible, you already know Paul used the phrase "fullness of the Gentiles" in that context because he is referring to what Jacob said to Joseph in this passage:

After these things, it was said to Joseph, "Look! Your father is ill." So he took two of his sons with him—Ephraim and Manasseh. When it was reported to Jacob, "Look! Your son Joseph has come to you," Israel gathered strength and sat up on the bed. Then Jacob said to Joseph:

*"El Shaddai appeared to me in Luz, in the land of Canaan, and **blessed** me. He said to me: 'Look! I am going to make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will give you to a congregation of peoples, and I will give this land to your Seed after you {as} a possession of 'olam.' But now, two of your sons—the ones born to you in the land of Egypt before my coming to you in Egypt—are mine. Ephraim and Manasseh shall be to me as Reuben and Simeon. But those you engendered—that you engendered after them—shall be yours. They will be called along with the name of their brothers in their **inheritance**. But I, while I was coming from Padan, Rachel died on me in the land of Canaan on the way while there was still a good stretch of Earth to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way." (Ephrath is Bethlehem.) Then Israel saw the sons of Joseph and said, "Who are these?" And Joseph said to his father, "These are my sons whom God gave to me in this {land}." So he said, "Bring them to me, please, so that I may bless them." Now the eyes of Israel were so heavy from age that he was not able to see, so he brought them to him and he kissed them and hugged them. Then Israel said to Joseph, "I could not pray to see your face, but Look! God has allowed me to see your seed as well!" Then Joseph took them from his knees, and he bowed down with his face toward the ground. And Joseph took both of them—Ephraim with his right to the left of Israel and Manasseh with his left to the right of Israel—and brought them to him. Then Israel stretched out his right hand and placed it on the head of Ephraim (even though he was the youngest) and his left hand on the head of Manasseh—crossing his hands because Manasseh was the firstborn, and he blessed Joseph and said:*

*"The God before Whom my fathers
Abraham and Isaac walked,
The God Who has shepherded me ever
since I was until this day,
The Messenger Who redeemed me from all evil,
Will **bless** the boys;
And the name that I have will be called in them,
As well as the name of my fathers
Abraham and Isaac,
So that they increase into a multitude
in the midst of the Earth."*

When Joseph saw that his father placed his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it was wrong in his eyes. So he grasped the hand of his father to move it from the head of

Ephraim to the head of Manasseh. And Joseph said to his father: "Not so, my father, because this is the firstborn. Place your right {hand} on his head." But his father refused and said: "I know, my son, I know. He also will become a people; and he also will be great. However, his younger brother will become greater than he, and **his seed will become the fullness of the Gentiles.**" (Genesis 48:1–19) —my interim translation

Now, if you really want to know what the Apostle Paul had in mind when he used the phrase "fullness of the Gentiles" in Romans 11:25, you have to take into account the fact that he most often quotes from the Septuagint—the only Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures available in the time of Christ—and only occasionally does he revise that translation by providing his own translation of the Hebrew text. So you have to go back and read the Greek text that Paul was reading before you can see what he saw in the biblical text. When you do that, however, you will find that the Jews who made the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Scriptures understood there was a direct link between what Jacob said to Joseph in the passage above and what God said to Abraham in this passage:

Now, when Abram was ninety-nine years old, His Majesty appeared to Abram and said to him: "I am **El Shaddai**. Walk before Me and be complete, and I will give {according to} My covenant between Me and you, and I will multiply you tremendously." Abram fell on his face, and God spoke with him, saying: "As for Me, Look! My covenant is with you, and **you will become the father of a multitude of Gentiles**. But your name will no longer be called 'Abram.' Your name will become 'Abraham' because **I will make you father of a multitude of Gentiles**. Then I will make you tremendously fruitful, and I will make you into Gentiles, and kings will go forth from you. Then I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your seed after you—throughout their generations, for a covenant of '**olam**—to be God to you and your seed after you. Then I will give you and your seed after you the land of your sojournings—all the land of Canaan—for a possession of '**olam**, and I will be God to them." (Genesis 17:1–8) —my interim translation

The Jews who made the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Scriptures used the same phrase in

Genesis 17:4 that they used in Genesis 48:19. That is, they translated the Hebrew phrase that is normally translated "multitude of nations/Gentiles" as "fullness of nations/Gentiles." And they left out the Greek term for "multitude/fullness" completely in Genesis 17:6. They clearly did that because they were aware of several unique things related to the Greek term that is most often translated "fullness" in the New Testament. And the Apostle Paul, with his encyclopedic knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures, would have known *why* the Jews did *what* they did when they translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek.

But the Apostle Paul was also aware of several other things related to the *parabolic image* of the "fullness" of Corporate Israel, the *significance* of which I have not yet fully explained. One of the things he knew was the fact that Ephraim "carried *The Name*" of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob out of the "nation" of Corporate Israel and scattered it among the "nations"—that is, among the Gentiles—thereby ensuring that Abraham will not be able to enter the Resurrection until the "fullness" of his "name" has been added to Corporate Israel—from the Gentiles—just as Paul says it will be in Romans 11:25–26. Paul also *talks about* that in this passage:

Just as Abraham "BELIEVED THE {Living} GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS A DECLARATION OF NOT GUILTY," so also you know that those from belief, these are sons of Abraham. But the Scripture—seeing in advance that, from belief, the {Living} God is declaring the Gentiles not guilty—preached the Gospel in advance to Abraham, that "ALL THE GENTILES WILL BE **BLESSED** IN YOU." Therefore, those from belief are being **blessed** with the Believer, Abraham. For as many as are from works of law are under a curse. For it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT REMAIN IN ALL THE THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO DO THEM." But {the fact} that no one is declared not guilty by law before the {Living} God is obvious, because "THE ONE WHO IS NOT GUILTY WILL LIVE FROM BELIEF." But "The Law" is not from belief; but rather, "THE ONE WHO DOES THEM WILL LIVE IN THEM." "An Anointed {One}" bought us back from the curse of "The Law," having become a curse on our behalf—because it is written, "EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE IS CURSED"—(1) So that into the Gentiles "**The Blessing**" of Abraham might come—in "The Anointing" of Jesus, (2) so that we might **receive "The Promise"** of the "Spirit" through "The Belief." Brothers, I am speaking

according to man; nevertheless, no one can set aside the validated testament of a man or add a codicil. But **"The Promises"** were spoken to Abraham and to his "Seed." He does not say, "And to the seeds," as of many; but as of One: "And to your Seed," that is, "an Anointed {One}." But I am saying this: A testament previously validated by the {Living} God, "The Law"—which came four hundred and thirty years later—does not invalidate, so as to abolish **"The Promise."** For if **"The Inheritance"** is from law, it is no longer from a **promise**; but the {Living} God freely gave it to Abraham through a **promise**. Why "The Law" then? It was added on account of transgressions until the Seed should come to Whom it had been **promised**, having been directed through messengers into the hand of a Mediator. Now, the mediator is not for one, but the {Living} God is One. Is "The Law," therefore, against **"The Promises"** of the {Living} God? Certainly not! For if a law that was able to give life had been given, "The Declaration of Not Guilty" certainly would have been from law. But the Scripture has imprisoned everyone under sin, so that **"The Promise"**—from "The Belief" of Jesus "Anointed"—might be given to those who believe. (Galatians 3:6–22) —my interim translation

The fact that God did not tell Jacob what to do when he *handed down the promise* does not mean Jacob did anything wrong in dividing up *the promise*. As a matter of fact, the biblical evidence indicates he did exactly what God knew he would do. But that does not mean God wanted him to do it either. For the benefit of those who are too simpleminded to understand such fine distinctions, just think in terms of Satan and the various idiotic things that he and his children have done—and continue to do on a daily basis. God is certainly not pleased with any of them, but He uses every last one of them to accomplish exactly what He planned all along. So the best you can say about Jacob's decision is, he did what he thought was best and everything came out just as God planned it in the end.

Editor: *Another question has come in asking about idioms: "Should the idioms 'give a seed' and 'raise up a name' cause one to see two sets of parabolic images—one the mind-set of the Canaanites in trying to 'make a name' or 'make a king' and the other where God 'makes a Name' for Himself in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ? Does the veil hide the reality behind the mind-set?"*

Elijah: The short answer is: "No, those idioms come directly from the ancient Hebrew/Canaanite mind-set in regard to resurrection. Consequently, once a True Believer 'puts on' (that's another Hebrew idiom) the ancient Hebrew/Canaanite mind-set, he can easily understand an explanation of the seven sealed messages hidden in the Hebrew Scriptures. That is, the Hebrew idioms and the *parabolic imagery* associated with those idioms contain everything he needs to know to be able to understand God's purpose in the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ." The wee-bit shorter answer is: "Yes, 'the veil' does hide the reality behind the mind-set; and 'the veil' that covers both the Hebrew Scriptures and the unregenerate mind of the unbeliever prevents anyone who has not been born again from fully understanding the reality that the Hebrew idioms and *parabolic imagery* explain. That is because the reality that the Prophets explain is, in and of itself, precisely the same mind-set the True Believer is striving to attain."

Now that the issue of Hebrew idioms has been raised, I want to show you something you are probably not aware of. It pertains to the fact that Moses not only provides a history of *the promise* in the things he wrote; he also defines a huge number of the Hebrew idioms—idioms the reader needs to know in order to understand what the Prophets wrote about the history of *the promise* and Jesus Christ as *Corporate Israel*, *the Heir of the promise*—the One Who *inherited what was promised* when God not only "built a house," "made a name," and "raised up a seed" for Himself but also did the same for Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David when He "raised up" Jesus Christ from the dead.

As you read through the following rather long passage of Scripture, pay particular attention to all the Hebrew idioms I have bolded. You will undoubtedly see most of them on other occasions:

Genesis—Chapter 37

Now Jacob was dwelling in the land of his father's sojourning—in the land of Canaan. These are the generations of Jacob: Joseph—as **a son of seventeen years**—was shepherding the flock with his brothers. But he was a lad with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's women; and Joseph brought a bad report about them back to their father. Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was to him **a son of old age**; so he made

a multicolored tunic for him. And his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, so they hated him and were not able **to speak to him peacefully**. Then Joseph dreamed a dream; and when he told his brothers, they hated him even more. But he said to them, "Please, listen to this dream that I dreamed: Now look! We were binding bundles in the field, and Look! My bundle **stood up and even took a stand**. Then Look! Your bundles gathered around and bowed down to my bundle." Then his brothers said to him: "Will you reign as king over us? We swear you will not rule over us!" So they hated him all the more for his dreams and for his words. Then he dreamed yet another dream; so he recounted it to his brothers and said, "Look! I dreamed another dream, and Look! The sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me." But when he recounted {it} to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him and said to him: "What is this dream that you dreamed? Am I, your mother, and your brothers actually going to come to bow down to the ground before you?" Then his brothers were jealous of him, but his father **guarded the Word**. When his brothers went out to shepherd their father's flock in Shechem, then Israel said to Joseph: "Are your brothers not shepherding in Shechem? Come, and I will send you to them." And he said to him, "I'm ready." So he said to him, "Please, go and **see about the peace of your brothers and the peace of the flock**; then bring back word to me." Then he sent him from the valley of Hebron, and he went toward Shechem. But a man found him, and Look! He was wandering in the field. So the man asked him, saying, "What are you looking for?" And he said: "I am looking for my brothers. Please tell me: Where are they shepherding?" So the man said, "They set out from here when I heard {them} say, 'Let's go toward Dothan.'" So Joseph went after his brothers and found them in Dothan. But they saw him from a distance; so before he drew near to them, they conspired against him to put him to death. And each one said to his brother: "This **Ba'al of the dreams** is coming! So now, come on and let's kill him and throw him into one of the pits. Then we will say, 'A bad animal ate him!' Then we will see what will become of his dreams." But Reuben overheard, and he **delivered him from their hand**. And he said, "Let's not **smite a soul**." Then Reuben said to them: "Don't **pour out blood**. Throw him into this pit that is in the wilderness, but don't **lay a hand on him**"—so that he might **deliver him from their hand** to return him to his father. So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped

Joseph of his tunic—the multicolored tunic that was on him—and they took him and threw him into the pit. Now the pit was empty; there was no water in it. And they sat down to eat bread. Then they **raised their eyes and saw**, Look! A caravan of Ishmaelites was coming from Gilead, and their camels were carrying aromatic resin, balsam, and myrrh, going to bring {them} down to Egypt. Then Judah said to his brothers: "What is the profit if we kill our brother and **cover up his blood**? Come on, and let's sell him to the Ishmaelites and not **let our hand be against him** because he is our brother, our flesh." So his brothers listened. And when the Midianite men—traders—passed by, they grabbed hold and pulled Joseph up from the pit, and they sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty silver. And they brought Joseph into Egypt. When Reuben returned to the pit, then Look! Joseph was not in the pit; so he **tore his clothes**. Then he returned to his brothers and said: "**The boy is not**; and me? Where am I to go?" So they took Joseph's tunic, and they slaughtered a he-goat, and they dipped the tunic in the blood. Then they sent the multicolored tunic and had it brought to their father; and they said, "We found this; please examine whether it is your son's tunic or not." When he examined it, he said: "It is my son's tunic. A bad animal has eaten him; Joseph has been torn to pieces!" Then Jacob **tore his clothing**, and put sackcloth on his loins, and mourned for his son many days. Then all of his sons and his daughters stood by to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. And he said, "I will surely **go down to the Sea of El** mourning for my son." And his father wept for him. But the Midianites sold him to Egyptians—to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the bodyguards.

(Genesis 37:1–36) —my interim translation

Genesis—Chapter 39

Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt; and Potiphar—an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the bodyguards, an Egyptian man—had bought him from the hand of the Ishmaelites who brought him down there. But His Majesty **was with Joseph**, and he became a prosperous man; although he **was in the house of his master**, the Egyptian. And his master saw that His Majesty **was with him**, and His Majesty caused all that he did to prosper in his hand. So Joseph **found favor in his eyes**, and he made him an attendant. Then he appointed him over his house, and he **put all that he had in his hand**. So it was from the

time when he appointed him over his house and over all that he had that His Majesty **blessed** the house of the Egyptian on account of Joseph. And **the blessing** of His Majesty was on all that he had—in the house and in the field. So he **left all that he had in Joseph's hand**, so that he did not **make known to him** anything except the food that he was going to eat. Now Joseph was handsome in form and handsome in appearance. So after these things, his master's woman **raised up her eyes to** Joseph and said, "Lie with me." But he refused and said to his master's woman: "Look! My master has not **made known to me** what is in the house, but all that he has he **put in my hand**. There is nobody greater in this house than I, and he has held back nothing from me except you, because you are his woman. How could I do this great evil and sin against God?" So it was that when she spoke to Joseph day after day, he did not listen to her, **to lie beside her, to be with her**. Then it happened one day that when he went to the house to do his work, none of the men of the house were there in the house. So she grabbed him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me!" But he left his garment in her hand and fled, and went outside. When she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and fled outside, she called to the men of her house, and she said to them, saying: "See? He brought in a Hebrew man for us, **to make us a laughingstock**! He came in to lie with me, but I cried out in a loud voice. And when he heard that I raised my voice and cried out, he left his garment beside me and fled, and went outside." Then she kept his garment beside her until his master came to his house. And she spoke to him in accordance with all these words, saying: "The Hebrew slave that you brought for us came to me, **to make me a laughingstock**. But when I raised my voice and cried out, he left his garment beside me and fled outside." And when his master heard the words of his woman, which she spoke to him, saying, "Your slave did all these things to me," **his face got hot**. So Joseph's master took him and put him in the house of confinement—a place where the prisoners of the king were imprisoned—and he was there, in the house of confinement. But His Majesty **was with Joseph**, and He extended lovingkindness to him and **gave him favor in the eyes of** the captain of the house of confinement. And the captain of the house of confinement **put all of the prisoners** who were in the house of confinement **in the hand of Joseph**, so that he was doing all that they were doing there. The captain of the house of confinement did not **look at anything in his hand** because His Majesty **was with him**, and His

Majesty made what he was doing prosper.
(Genesis 39:1–23) —my interim translation

Genesis—Chapter 40

So it was after these things, the cupbearer of the king of Egypt, and the baker, sinned against their master, against the king of Egypt. And Pharaoh became enraged against his officers—against the captain of the cupbearers and the captain of the bakers—and he **put them under the guard** of the house of the captain of the bodyguards—in "the Roundhouse," the place where Joseph was imprisoned. And the captain of the bodyguards appointed Joseph to them, and he served them; and they were **under guard** for days. Then the two of them—the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt who were imprisoned in "the Roundhouse"—dreamed a dream; each one {had} his dream the same night, {and} each one {had} an interpretation of his dream. When Joseph came to them in the morning and saw them, then Look! They were perplexed. So he asked the officers of Pharaoh who were with him in the house of confinement, saying, "Why **are your faces bad** today?" Then they said to him, "We dreamed a dream, but there was no interpretation with it." So he said to them: "Do not interpretations belong to God? Please recount {it} for me." Then the captain of the cupbearers recounted his dream to Joseph; and he said to him: "In my dream, Look! A vine was before me, and on the vine were three branches. But as she was budding, her blossoms came up; her clusters ripened grapes. And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, so I took the grapes, and I squeezed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I put the cup into Pharaoh's hand." Then Joseph said to him, "This is its interpretation: The three branches are three days. In yet three days, Pharaoh will '**lift up your head**' and **restore you to your right**, and he will put the cup of Pharaoh in your hand in accordance with the former decision—that you were his cupbearer. Just remember me when it goes well for you; and please do me a kindness and mention me to Pharaoh, so that he brings me out of this house. Because I was stolen from the land of the Hebrews, and even here I have done nothing that they should put me in the pit." When the captain of the bakers saw that he interpreted a good thing, he said to Joseph: "I was also in my dream, and Look! Three baskets of fine bread were on my head. And in the top basket were some of all of Pharaoh's food made by a baker, and the birds were eating them from the basket on my head." Then Joseph responded and said:

"This is its interpretation: The three baskets are three days. In yet three days, the Pharaoh will **'lift up your head'**—from you. That is, he will hang you on a tree, and the birds will eat your flesh from you." So it was on the third day, the day Pharaoh was born, that he made a feast for all his servants and he **"lifted up the head"** of the captain of the cupbearers—and the head of the captain of the bakers—in the midst of his servants. That is, he restored the captain of the cupbearers as his cupbearer, so that he put the cup into Pharaoh's hand; but he hanged the captain of the bakers just as Joseph had interpreted for them. But the captain of the cupbearers did not remember Joseph; he forgot him.

(Genesis 40:1–23) —my interim translation

Genesis—Chapter 41

So it was at the end of two full years that Pharaoh was dreaming, and Look! He was standing by "the River." And Look! Seven cows—beautiful of appearance and fat of flesh—were coming up from "the River," and they grazed in the marsh grass. Then Look! Seven other cows were coming up after them from "the River"—bad of appearance and thin of flesh—and they stood beside the cows on the bank of "the River." Then the cows—the ones bad of appearance and thin of flesh—ate the seven cows—the ones beautiful of appearance and fat. Then Pharaoh woke up. But he fell asleep, and he dreamed a second time; and Look! Seven ears of grain were coming up on one stalk—fat and good. Then Look! Seven ears of grain—thin and scorched by a sirocco—were sprouting after them; and the thin ears of grain swallowed the seven fat and full ears of grain. Then Pharaoh woke up, and Look! {It was} a dream. So it was in the morning that his spirit was troubled, and he sent and summoned all the magicians of Egypt and all her wise men. And Pharaoh recounted his dreams to them, but none could interpret them for Pharaoh. Then the captain of the cupbearers spoke to Pharaoh, saying: "I am **remembering my sins** today. Pharaoh was enraged against his servants, and he **put me under the guard** of the house of the captain of the bodyguards—me and the captain of the bakers. And we—I and he—dreamed a dream during the same night; each of us dreamed according to the interpretation of his dream. But a Hebrew lad was there with us—a servant of the captain of the bodyguards—and when we recounted {them} to him, he interpreted our dreams for us. He interpreted {to} each in accordance with his dream. And

just as he interpreted for us, so it was: He **restored me to my right**, but he hanged him." So Pharaoh sent and summoned Joseph, and they brought him quickly from the pit. Then he shaved, and changed his clothes, and came to Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said to Joseph: "I dreamed a dream, and nobody can interpret it. But I have heard {it} said about you, you can hear a dream to interpret it." Then Joseph responded to Pharaoh, saying, "Not me! God **will respond peacefully** to Pharaoh." So Pharaoh spoke to Joseph: "In my dream, Look! I was standing on the bank of 'the River.' And Look! Seven cows were coming up out of 'the River'—fat of flesh and beautiful of form—and they grazed in the marsh grass. Then Look! Seven other cows were coming up after them—thin, and very bad of form, and lean of flesh. I have not seen anything so bad in all the land of Egypt! Then the lean and bad cows ate the first seven fat cows! And when they had **brought them into their insides**, it could not be known that they had **gone into their insides**; their appearance was just as bad as before. Then I woke up. Then I saw in my dream, and Look! Seven ears of grain were coming up on one stalk—full and good. And Look! Seven ears of grain—withered, thin, and scorched by a sirocco—were sprouting after them; and the thin ears of grain swallowed the seven good ears of grain. And I talked to the magicians, but nobody could tell me." Then Joseph said to Pharaoh: "Pharaoh's dream is one {dream}; it has told Pharaoh what the {Living} God is going to do. The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears of grain are seven years. The dream is one {dream}. Also, the seven lean and bad cows that are coming up after them are seven years, and the seven lean ears of grain scorched by the sirocco will be seven years of famine. That is the word that I have spoken to Pharaoh: What the {Living} God is going to do, He has shown to Pharaoh. Look! Seven coming years **will be greatly satisfying** in all the land of Egypt. But seven bad years will arise after them, and all 'the satisfaction' in the land of Egypt will be forgotten, and the famine will total the land. So **'the satisfaction' that was in the land will not be known** because of the famine that is after that, because **it will be completely total**. But concerning the dream that Pharaoh had changing twice: When the thing is set in place by the {Living} God, the {Living} God moves quickly to do it. But now Pharaoh must look for an understanding and wise man, and he must **set him over the land** of Egypt. Pharaoh must act, and he must appoint those who are appointed over the land, and he must **organize the land of Egypt**

as for war during the seven years of 'the satisfaction.' And they must gather all the food of these seven coming good years, and they must pile up clean grain under the hand of Pharaoh as food in the cities, and they must set guard. And the food must be designated for the land during the seven bad years that will be in the land of Egypt so that **the land won't be cut off** during the famine." And the word **was good in the eyes** of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants; so Pharaoh said to his servants, "Could we find any man like this, in whom the spirit of God is?" Then Pharaoh said to Joseph: "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one as understanding and wise as you. You **will be over my house**, and all my people **will kiss on your mouth**. Only in the throne will I be greater than you." Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See! I have **put you over all the land** of Egypt!" Then Pharaoh removed his signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph's hand, and he clothed him in garments of fine linen, and he put the gold necklace around his neck. Then he made him ride in his second chariot, and they cried out before him, "Bow down!" When he **put him over all the land** of Egypt, Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh; but apart from you, a man will not **raise his hand or his foot** in all the land of Egypt." Then Pharaoh named Joseph Zaphenath-paneah; and he gave him Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, as his woman. And Joseph **went out across the land** of Egypt. Now Joseph **was a son of thirty years** when he stood before Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and Joseph went out from before Pharaoh, and he went all over the land of Egypt. And the Earth **made {produce} until hands were full** during the seven years of "the satisfaction." So he gathered all the food of the seven years that were in the land of Egypt, and he put food in the cities. He put the food from the field that was around the city in her midst. And Joseph piled up clean grain like the sand of the sea—very abundant—until he stopped counting because it could not be counted. Now before the year of the famine came, two sons were delivered for Joseph, which Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera, the priest of On, delivered for him. And Joseph **called the name** of the firstborn Manasseh, "Because God has made me forget all my trouble and all the house of my father." But he **called the name** of the second Ephraim, "Because God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction." When the seven years of "the satisfaction" that was in the land of Egypt were completed, and the seven years of the famine began to come just as Joseph said, then there was famine in all

the lands; but in the land of Egypt there was bread. And when all the land of Egypt was hungry, and they cried out to Pharaoh for bread, then Pharaoh said to all Egypt, "Go to Joseph; whatever he says to you, you must do." So when the famine was over all the surface of the Earth, then Joseph opened all that was in them and sold to Egypt, because the famine was strong in the land of Egypt. Now all the Earth came to Egypt—to Joseph—for grain, because the famine was strong in all the Earth. (Genesis 41:1–57) —my interim translation

Genesis—Chapter 42

When Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, Jacob said to his sons, "Why are you **looking at each other**?" Then he said: "Look! I have heard that there is grain in Egypt. Go down there and buy grain for us, so that we may live and not die." So the ten brothers of Joseph went down to buy clean grain from Egypt. But Jacob did not send Benjamin, the brother of Joseph, with his brothers because, he said, "Lest harm befall him." So the sons of Israel went to buy grain in the midst of those who were going, because the famine was in the land of Canaan. Now, Joseph was the one in control of that land, the one who sold to all the people of the land; so when Joseph's brothers came in, they bowed down to him, faces to the ground. When Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them, but he refrained from acknowledging them and spoke to them harshly. And he said to them, "From where have you come?" And they said, "From the land of Canaan, to buy grain." Now Joseph had recognized his brothers, but they had not recognized him. And Joseph remembered the dreams that he had dreamed about them, so he said to them: "You are spies! You have come **to look at the nakedness of the land**!" So they said to him: "No, my master, your servants have only come to buy food! We are all sons of one man; we are honest; your servants are not spies." But he said to them, "No! You have surely come **to look at the nakedness of the land**!" Then they said: "Your servants are twelve. We are brothers, sons of one man in the land of Canaan. But Look! The youngest is with our father today, and **the one is no more**." Then Joseph said to them, "It is what I spoke to you, saying, 'You are spies!' You must be tested by this: {I swear} **by the life of Pharaoh**, you will not go out from this {place} unless your youngest brother comes here. Send one of you so that he may get your brother, but you must remain imprisoned so that your words can be tested {to see if} the

truth is with you. But if not, {I swear} **by the life of Pharaoh**, you are surely spies!" Then he gathered them to be guarded three days. And Joseph said to them on the third day: "Do this, so that you may live. I fear the {Living} God. If you are honest, let one of your brothers be imprisoned in the house where you are being guarded, but you go, bring grain for your hungry houses. But you must bring your youngest brother to me so that your words may be proven true and you not die." And so they did. But they said, each one to his brother: "Surely we are guilty because of our brother—that we saw the distress of his soul when he sought our favor and we did not listen. Therefore, this distress has come on us." Then Reuben responded to them, saying, "Did I not say to you, saying: 'Don't sin against the lad,' and you would not listen? But even still his blood, Look! **It is seeking** {revenge}." Now, they did not know that Joseph was listening, because **the interpreter was between them**; so he moved away from them and wept. Then he returned to them and spoke to them, and he took Simeon from them and imprisoned him before their eyes. Then Joseph gave orders for them to fill their containers with clean grain and to return their money—each to his sack—and to give them provisions for the way, and so it was done for them. So they loaded the grain on their donkeys, and they went from there. And when one opened his sack to give some of the feed to his donkey in the camp site, he saw his silver and Look! It was in the mouth of his bag. And he said to his brothers, "My money has been returned, and Look! It is right in my bag!" Then **their heart went out**, and each one trembled along with his brother, saying, "What is this God is doing to us?" Then they came to Jacob, their father, to the land of Canaan; and they told him all that had happened to them, saying: "The man, the master of the land, spoke to us harshly; and he **put us as spying on the land**. But we said to him: 'We are honest! We are not spies! We twelve are brothers, sons of our father. **The one is no more**, and the youngest is today with our father in the land of Canaan.' Then the man, the master of the land, said to us, 'By this I will know that you are honest: Leave the one with me, but take for your hungry houses and go. But bring your youngest brother to me so that I will know that you are not spies, that you are honest. I will give your brother to you, and you can travel about the land.'" But when they were emptying their sacks, then Look! Each one's pouch of silver was in his bag. And when they saw the pouches of silver—they and their father—they were afraid. Then Jacob, their father, said to them: "You have

bereaved me! Joseph is not here; Simeon is not here; and you would take Benjamin! Everything is against me!" Then Reuben said to his father, saying: "You may put two of my sons to death if I do not bring him to you. **Put him in my hand**, and I will return him to you." But he said: "My son will not go down with you, because his brother is dead and he alone remains. And should harm befall him in the way in which you go, then you would **bring my gray hair down to the Sea of El** in sorrow." (Genesis 42:1–38) —my interim translation

Genesis—Chapter 43

Now **the famine was heavy in the land**. So when they finished eating the grain that they brought from Egypt, their father said to them, "Go back, buy a little food for us." Judah said to him, saying: "The man swore an oath against us, saying, 'You **will not see my face** unless your brother is with you.' If you are willing to send our brother with us, we will go down, and we will buy food for you. But if you are not willing to send, we will not go down, because the man said to us, 'You **will not see my face** unless your brother is with you.'" Then Israel said, "Why did you **do me evil** by telling the man you had yet {another} brother?" So they said: "The man asked specifically about us and about our siblings, saying: 'Is your father still alive? Do you have a brother?' So we reported to him in accordance with these words. How could we possibly know that he would say, 'Bring your brother down'?" And Judah said to Israel, his father: "Send the lad with me, so that we may arise and go, so that we may live and not die—both us, and you, and our little ones. I myself **will post bond for him**. You can **seek it from my hand**. If I do not bring him to you and stand him before you, then I will have **sinned against you** all the days. Surely, if we had not hesitated, by this {time} we surely could have gone back twice." Then Israel, their father, said to them, "If so, then do this: Take some of the best produce of the land in your containers, and bring a gift down to the man—a little balsam and a little honey, aromatic resin and myrrh, pistachios and almonds. But take double the silver in your hand, and the silver that was returned in the mouth of your bags you must return in your hand. Perhaps it was a mistake. But take your brother and arise, go back to the man. And may **El Shaddai give you compassion before the man** so that he sends with you your other brother and Benjamin. But as for me, if I am to be bereaved, I will be bereaved." So the men took this gift,

and they took double the silver in their hand, along with Benjamin. And they arose and went down to Egypt, and they stood before Joseph. When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to **the one who was over his house**, “Bring the men to the house and slaughter {an animal} and prepare {it}, because the men will eat with me at noon.” So the man did just as Joseph said, and the man brought the men to Joseph’s house. And the men were afraid because they had been brought to Joseph’s house; and they said, “Because of the money that was returned in our bags the first time we were brought {here} so that he could **roll us** and **fall on us** and take us for slaves along with our donkeys.” So when they approached **the man who was over Joseph’s house**, they spoke to him at the entrance of the house; and they said: “I swear, my master, we definitely came down the first time to buy food; but when we came to the camp site and opened our bags, then Look! Each one’s silver was in the mouth of his bag—our money by its weight. So we returned with it in our hand. And we brought down other silver in our hand to buy food. We don’t know who put our silver in our bags.” So he said to them: “Peace to you; don’t be afraid. Your God—even the God of your fathers—has put a treasure in your bags for you. Your silver came from me.” And he brought Simeon out to them. Then the man brought the men to Joseph’s house and gave {them} water, and they washed their feet, and he gave feed to their donkeys. And they prepared the gift for Joseph’s coming at noon because they had heard they would be eating bread there. When Joseph came to the house, they brought the gift that **was in their hand** to him at the house, and they bowed down to him, to the ground. And he **asked them about their peace**, and he said: “**How is the peace** of your father of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?” And they said, “Your servant, our father, **has peace**; he is still alive.” Then they knelt and bowed down. Then he **raised his eyes and saw** Benjamin, his brother, the son of his mother; and he said, “Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me?” And he said, “May God **grant you a favor**, my son.” Then Joseph moved quickly because his feelings toward his brother were aroused, and he sought to weep, so he went into his private room and he wept there. Then he washed his face and went out; and he controlled himself and said, “Serve bread.” So they seated him by himself, and them by themselves; and the Egyptians who were eating with him by themselves, because the Egyptians were not able to eat bread with the Hebrews because it is an abomination to

Egyptians. And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth, and the men looked at each other in amazement. And he carried portions to them from what was before him, but Benjamin’s portion was five hands more than any of theirs. So they drank and got drunk with him. (Genesis 43:1–34)—my interim translation

Genesis—Chapter 44

Then he commanded **the one who was over his house**, saying: “Fill the men’s bags with food, as much as they can carry, and put each one’s silver in the mouth of his bag. But you must put my goblet—the silver goblet—in the mouth of the youngest, along with the silver for his grain.” So he did according to the word that Joseph spoke. The morning was light when the men and their donkeys were sent away. They had gone out of the city, {but} they were not far away, and Joseph said to **the one who was over his house**, “Arise, pursue after the men and when you overtake them, say to them: ‘Why have you repaid evil for good? Is not this that from which my master drinks when he does divination? Did you not do evil by what you did?’” So he overtook them and spoke these words to them. But they said to him: “Why would my master speak according to these words? Far be it from your servants to ever act in accordance with this word. Look! The silver that we found in the mouth of our bags we returned to you from the land of Canaan. So how could we steal silver or gold from the house of your master? With whichever of your servants it is found, let him die; and we will also become my master’s servants.” And he said: “So now it will be in accordance with your words. The one with whom it is found will become my slave, but you will be innocent.” So they moved quickly, and each one took his bag down to the ground, and each one opened his bag. And he searched—he began with the oldest and finished with the youngest—and found the goblet in Benjamin’s bag. Then they **tore their clothes**, and each one loaded up his donkey, and they returned to the city. When Judah and his brothers came to Joseph’s house, he was still standing there, and they fell before him to the ground. And Joseph said to them: “What is this deed that you have done? Did you not know that a man like me can do divination?” So Judah said: “What can we say to my master? What can we speak? How can we exonerate ourselves? The {Living} God has **found the iniquity** of your servants. Look! We are my master’s servants, both

we and the one in whose hand the goblet was found." But he said: "Far be it from me to do this. The man in whose hand the goblet was found will become my servant, but you can **go up in peace** to your father." Then Judah approached him and said to him: "On my life, my master, please let your servant **speak a word in my master's ears** and don't **let your face get hot against your servant**, because you are equal to Pharaoh. My master asked his servants, saying, 'Do you have a father or a brother?' And we said to my master: 'We have an old father and a young child of his old age. But his brother is dead, so he alone remains to his mother, and his father loves him.' Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me, so that I may **set my eyes on him**.' But we said to my master, 'The lad is not able to leave his father; and should he leave his father, then he would die.' But you said to your servants, 'If your youngest brother does not come down with you, you will not **see my face** again.' So when we went up to your servant, my father, we told him the words of my master. Then our father said, 'Go back, buy a little food for us.' But we said: 'We can't go down. If our youngest brother is with us, then we will go down, because we can't **see the face of the man** if our youngest brother is not with us.' Then your servant, my father, said to us: 'You know that my woman bore two for me; but the one went out from me, and I said, "Surely he has been torn to pieces," and I have not seen him until now. But if you **take this one from my face**, and harm befalls him, you **will bring my gray hair down to the Sea of El** in sorrow.' So now, when I come to your servant, my father, and the lad is not with us, and **his soul has been bound up in his soul**, then it will be that when he sees **the lad is not**, he will die. And your servants **will bring the gray hair of your servant, our father, down to the Sea of El** in sorrow. Because your servant **posted bond for the lad with my father**, saying, 'If I do not bring him back to you, then I will have **sinned against my father** all the days.' So now, please let your servant remain a slave to my master instead of the lad; and let the lad go up with his brothers. For how can I go up to my father if the lad is not with me—lest I see **the evil that will find my father**?"

(Genesis 44:1–34) —my interim translation

Genesis—Chapter 45

And Joseph was not able to control himself before all those standing around him, so he cried out, "Make everyone go

out from me!" So no one was standing with him when Joseph **made himself known** to his brothers. Then he **put his voice into weeping** so that the Egyptians heard and the house of Pharaoh heard. And Joseph said to his brothers: "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?" But his brothers were not able to respond to him because they were **terrified of his face**. So Joseph said to his brothers, "Please, approach me." When they approached, he said: "I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. So now, don't be worried, and **don't be hot in your own eyes** because you sold me here, because God sent me before you to preserve life. Because this is two years the famine has been in the midst of the land, and still five years that there won't be plowing and harvesting. So God sent me before you to **seat a remnant in the Earth**, and to keep you alive for a great escape. So now, you did not send me here, but the {Living} God. And He **seated me as a father** to Pharaoh, and as master to all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. Move quickly, and go up to my father and say to him, 'This is what your son Joseph has said: "God has **seated me as master** of all Egypt. Come down to me; don't stand still. And you must dwell in the land of Goshen so that you are near me—you and your sons and your sons' sons and your flocks and your herds and all that you have. And I will provide for you there—because there are still five years of famine—lest you and your house and all who are yours, be disinherited.'" So Look! Your eyes—and the eyes of my brother Benjamin—see that my mouth is the one speaking to you. So you must tell my father about all the glory in Egypt and all that you have seen. But move quickly and bring my father down here." Then **he fell on the neck of his brother** Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. Then he kissed all his brothers and wept on them, and afterwards his brothers spoke with him. When **the voice was heard by the house of Pharaoh**, saying, "The brothers of Joseph have come," **it was good in the eyes of Pharaoh** and in the eyes of his servants. So Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers: 'Do this: Load your animals and go enter the land of Canaan. Then take your father and your houses and come to me, and I will give you the best of the land of Egypt so that you **eat the fat of the land**.' So now, you have been ordered: 'Do this. Take for yourselves wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your women, so that you can carry your father and come. But don't **let your eyes have compassion on your containers**, because the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.'" So the sons of Israel did so. And Joseph gave them wagons

according to the mouth of Pharaoh, and he gave them provisions for the way. To all of them—to each one—he gave changes of clothing, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred silver and five changes of clothing. But to his father he sent this: Ten donkeys carrying some of the best of Egypt, and ten female donkeys carrying clean grain and bread, and sustenance for his father on “The Way.” Then he sent his brothers away, and they went. And he said to them, “Don’t be distressed by **‘The Way.’**” So they went up from Egypt, and they entered the land of Canaan—to Jacob, their father. And they told him, saying, “Joseph is still alive, and he is even ruling over all the land of Egypt.” But **his heart was numb**, so he did not believe them. So they spoke all the words that Joseph had spoken to them; and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob, their father, came alive. And Israel said: “Enough! My son Joseph is still alive! I will go, and I will see him before I die!” (Genesis 45:1–28) —my interim translation

Genesis—Chapter 46

So Israel—along with all who were his—set out and came to Beersheba, and he sacrificed sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. And God spoke to Israel during visions of the night, and He said: “Jacob! Jacob!” And he said, “Here I am!” Then He said: “I am the {Living} God—the God of your father. Don’t be afraid to go down to Egypt, because I am going to establish you as a great nation there. I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will most certainly bring you up again. But Joseph will **set his hand over your eyes.**” Then Jacob arose from Beersheba; and the sons of Israel carried Jacob, their father, and their little ones and their women, in the wagons that Pharaoh had sent to carry him. And they took their livestock and their possessions that they possessed in the land of Canaan, and they came to Egypt—Jacob and all his seed with him. His sons and his sons’ sons were with him, along with his daughters and his sons’ daughters. Even all his seed he brought with him to Egypt.

(Genesis 46:1–7) —my interim translation

There are undoubtedly more Hebrew idioms in that passage than just the ones I bolded. It is often difficult to recognize an idiom unless one is specifically on the lookout for them (an idiom), and I wasn’t looking for idioms when I translated the text; I was just trying to produce a fairly literal—and readable—translation.

But then I got to (an idiom) Moses’ account of how Pharaoh “raised up the head” of both the cupbearer and the baker—in the one case idiomatically and in the other case literally. When I saw the way he put that, it became blatantly obvious to me that he was having way too much fun ridiculing the obviously dimwitted reader who doesn’t understand he is not only providing background information, he is also defining idioms—idioms whose *meaning* and *significance* will undoubtedly become important later on when the Prophets start speaking in terms of the *parabolic imagery* associated with those idioms.

To drive his point home to the reader who has insight into *the promise*, Moses even includes a brief account whose *meaning* and *significance* is impossible to understand if one does not know the Scriptures were *intentionally not written* in “the king’s English”—you know, the “Christianized,” grammatically correct language that translators tend to use when they translate the Bible. They were written in the idiomatic, colloquial, and—dare I say—sometimes bawdy language of the day in which they were written.

If you were paying attention, you should already be aware of the fact that I left out the following part of Moses’ story about the fall and rise of Joseph. I did that just so I could show you it fits right in with the rest of his account when you know one of his primary purposes is defining the *meaning* of idioms:

Genesis—Chapter 38

And at that time, Judah **went down from** his brothers and **joined up with** an Adullamite man named Hirah. When Judah saw there the daughter of a Canaanite man named Shua, he **took her and entered her**. Then she became pregnant and gave birth to a son, and he **called his name** Er. She became pregnant again and gave birth to a son, and he **called his name** Onan. She gave birth to still a {third} son, and he **called his name** Shelah! (He {Judah} was in Chezib when she gave birth to him.) Then Judah **took a woman for** Er, his firstborn. Her name was Tamar. But Er, the firstborn of Judah, was evil in the sight of His Majesty, so His Majesty put him to death. Then Judah said to Onan, “**Enter your brother’s woman** so that you **give her progeny** and **raise up a seed for your brother.**” But Onan knew that the seed would not be his, so when he **entered his brother’s woman**, he **ruined {his seed} on the ground** so as not

to **give a seed** to his brother. But what he did **was evil in the eyes of** His Majesty, so He put him to death also! Then Judah said to Tamar, his daughter-in-law, "Live as a widow in your father's house until Shelah, my son, has grown up." Because he thought, "Lest he also die like his brothers!" So Tamar went to live in the house of her father. The days passed, and the daughter of Shua (Judah's woman) died, and Judah mourned. Then he and Hirah, his friend the Adullamite, went up to Timnah to those who were shearing his sheep. When it was reported to Tamar, "Look! Your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep!" she removed her widow's clothes from her, covered herself {completely} with a veil, enshrouded herself, and sat at the entrance of two springs which are on the way to Timnah, because she saw that Shelah had grown up and she hadn't been **given to him as a woman**. When Judah saw her, he thought she was a **zonah** because she had covered her face. So he turned to her—into the way—and said: "Come on! Let me **enter you!**" because he didn't know that she was his daughter-in-law. And she said, "What will you give me to **enter me?**" So he said, "I will send a kid-goat from the flock!" But she replied, "Only if you give a pledge until you send it!" So he responded, "What pledge should I give you?" And she said "Your seal, your cord, and your staff that is in your hand!" So he gave them to her, and he **entered her**, and she became pregnant by him. Then she got up, went and removed her veil from her, and clothed herself with her widow's clothes. When Judah sent the kid-goat by the hand of his Adullamite friend to take back the pledge from the woman, he could not find her. So he asked the men of her **maqom**, saying, "Where is the holy one who was at the two springs alongside 'The Way?'" But they replied, "A holy one has not been in this {**maqom**}!" So he went back to Judah and said: "I could not find her! And more than that, the men of the **maqom** said, 'A holy one has not been in this {**maqom**}!'" Then Judah said: "Let her keep them for herself so we don't look ridiculous. Look! I've {already} sent this kid, and you couldn't find her!" About three months later it was reported to Judah: "Your daughter-in-law Tamar has **practiced the zonah ritual**. She has even gotten pregnant for those who **practice the zonah ritual!**" So Judah said, "Bring her out and let her be burned!" As she was being brought out, she sent to her father-in-law, saying, "I'm pregnant by the man to whom these belong." And she said, "Investigate whose seal, cord, and staff these are." Judah recognized them and said, "She is more innocent than I am since I

haven't given her to my son Shelah." And he didn't **know her** again. At the time that she gave birth, Look! there were twins in her womb! When she gave birth, one put out a hand. The midwife took and tied a scarlet thread on his hand saying, "This one came out first!" When his hand withdrew, Look! his brother came out! So she said, "**What a breach you've made for yourself!**" So his **name was called** Perez {Breach}. And after his brother (who had the scarlet {thread} on his hand) came out, his **name was called** Zerah.

(Genesis 38:1–30) —my interim translation

Moses' account of Joseph's fall and rise reminds me of a ridiculous little story I wrote way back in the day (whatever that idiom means). My point was to show you just how stupid it is for anyone to claim the Scriptures can only be interpreted literally. I did that by showing you how easy it is for native speakers of a language to communicate using idioms. Maybe it still has legs (an idiom):

It was obvious to everybody in the small town that the boy gave the old couple headaches. The two had banged their heads against the wall for years, constantly walking on eggshells, knowing the boy would hit the ceiling at the least provocation. They kept hoping he would eventually get his act together and stand on his own two feet. He never did. High school hadn't been his cup of tea, so his heart hadn't been in it. He had looked down his nose at homework. He found it beneath him.

But the problem wasn't just with the boy alone. Rather than stand their ground, the old couple threw up their hands and stuck their heads in the sand. They let him use the family car. Consequently, he was always out burning up the road instead of carrying his own weight. Eventually, he dropped out of school and spent his days hanging around the pool hall, always looking for some poor sucker he could fleece. Fortunately for the old couple, war broke out. When the boy signed up, they patted themselves on the back and even threw a party when he left, not so much for him as for themselves.

Boot camp was hell for the boy, but before long he thought he knew the ropes. He started going on sick call every day, trying to get a medical discharge. He wasn't pulling the wool over anyone's eyes, however; they could see right through him. And it all went in his file. After he shipped out to the front, he should have seen the writing on the wall and realized his goose was cooked, but he didn't.

He was always in the first wave to hit the beach because his commanders had no stomach for his shenanigans. Sure enough, his number came up. The poor stiff got out all right—six feet under.

After the boy bought the farm, the old lady immediately saw dollar signs. She thought she and the old man would live on easy street. But the old man had long been a pack rat, and the leopard wasn't about to change his spots. However, the old fellow kicked the bucket not long afterward, and that left the old woman with more dough than a bakery. The old man had firmly believed in term life. Consequently, from her point of view, he had kicked one big bucket full of cash her way; and she was determined to live high on the hog. It was all going to be icing on her cake. After all, she told herself, she had only put up with the miserly old codger all those years because society demanded it of her. He had long been an albatross around her neck, but she had paid her dues. Consequently, the fox was now in the hen house and ready for chicken dinner.

The town folk soon saw where the boy had gotten his lack of common sense. Rather than walking the straight and narrow, the old woman went wild. She started throwing money around like she was crazy. Maybe she was. If she wasn't to begin with, she certainly was later on. She dropped a stitch one day that caused it all to come unraveled. After that she was clearly one brick shy of a full load.

The roof caved in after she went looking for something flashy she could use to tool around town with the kids. Imagine, a woman her age! Unfortunately, the dealer saw her coming a mile away, and he sold her a lemon. It was the most beautiful thing the woman had ever seen, and she savored the aroma of it, but it was lemon through and through. It wouldn't even peel out the way she thought it should. However, that wasn't the only fly in the ointment. She often found herself without transportation because her beloved lemon was always in the shop overnight for this or that. Therefore, she sat home sipping lemonade, longing to be out painting the town.

When the old woman finally realized she had been taken to the cleaners, and her lemon wasn't going to satisfy her pent-up appetite for the best this life had to offer, her devastation was total. It left such a bitter taste in her mouth that she spent the rest of her life shuffling around muttering something about sour grapes and rotten apples.

*("Questions & Answers," **The Voice of Elijah**®, January 1993)*

I wrote that goofy story more than sixteen years ago. At the time, I was still laying a foundation (an idiom) for the things I have explained over the years since. A couple of years ago, I finally switched over to using only my own translation of the Scriptures in the things I write. I have recently begun to realize how important it is that I translate the biblical text as literally as possible so that you are able to see the idioms in the biblical text and make them a part of your own mind-set. But I have only now become aware of just how difficult a task that is. Idioms are not always easy to spot, even in one's native language, for the simple reason that we use them all the time. When an idiom becomes widely used, it is even more difficult to recognize simply because everybody "knows" what it *means*.

Less educated people undoubtedly use idioms more frequently than educated people, and poor people more frequently than the wealthy. I have absolutely nothing to back that up (an idiom), it just seems logical to me because I started out in life as poor, uneducated white trash; and I tend to use idioms all the time. I also know—from my excursion into the upper echelons of the intelligentsia a few decades ago—that the educated upper crust of society has a tendency to look down on (an idiom) the use of idioms, in public at least. So I find it very amusing that the book the Prophets wrote for the Almighty God uses idioms repeatedly just to make fun of snooty folks who, simply because they find idiomatic language beneath them (an idiom), can't "see" what is right in front of their eyes.

An idiom always has an attendant image with which it is associated; and the more one knows about that image, the more clearly and completely the idiom can speak. In the ancient Near East, a man's "house" was his family. A man's "name" was a living entity that required a "house" in which it could continue to live after the man died. A man's "seed" was his male offspring—those who would continue to "build a house," "make a name," and "raise up seed" for his "name." But none of those things hold all that much *significance* unless one knows that if the man's "name" ever lacked a "house" in which it could live, the man could never be resurrected. And in that ancient Canaanite/Hebrew mind-set lies the key to understanding the *parabolic imagery* related to "The Name" that Jesus Christ *received* when God "raised up a Seed," "built a House," and "made a Name" for Himself on Resurrection Morn. Believe it if you care to ■

Continued from front cover

the ancient Scriptures. And Aristobulus, in his first book addressed to Philometor, writes in these words: "And Plato followed the laws given to us, and had manifestly studied all that is said in them."

And before Demetrius there had been translated by another, previous to the dominion of Alexander and of the Persians, the account of the departure of our countrymen the Hebrews from Egypt, and the fame of all that happened to them, and their taking possession of the land, and the account of the whole code of laws; so that it is perfectly clear that the above-mentioned philosopher derived a great deal from this source, for he was very learned, as also Pythagoras, who transferred many things from our books to his own system of doctrines.

And Numenius, the Pythagorean philosopher, expressly writes: "For what is Plato, but Moses speaking in Attic Greek?"

This Moses was a theologian and prophet, and as some say, an interpreter of sacred laws.

His family, his deeds, and life, are related by the Scriptures themselves, which are worthy of all credit; but have nevertheless to be stated by us also as well as we can.

Clement of Alexandria, "The Stromata, or Miscellanies," Book i, Chap. xxii, in Roberts and Donaldson (Eds.), *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, (1885), Vol. 2, pp. 334–335.

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