



THE VOICE of ELIJAH

Restoring the hearts of the fathers to the children

Some Basic Truths Were Lost Early On

But whenever a dispute arises about the nativity, all who reject it as creating a presumption in favour of the reality of Christ's flesh, wilfully deny that God Himself was born, on the ground that He asked, "Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?" Let, therefore, Apelles hear what was our answer to Marcion in that little work, in which we challenged his own (favourite) gospel to the proof, even that the material circumstances of that remark (of the Lord's) should be considered.

First of all, nobody would have told Him that His mother and brethren were standing outside, if he were not certain both that He had a mother and brethren, and that they were the very persons whom he was then announcing,—who had either been known to him before, or were then and there discovered by him; although heretics have removed this passage from the gospel, because those who were admiring His doctrine said that His supposed father, Joseph the carpenter, and His mother Mary, and His brethren, and His sisters, were very well known to them.

But it was with the view of tempting Him, that they had mentioned to Him a mother and brethren which He did not possess. The Scripture says nothing of this, although it is not in other instances silent when anything was done against Him by way of temptation. "Behold," it says, "a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted Him." And in another passage: "The Pharisees also came unto Him, tempting Him." Who was to prevent its being in this place also indicated that this was done with the view of tempting Him?

I do not admit what you advance of your own apart from Scripture. Then there ought to be suggested some occasion for the temptation. What could they have thought to be in Him which required temptation? The question, to be sure, whether He had been born or not? For if this point were denied in His answer, it might come out on the announcement of a temptation.

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All correspondence
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Voice of Elijah, Inc.
P.O. Box 2257
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A Note From the Editor

As we begin another decade, I thought it might be interesting to see a few of the highlights of the one just completed. In January 2010, Larry discovered *theWord*® Bible software. Here's what he wrote about that:

Just after the first of February, while tracking down and testing every software program I could find, I came across theWord® Bible software. As soon as I started using it, I knew. It was as if the Lord suddenly said, "It's time." I had been working on my translation of the Scriptures for nearly 30 years at that point, never completely satisfied with anything I had done simply because there was no easy way to check my work. All that time I had been lamenting to myself and others, "How am I ever going to accomplish what God has called me to do?" I should have known better. God always has a plan.

At this writing, I have been using theWord® for just four and a half years. In that short time, I have been able to do a hundred times more than I was able to do over the three decades prior.

God Called; I Answered, Larry D. Harper, pp. 247-248

Although *theWord*® got the decade started, we met other milestones along the way as well. Here is a brief overview:

2010: Voice of Elijah, Inc. began shipping boxes of Free Offer booklets to distribution outlets (i.e., Prison Book Project, Soldiers' Angels, Love Packages, etc.). In May, Larry gave a radio interview about *The AntiChrist* booklet with James Lloyd of GEOmedianetwork.com. In July, the first perfect bound (not stapled!) copies of *The AntiChrist* were published.

2011: *7 Simple Steps to Salvation* and *Wanna Hear a Whopper?* were published. Voice of Elijah's Twitter and Facebook pages went live. *The Way, The Truth, The Life* was republished as a stand-alone book. *The Old Testament Gospel of Jesus Christ* project began, was recorded in sound studio, and was added to the Free Offer booklet offering in January 2012. Larry began using *Twitter@ElijahProject* to provide progress reports regarding the HSSB translation of the New Testament.

2012-2013: In December 2012, the Voice of Elijah, Inc. Board of Directors offered the CEO Candidate position to Royce Gonzalez, a Next Step participant and active Outreach Volunteer. She graciously accepted the offer in February of 2013 and began a year-long preparation for the CEO/President position. By the end of January 2013, Larry was almost finished adding Strong's numbers to his translation of the New Testament. The next step was to ensure that the Strong's numbers had been correctly assigned and that the translation was standardized. That is nearing completion in January 2020. A very long process indeed! In March, *The Old Testament Gospel of Jesus Christ* was posted on YouTube. On December 31, I served my last day as the CEO of Voice of Elijah, Inc.

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2014: January 1 was Royce's first day as CEO of Voice of Elijah, Inc. She's been at it six years now and continues to do a great job! 2014 also marked the year of the opening of the Seventh Seal: *"The Shadow."* In July, Larry completed the first pass on the New Testament. In October, *God Called; I Answered* was published.

2015: In June, programming for the *Harper's Standardized Study Bible App* began. We created and emailed a monthly online progress report to those interested in *Harper's Standardized Study Bible* translation and the HSSB App.

2016: In January, The Elijah Project offered a Seminar at Sea: Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians. June marked the beginning of the HSSB App Alpha Testers working on the HSSB App and providing input for improvements/fixes. August 17, 2016 marked 50 years since God called Larry to teach.

2017: Regarding the January 2017 article, "It Ain't No Fun Tryin' ta Stand Up in a Hurricane," I wrote this in "A Note from the Editor":

The main article in this newsletter is a wonderful gift to all True Believers who are entrenched in battle while preparing for the appearance of the Antichrist. The Voice of Elijah® is starting off the new year with additional weapons for our arsenal so that True Believers are equipped to "overcome."

In the April 2017 issue, Larry wrote:

The Lord expects every True Believer to master the Truth regarding the promise that he received when he was born again. Only then will he be able to overcome the training the "winds" instilled in him before he was born again. Mastering that Truth is a herculean task, and one that can only be accomplished through diligence and total submission to the Holy Spirit that resides within.

The Voice of Elijah®, April 2017, p. 26

Both of the above articles stood out as game changers. Larry has told us killing the "winds" is no game. So you might want to read and re-read these

two issues and get about the business of protecting the Truth you have been given. It is a life and death issue... your life and your death.

2018: HSSB App was made available for distribution on The Elijah Project website and in March the App was successfully installed in Myanmar—the first international copy! In July, Larry presented a seminar on the Book of Hebrews.

2019: In January, Larry submitted the article "Wanna Hear Another Whopper the Liar Came Up With? (I'm Certain You Won't Believe It!)," discussing the ideologies of Dispensationalism, Capitalism, and Communism (which included excerpts of The Communist Manifesto). This is a must-read article for those interested in understanding the times in which we live. In February, several Next Step participants and their families traveled to Egypt to capture pictures for *The Passover Parable Project* and *The Mind-set of Moses* seminar. In November, The Elijah Project posted a video of *The Passover Parable* booklet on YouTube.

In addition to all of the above, The Elijah Project provided bound transcripts of The Next Step materials to Next Step participants, the HSSB App for testers to evaluate, upgrades to both *The Voice of Elijah®* and The Elijah Project websites, 40 issues of *The Voice of Elijah®* newsletter, 80 issues of *The Voice of Elijah® Update*, *The Voice of Elijah®* posts on social media (several per day since 2011), Topical Index and Scripture Index files (to eventually be included in the HSSB App), and so much more. The Elijah Project's To Do List going forward is filled with many more projects (HSSB hard cover, Progressive Web App, the HSSB App's fully functional release, *The Passover Parable* video project, and the list goes on). Larry is currently putting headings into the New Testament as we prepare for the publication of *Harper's Standardized Study Bible* in print form later this year.

We ask that you join us in prayer for the accomplishment of all that the Lord wills in 2020 and beyond. It is "go" time!

In Him,

Marcia Harper

The Quickest “Way” to Get Rich Quick Is to *Inherit* a Fortune

In the January 2017 issue of *The Voice of Elijah*® newsletter, I told you the Apostle Paul makes a statement in the second chapter of 2 Corinthians that one can easily overlook if one doesn’t know what he has in mind. But I also said that if one knows what Paul is *talking about*, it becomes a stark reminder of the pitched battle in which the Lord demands each and every one of His Children not only participate but also come out triumphant. Therefore, I showed you what Paul says; and then I explained what he knows that you need to know if you intend to overcome the wiles of Satan here at the End of the Age.

April 2017

In this newsletter, I first reviewed what I had told you in the January issue. Then I explained how the renewing of the mind that Paul mentions in Romans 12:2 fits together with the things I had already explained in those issues. But in both of those issues, I included the following statement:

Most folks who call themselves “Christians” today don’t believe there is only one Truth to be found in the Hebrew Scriptures. Instead, they believe there is some sort of smorgasbord of “truths” from which one just picks and chooses whatever “truth” they find most acceptable. The Truth is, the Apostles fully understood the message of the Hebrew Scriptures and they made no bones about it. They also believed that anybody who believed something that contradicted the Truth they understood was not going to be saved. Paul states that emphatically in the first chapter of the Book of Galatians.

What Paul says in that passage should settle the issue for anyone with half a brain; but unfortunately, most “Christians” today are content to go on believing the mishmash of contradictory beliefs they have heard in the distorted remnants of the Church established by the Apostles. It has never occurred to them that the New Testament clearly reveals the leaders of the Apostolic Church believed but one Truth, and they also believed the Truth that they possessed can be found in the Hebrew Scriptures.

After stating that, I gave you a summary of the message of the Old Testament:

1. Two “Adams” are mentioned in the Creation Account. The Apostle Paul *talks about* those two “Adams” in 1 Corinthians 15:45–49. Genesis 1 describes the Resurrection of Jesus Christ in the image and likeness of God on the sixth “day” of Creation; Genesis 2 describes the creation of our forefather on the third “day.” I have already explained these things in the booklet titled *In the Image and Likeness of God* and in the October 2017 issue of this newsletter.

2. When God banned Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, He gave them the promise that they could be created in the image and likeness of God if they would only believe the promise. He also expected them to **hand down the promise** from one generation to the next as an **inheritance** that each **heir of the promise** could bequeath to the next **heir of the promise** as an **oral blessing**. The Book of Genesis is an account of how the Patriarchs did that very thing. I have already explained these things in *The Inheritance of the Believer*, Volume 1.

3. *The central purpose of the covenant God made with the sons of Israel at Mount Sinai was to unify the promise after Jacob divided it up when he blessed his sons and grandsons.* Since there was no longer just one *heir of the promise* as there had been up to that time, God used the Mosaic Covenant to create *Corporate Israel*, a corporate body that He claimed as His Firstborn Son. That corporate body functioned as a mediator to hold title to *the promise* until Jesus Christ became *Corporate Israel, the Heir of the promise*. I have also explained these things in *Not All Israel Is Israel* and *The Inheritance of the Believer, Volume 1*.

4. *Under the terms of The Law of Moses, an individual member of Corporate Israel could be "cut off from" Corporate Israel.* Various parts of that law demanded that ultimate punishment. If the sons of Israel were aware that someone had violated one of those, they were expected to execute the individual and thereby erase his name from Israel. Even if they did not do that, God would "cut him off from" *Corporate Israel*. That is, He would erase the individual's name from the census book of Israel that He maintained. For that reason God alone knew who had been "cut off from" *Corporate Israel*, and no one else had the right to say anyone was still a member of *Corporate Israel*. I have already explained these things in *Not All Israel Is Israel*.

5. *God made two covenants with the sons of Israel at Mount Sinai.* The first covenant required the perfect obedience of the corporate body and did not provide a means of atonement. If one individual sinned, every member of the corporate body became guilty. The second covenant provided a means of atonement for the individual. If an individual sinned, his sin could be atoned for through a sacrificial ritual, but the corporate body still remained guilty. I have also explained these things in *The Inheritance of the Believer, Volume 1*.

6. *Because the sons of Israel failed to adhere to the requirements of both the first and second Mosaic Covenants, the Prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel promised them God would offer a New Covenant to the individual members of Corporate Israel.* He did that through the ministry of John the Baptist. But the New Covenant that the Jews accepted at that time was just like the first Old Covenant their ancestors had accepted at Mount Sinai—

it provided no means of atonement. If a person sinned, he would immediately be "cut off from" *Corporate Israel*. So God "cut off from" *Corporate Israel* all the members of *Corporate Israel* other than Jesus Christ because they could not keep the terms of the New Covenant. I have also explained these things in *Not All Israel Is Israel*.

7. *When Jesus Christ was baptized by John and accepted the terms of the New Covenant, He became Corporate Israel, the Heir of the promise.* Therefore, when He died, He atoned for the sins of *Corporate Israel* by suffering under the curses of the Mosaic Covenant. But because of His obedience to the terms of the New Covenant, God was obligated to *fulfill the promise* and resurrect Him so that He could *inherit what was promised* to Adam and Eve—creation in the image and likeness of God. I have also explained these things in *Not All Israel Is Israel* and in the pages of *The Voice of Elijah*® newsletter and *The Voice of Elijah*® Update over the past quarter of a century.

8. *When Christ died, His death invoked the terms of the oral testament He had made prior to His death.* Under the terms of that oral testament, all anyone has to do to *inherit the promise* is believe it—and apologize to God for the sins they have committed. Those who do that will be declared not guilty by God; those who don't, won't. I have also explained these things in the pages of *The Voice of Elijah*® newsletter and *The Voice of Elijah*® Update over the past quarter of a century.

I told you that, if you intend to triumph over the enemy of your soul, you need to believe the things I outlined in the eight paragraphs above; and you also need to know why you have *chosen* to believe them. That is because the Truth they provide is a refuge in which your soul can hide whenever you face a fierce onslaught of enemy forces. Without them, you will have nothing you can use to defend against the lies that Satan propagates for the sole purpose of destroying the souls of men.

October 2017

In this newsletter, I gave yet another list of things you need to know and believe if you intend to triumph over the "winds" that are going to "blow" here at the End of the Age. I said this:

The Truth regarding the biblical account of God’s decision to create Jesus Christ—the Second Adam—in His Own image and likeness is this:

1. Genesis 1 is a summary overview of everything God has done with regard to His decision to create Jesus Christ in His Own image and likeness.
2. Genesis 2–4 explains some of the events that led up to God’s decision to create Jesus Christ in His Own image and likeness.
3. The first two verses of Genesis 5 are an introduction to Moses’ account of why God decided to create Jesus Christ in His Own image and likeness.
4. Moses’ account of why God decided to create Jesus Christ in His Own image and likeness begins in Genesis 5:3 and goes through Genesis 8.
5. Genesis 9:1–7 is a summary of God’s announcement of His intention to begin the process of creating Jesus Christ in His Own image and likeness.

January 2018

In this newsletter, I told you that you need to keep those things in mind if you want to know the Truth with regard to the message of the Scriptures. But I said you also need to know the creation of Jesus Christ in the image and likeness of God is the very focus of the Scriptures in which God has revealed His plan and purpose for the salvation of mankind. His *fulfillment* of that plan began with the Resurrection of “The Man,” Jesus Christ, in His Own image and likeness; and it will conclude with the Resurrection of all “male and female” Believers in that same image and likeness at the End of the Age. That is the Truth regarding the *parabolic image* of the “new birth” by which one becomes a Child of God. But only those who believe the Truth here at the End of the Age will participate in that event. Everyone else will be discarded.

I went back to the beginning of the biblical account of God’s plan of salvation and recounted the things you need to know and believe if you intend to be one of those who participate in the Resurrection of the Righteous at the End of the Age. I told you the story begins immediately after Adam and Eve admitted their

sin to God. At that time, He gave them *the promise* that they could be created in His image and likeness if they would merely believe *the promise* and *hand it down* as an *inheritance* so that others would have opportunity to believe it as well. I also reviewed the things I explained in *The Inheritance of the Believer, Volume 1*. I told you the genealogies in Genesis 5–11 are an account of how Abraham came to be *the heir of the promise*, and the remainder of the Book of Genesis tells us how Abraham *handed down the promise* to his son Isaac, and Isaac *handed down the promise* to his son Jacob.

April 2018

In this newsletter, I explained something that erudite “scholars” have long debated: What is the *significance* of the Old Testament appellation “all Israel”? That is, what does it *mean*? Why did the Prophets use it to refer to the Northern Kingdom after the division of the kingdom following the death of Solomon? Why do some translations infer the Apostle Paul uses it in Romans 9:6?

I told you that if you have read *Not All Israel Is Israel*, you should already know what Paul *means* by what he says in that passage. He knows *the promise* was *handed down* from one *heir of the promise* to the next until it came into the possession of Jacob. He also knows “all Israel” is how the Prophets referred to *Corporate Israel*. That is, they refer to the sons of Israel as if they were all one person. A little later on in the Book of Romans, Paul makes it clear he knows the *significance* of the phrase “all Israel”; but I told you that those with “eyes that cannot see and ears that cannot hear” won’t have a clue as to what he *meant* by what he said because the Truth regarding their situation is exactly as Paul describes it in 2 Corinthians 4:2–6.

I gave you a paraphrase of what Paul says in Romans 11:1–32 to show you a bit of his mind-set regarding Jesus Christ as “The Remnant” of *Corporate Israel* Who continued to hold title to *the promise* after all the other Jews were “cut off from” *Corporate Israel*. I told you Paul begins *talking about* the fact that the Jews have been “cut off from” *Corporate Israel*, but he insists that does not *mean* God has abandoned His intention to *fulfill the promise*. It just *means* the Jews who rejected the Truth are no longer members of *Corporate Israel*, *the Heir of the promise* Who has already *inherited what was promised*. He points back to the fact that *the promise* was *handed down* by Abraham to Isaac, and Isaac to

Jacob, in accordance with God's choice. In both cases, God rejected a potential *heir*—Ishmael and Esau—who did not *inherit the promise*. His point is, the same thing has happened to the Jews.

I explained the essence of what Paul says is, God has the right to choose who does and does not have access to *the promise*. But he mentions what Hosea says about the Gentiles becoming the People of God because Hosea prophesied at the time when God "cut off" the ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom "from" Corporate Israel and never restored them. Paul's point is, that same "cutting off" process resulted in Jesus remaining as "The Remnant" of Corporate Israel; and God is now "building a house" on the very "Stone" that the Jewish leaders ignorantly thought they were "cutting off from" Israel.

I told you that, in Romans 10, Paul expresses his desire that the Jews who have been "cut off from" Corporate Israel would believe that Jesus Christ is *the Heir of the promise* and accept God's declaration of not guilty by believing God has *fulfilled the promise* by raising Christ from the dead. Unfortunately, the Jews have refused to do that; so God turned to the Gentiles and is now "taking" a People for Himself and "building a house" out of those who respond to the Truth.

I told you the biblical account regarding "the fullness of the Gentiles" begins in Genesis 48, where Jacob, *the heir of the promise*, was on his death bed, ready to *hand down the promise* to the next *heir of the promise*. Moses tells us that Jacob passed over his eldest sons and gave his grandson Ephraim the honor of "carrying *The Name*" of the three men who had most recently been *the heir of the promise* (Gen. 48:1–22).

I explained that Genesis 48 is a pivotal point in the biblical history of *the promise*, and it provides critical insight into why God granted Gentiles the opportunity to be "grafted in" to Corporate Israel. But I also said to understand the biblical history pertaining to the salvation of the Gentiles, one needs to know a few crucial facts about the ancient Hebrew mind-set regarding "The Names" of the Patriarchs that Jacob gave Ephraim the honor of "carrying." So I gave you this list:

1. "The Name" of a man was considered to be an integral part of the man, just as real a part as his body, soul, and spirit. It reflected the essence of who he was. That is why God changed "The Name" of Abram to Abraham and "The Name" of Jacob to Israel.

2. The ancients believed that, when a man died, he had no hope of resurrection if his name did not have a "house" (a son) in which it could continue living. That is the unstated point of the story about Tamar and Judah in Genesis 38 and the story about Ruth and Boaz in the Book of Ruth, as well as the law regarding levirate marriage in Deuteronomy 25:5–10.

3. The son who had the honor of "carrying The Name" of his forefathers was the "carrier." Since the resurrection and eternal life of the forefathers depended on someone "carrying" their "Name," having a son who could "carry" it after his death was essential.

I told you the fact that Jacob gave Ephraim the right to "carry *The Names*" of the Patriarchs became extremely significant in 722 B.C., when the ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom were "cut off from" Corporate Israel at the time of the Assyrian Captivity. The tribe of Ephraim was one of those ten tribes; and Hosea plainly tells us the "The Names" of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were scattered throughout the Gentiles when Ephraim got himself all mixed up with them (Hos. 7:8).

I said that, when Paul used the phrase "the fullness of the Gentiles" in Romans 11:25, he is pointing back to what Jacob said to Joseph; but I also told you he uses the phrase "all Israel" in the very next verse because he knows it *means* "Corporate Israel." So I went on to explain how God used the covenant ratified at Mount Sinai to mold the sons of Israel into Corporate Israel, the Firstborn Son of God that Jesus Christ became when He was baptized by John.

July 2018

In this newsletter, I told you the book *Not All Israel Is Israel* provides the rock-solid foundation on which I base nearly everything else I teach. It explains how Jesus Christ became Corporate Israel via a process in which the Living Word of God "cut off" everyone else "from" Corporate Israel. I explained the significance of the Hebrew idiom "cut off from" and gave you a list of activities (*Not All Israel Is Israel*, pp. 107–110) for which the individual members of Corporate Israel could lose their position in that corporate body.

I told you that one of the most important take-aways you can gain from *Not All Israel Is Israel* is an accurate understanding of Romans 11, where the

Apostle Paul is *talking about* the fact that Jesus Christ is now *Corporate Israel*. Everyone else, both Jew and Gentile, must be “grafted back in” to the same *corporate* body from which the Jews were all “cut off.” Paul insists God has not abandoned His People because Jesus Christ still remains as a *Remnant* of that august body; but since the unrepentant Jews have lost their position in it, they must be “grafted in” again. What he says is impossible to understand if you don’t know Jesus Christ became *Corporate Israel* when all the other Jews were “cut off from” *Corporate Israel* simply because he uses the name *Israel* to refer to both Jesus Christ as *Corporate Israel* and the Jews who were members of that *corporate* body before they were “cut off from” it.

I told you a second takeaway from *Not All Israel Is Israel* that is just as important as the first is an accurate understanding of how Romans 11 relates to the Assyrian Captivity of the ten tribes of the sons of Israel in the Northern Kingdom in 722 B.C. I said if one does not understand the *significance* of those ten tribes becoming Gentile, the *meaning* and *significance* of what Paul explains in Ephesians 2:1–22 will elude him.

April 2019

In this newsletter, I reminded you again:

God made two covenants with the sons of Israel at Mount Sinai. The first covenant required the perfect obedience of the corporate body and did not provide a means of atonement. If one individual sinned, every member of the corporate body became guilty. The second covenant provided a means of atonement for the individual. If an individual sinned, his sin could be atoned for through a sacrificial ritual, but the corporate body still remained guilty. I have also explained these things in The Inheritance of the Believer, Volume 1.

Then I showed you some of the things that I explain in *The Inheritance of the Believer, Volume 1*. I told you the purpose of the Mosaic Covenant was to unify *the promise*, make *Corporate Israel the Heir of the promise*, and establish the terms under which God would *fulfill the promise*. I reminded you that *the inheritance of what was promised* was conditioned on the collective obedience of *Corporate Israel*.

Then I showed you how God made Moses *the heir of the promise* by “cutting off” everyone else when the people sinned at Mt. Sinai and how He then made a second covenant with Moses, a covenant in which the people were viewed as members of Moses, a covenant that allowed Moses to *hand the promise down* to the people once again by making them *Corporate Israel* and blessing them shortly before he died. I also told you to compare *the blessing* of Moses—who was *the heir of the promise* in his day—and *the blessing* of Jacob—who was *the heir of the promise* in his day.

My point in showing you both *the blessing* of Moses and *the blessing* of Jacob was to make the point that both served the same function. In both cases, *the heir of the promise* was *handing down the promise* to the next *heir(s) of the promise*. I told you the difference is, Jacob divided up *the promise* and *handed down* various parts of *the promise* to his sons. Moses *handed down the promise* to the tribes of *Corporate Israel*, *the heir of the promise*. But he did so only after the people ratified yet a third covenant, one in which they became members of the *Corporate* entity rather than members of Moses.

July 2019

In this newsletter, I repeated the sixth item on my summary of the Old Testament message that I gave you in the April 2017 issue:

6. Because the sons of Israel failed to adhere to the requirements of both the first and second Mosaic Covenants, the Prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel promised them God would offer a New Covenant to the individual members of Corporate Israel. He did that through the ministry of John the Baptist. But the New Covenant that the Jews accepted at that time was just like the first Old Covenant their ancestors had accepted at Mount Sinai—it provided no means of atonement. If a person sinned, he would immediately be “cut off from” Corporate Israel. So God “cut off from” Corporate Israel all the members of Corporate Israel other than Jesus Christ because they could not keep the terms of the New Covenant. I have also explained these things in Not All Israel Is Israel.

Then I reiterated the first thing that is absolutely essential to an accurate understanding of the things that Moses wrote with regard to God’s legal agreement

with the sons of Israel: God signed on to three "covenants" (legal agreements) with the sons of Israel:

1. The first legal agreement that God offered at Mt. Sinai is described in Exodus 21:1–31:18. The terms of that legal agreement made all the sons of Israel one person—*Corporate Israel*. That one Person held title to every part of *the promise* that God *handed down* to Adam and Eve when He banned them from the Garden of Eden. But God did not provide any means of atonement under the terms of that agreement; if one member of Israel sinned, every member of Israel was guilty of his sin. Therefore, when the sons of Israel broke the legal agreement by worshiping the golden calf that Aaron made, God rejected the entire group—except Moses.

2. The second legal agreement that God offered at Mt. Sinai is described in Exodus 32:1–40:38. When Moses begged God to spare the sons of Israel and not destroy them, the Lord agreed to ratify a second legal agreement with the sons of Israel. But He did not make the second legal agreement directly with the sons of Israel; He made it with Moses, and He made Moses the sole member of *Corporate Israel*, with the sons of Israel "grafted in" to *Corporate Israel* as members of Moses. That is, Moses was in much the same position as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had been when they were *the heir of the promise*. The only difference was, *Corporate Israel* had already been established as *the heir of the promise* under the terms of the first legal agreement. Therefore, Moses became the sole member of that *Corporate* body.

Under the terms of the second legal agreement, God also allowed atonement for sin, so that although *Corporate Israel* was still held guilty for the sin of each individual member, the individual members could retain their position in the *Corporate* body by following the sacrificial rituals that Moses established.

3. The third legal agreement that God offered the sons of Israel is described in Deuteronomy 27:1–32:52. Shortly before Moses died, the Lord laid out the terms under which Moses, as the sole member of *Corporate Israel*, would *hand down the promise* to the sons of Israel so that they *individually* became members of *Corporate Israel* rather than members of Moses. Under the terms of that legal agreement, the most significant

change was to the priesthood: The entire tribe of Levi replaced the sons of Aaron as priests, and they were given the responsibility of *handing down The Teaching of Moses* from one generation to the next.

I told you that you also need to understand the *significance* of several passages of Scripture before you can read and understand what the Prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel said about the New Covenant. I said the basic takeaways from Leviticus 26—the first passage essential to your accurate understanding of the message of the Scriptures—are fairly easy to understand. Then I gave you my translation of the chapter and pointed out a few things one should make note of in the text:

1. Every last statement in the passage is addressed to the sons of Israel as individuals. I have indicated that by translating every plural form of the second person personal pronoun with a lower-case "you" and bolding every occurrence of it. If the statements in the passage were addressed to Corporate Israel, I would have translated the pronoun you with an initial cap—"You"—to indicate the statements are addressed to Corporate Israel, instead of the sons of Israel as many individuals.

2. The promise stated in verses 11 and 12 is clearly conditioned on the people fulfilling the conditions on which the promise is based. You need to keep that in mind simply because the text of the Scriptures make it abundantly clear that did not happen at any time during the Old Testament history of the sons of Israel. You also need to keep in mind the fact that the Tabernacle was already in the midst of the sons of Israel at that time. The point being, the promise stated in verse 11 is not talking about God dwelling in the Tabernacle among the sons of Israel at that time; it is, instead, speaking in terms of a time when the individual members of Corporate Israel would finally get their act together and do what God required.

3. The promise stated in verses 44 and 45 explains what God intends to do after the sons of Israel have violated the terms of the legal agreement they accepted at Mount Sinai, thereby making that legal agreement null and void. At that time, God says He is going to go back to the terms He stipulated under the first legal agreement He offered the sons of Israel when He brought them out of Egypt. Make note of what I just told you; it is extremely important. That is because God did not offer any provision for

atonement under the terms stipulated in the **first** legal agreement.

Then I emphasized the two *promises* God made the sons of Israel through Moses in Leviticus 26:

¹¹“[Then I will put] [My Residence] [in *your* Midst], [and My Soul] [will [not] detest] [*you*]. ¹²[And I will move about] [in *your* Midst], [and I will be] [*your*] [God], [and *you*] [will be] [My] [People].”
(Leviticus 26:11–12) —my interim translation

⁴⁴“[But by all means] [even after] [This], [when they are] [in {the} Land] [of their Enemies], [I will [not] reject them]; [and I will [not] detest them] [so as to finish them off]—[so as to make [My Legal Agreement] [with them] null and void]—[because] [I] {am} [His Majesty] [their God]. ⁴⁵[But I will remember] [for them] [{the} Legal Agreement] [{with} The First Ones]—[those] [that] [I brought out] [of {the} Land] [of Egypt] [in the sight of] [The Gentiles] [to become] [their] [God]. [I] {am} [His Majesty].”
(Leviticus 26:44–45) —my interim translation

Then I pointed out the fact that the first of those two *promises* is conditioned on the individual members of Moses (the only member of Corporate Israel at the time) adhering to all of the terms stipulated in the legal agreement; the second *promise* is completely unconditional—God is going to do it no matter what.

After I explained those things, I told you that you need to know what God said to the sons of Israel when the time came for Moses to *hand down the promise* before he died. I reminded you he did that by means of *the blessing* recorded in Deuteronomy 33, and I gave you my interim translation of what Moses said.

I told you that if you understand the *significance* of that *blessing*, you should be able to see the bigger “picture” within which it occurs. That is, God made Moses *the heir of the promise*—the sole member of Corporate Israel—after He “cut off” all the other members of Corporate Israel after they sinned at Mount Sinai. Then He “grafted” them “back in” by making them members of Moses’ “house.” Since *the promise* would be lost if Moses did not *hand it down* to the next *heir of the promise* before he died, Moses did exactly what was required; he *blessed* Corporate Israel and made Him *the Heir of the promise*. I then explained how, in

Deuteronomy 27:1–31:30, all the sons of Israel became members of Corporate Israel instead of just members of Moses’ “house.”

I told you the takeaways from Deuteronomy 27 are just as easy to understand as those from Leviticus 26, provided you are willing to accept them:

1. The majority of the occurrences of the second person personal pronoun in that passage are singular—“You”—rather than plural—“you.” When Moses uses the plural form, he is always addressing the people as individuals; when he uses the singular form, he is addressing them as a single individual—Corporate Israel.

2. The point of the passage, which is to emphasize the responsibility of the individual as it pertains to the Corporate body, is clearly stated in verse 26:

“[Whoever] [does [not] confirm] [{the} Words of] [This] [Teaching] [by acting in accordance] [with them] [is irrevocably cursed!]" [And [all] [The People] must say], [Without doubt!]"”
(Deuteronomy 27:26) —my interim translation

3. The essence of the passage is summed up in verses 9 and 10, where Moses and the Levites tell the sons of Israel the obligation they have taken on by becoming members of Corporate Israel.

I told you the emphasis on the obligation of the Corporate body of “all Israel” continues on in the next chapter, Deuteronomy 28. So with very few exceptions, the second person personal pronouns are all singular—to indicate that the obligation for adherence to the terms of the legal agreement falls on the Corporate body.

I said that the Truth concerning Corporate Israel should be fairly obvious if one just stops to consider the implications of what is stated in verses 54–57 and verses 62–63. In those two passages, individual members of Corporate Israel are depicted as members of a Corporate body that Moses addresses as a single Person. I also told you that, knowing Moses addresses the People as separate individuals should make it obvious that God had no confidence the People would ever respond to Him with unity during their forty years in the wilderness.

I said the Truth is, when God spoke through Moses and Aaron after the erection and consecration of the Tabernacle, He was already planning to move on

from the second legal agreement to yet a third legal agreement—the one in Deuteronomy. But the sad fact is, He was already planning to move on from this third legal agreement to a fourth legal agreement. That was because He already knew the People were not going to adhere to the terms of this third legal agreement either.

I told you the essence of the legal agreement the sons of Israel accepted that day is laid out in Deuteronomy 27–28; and then I showed you Deuteronomy 29:14–15, which indicates the legal agreement would continue on from one generation to the next so as to include all the descendants of those who accepted the legal agreement the Lord offered at that time. Then I showed you Deuteronomy 30, where Moses switches from speaking generally regarding what the future holds for the sons of Israel and begins to speak specifically concerning the future of *Corporate Israel*. That is, he begins to speak *prophetically*.

I said Moses consistently uses the singular form of the second person personal pronoun in Deuteronomy 30, because he is speaking in regard to the future of *Corporate Israel*. But he is describing what will happen after Jesus Christ becomes *Corporate Israel* and *Corporate Israel* finally does what God requires. I said that is why Paul quotes Deuteronomy 30:11–14 in Romans 10:6–8. Then I told you Moses goes on in Deuteronomy 31 to describe the *parabolic pantomime* God orchestrated in which Moses, as *the heir of the promise*, had to die so that those he had previously *blessed* could *parabolically inherit what was promised*.

I next showed you how God changed the terms of the Old Covenant each time He offered the sons of Israel a new covenant:

1. First Old Covenant:

- a. Creates *Corporate Israel*.
- b. *Corporate Israel* is *the heir of the promise*.
- c. Individuals are members of *Corporate Israel*.
- d. No atonement is provided for anyone.
- e. If one sins, all are guilty.
- f. Aaron and his sons are the Priests.
- g. God will "reside" in the midst of His "People."
- h. Agreement is null and void at God's discretion.

2. Second Old Covenant:

- a. *Corporate Israel* is retained.
- b. Moses is the only member of *Corporate Israel*.
- c. Moses is *the heir of the promise*.

- d. Everyone else is a member of Moses' "house."
- e. Atonement is provided for individuals.
- f. No atonement is provided for *Corporate Israel*.
- g. If one sins, all are guilty.
- h. Aaron and his sons are the Priests.
- i. God will "walk" in the midst of His "People."
- j. Agreement is null and void at God's discretion.

3. Third Old Covenant:

- a. *Corporate Israel* is retained.
- b. *Corporate Israel* is *the heir of the promise*.
- c. Individuals are members of *Corporate Israel*.
- d. Atonement is provided for individuals.
- e. No atonement is provided for *Corporate Israel*.
- f. If one sins, all are guilty.
- g. The Levites are the Priests.
- h. God's desire is to dwell in their midst.
- i. Agreement is null and void at God's discretion.

I told you those are the basic differences between the three "covenants" God made with the sons of Israel, but I also told you that if you intend to gain insight into God's reason for ratifying those three legal agreements with the sons of Israel, you would do well to look at what He retained in each one, rather than focusing on the differences. I pointed out the following facts:

1. *God continued to retain Corporate Israel after He used the first legal agreement to create that corporation and make it the heir of the promise.*

2. *God never provided any means of atonement for Corporate Israel.*

3. *The foundational motive driving God to continue dealing with a recalcitrant bunch of imbeciles was His desire to dwell in the midst of His Own People. That is, He desired to have Children—a "House"—that He could call His Own.*

Then I told you that if you want to understand the message of the Scriptures, you have to start at the beginning and follow the story through the Scriptures, hopping from one passage to the next, wherever you find one text quoted in another. I said the Truth will escape the notice of those who have not read and understood the things I have already explained with regard to Genesis 1:26–27. I also told you the Truth is,

those two verses are describing what happened when Christ was resurrected—that is, when He was transformed into the image and likeness of God Himself.

I reminded you that, when God booted Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden, He gave them *the promise* that anyone could be made in the image and likeness of God if they believed and held on to *the promise* until they died. That is, He *promised* them they could be resurrected as His “Children,” full-fledged members of His “House,” His “People.” And I told you that if you start reading in Genesis 5 and continue reading from there all the way through Genesis 50, you can find every name on the long list of men who were, at one time or another, *the heir of the promise*.

I said God used the three “covenants” that He ratified with the sons of Israel to make sure *Corporate* Israel became *the Heir of the promise* Who had responsibility for *handing the promise down* to the next *heir of the promise*. That’s where the “New Covenant” fits into His plan regarding *the fulfillment of the promise* He made to Adam and Eve. It provided the mechanism whereby God could not only *hand the promise down* to the next generation, but also ensure there would never again be any need for a brainless bunch of deadheads to get their act together and do what God required.

Then I showed you Exodus 6:2–8, where God declares He intends to “take” the sons of Israel to be His “People.” I said God’s plan has always been to “reside” “in the midst of” His “People.” And I showed you that is the point He made in Exodus 25:8–9 and Exodus 29:45, when He told Moses to build a Tabernacle just like the one he saw on Mount Sinai. But I also pointed out Exodus 33:1–3, where He changed His plans a bit after the sons of Israel sinned.

I told you the change in God’s plans is clearly reflected in Leviticus 26:11–12, since *the promise* in that passage is clearly contingent on every *individual* son of Israel doing what is required under the terms of the second legal agreement before God would be obligated to *fulfill the promise*. Since some folks prefer to believe otherwise, I merely point out again the fact that the Tabernacle was already “in the midst” of the sons of Israel at that time, so the text has got to be speaking of a time yet to come. The Truth is, that time has already come and gone; but in the wisdom of God, it continues on for the fortunate few who have experienced the phenomenal effects of the new birth that God *promised* through Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

Those two Prophets make it clear that you can’t come to God, asking for forgiveness, and just “work it up.” By that I *mean* the new birth is not attained by *intellectually* accepting “the Truth” of the Gospel (whatever that *means*). It is only gained when your apology for sinning against the Lord is both honest and sincere. If it isn’t, God won’t accept it; and you won’t *receive* a new “heart” and a new “spirit” so that you can be mentally transformed into His Child. Jeremiah and Ezekiel make that point in the New Covenant passages I showed you, all of which are easily identified by their paraphrase of *the promise* recorded in Leviticus 26:11–12.

I told you, I realize I am way ahead of my explanation in more ways than one. First of all, I am a Gentile; so how could I ever lay claim to a *promise* that was made to the sons of Israel? But I also told you I would cut that Gordian knot in the next issue of this newsletter. I said it is enough for now that you know why God changed the terms of the legal agreement He had made with *Corporate* Israel by offering its terms to every *individual* member of that *Corporate* body. I said your understanding the Truth depends on your knowing the *significance* of Ezekiel 18:1–4.

I told you Ezekiel explains what God had in mind—*individual* responsibility for sin. But I also said some dim light might claim Ezekiel was referring to what was already the case; that is, that every *individual* had to offer sacrifices for his own atonement. But that is not what the passage is *talking about*. The people were facing deportation to Babylon, and the Prophets were telling them God was punishing *Corporate* Israel for the sins of prior generations. In response, the people were using a nifty little saying to blame God for their sorry predicament, telling the Prophets it was not right that they were expected to suffer for the sins of their fathers. So guess what? Jeremiah and Ezekiel responded by telling them it would not be that way under the terms of the New Covenant. In Jeremiah 31:29–34, the Prophet explains the case clearly; and the Apostle Paul (the author of the Book of Hebrews) quoted that passage in Hebrews 8:6–13 to make the claim that Jesus *fulfilled the promise* Jeremiah made.

October 2019

In this newsletter, I repeated the seventh item on the list I gave you in the April 2017 newsletter:

7. When Jesus Christ was baptized by John and accepted the terms of the New Covenant, He became Corporate Israel, the Heir of the promise. Therefore, when He died, He atoned for the sins of Corporate Israel by suffering under the curses of the Mosaic Covenant. But because of His obedience to the terms of the New Covenant, God was obligated to **fulfill the promise** and resurrect Him so that He could **inherit what was promised** to Adam and Eve—creation in the image and likeness of God. I have also explained these things in *Not All Israel Is Israel* and in the pages of **The Voice of Elijah®** newsletter and **The Voice of Elijah® Update** over the past quarter of a century.

I told you Satan has made a concerted effort to represent what I teach as “replacement theology.” The Truth is, I have never, and will never, claim the Church somehow **replaced** Corporate Israel as the covenant People of God. That is not what happened. After Jeremiah and Ezekiel told Corporate Israel that God planned to make a New Covenant with the *individual* members of Corporate Israel, Corporate Israel continued on as it had previously; but Jesus Christ **became** Corporate Israel when John the Baptist offered the *individual* members of Corporate Israel a New Covenant relationship to God and they were “cut off from” Corporate Israel. But to understand how that happened, you need to be aware of the things I explained in *Not All Israel Is Israel*. I summarized those things this way:

4. Under the terms of The Law of Moses, an individual member of Corporate Israel could be “cut off from” Corporate Israel. Various parts of that law demanded that ultimate punishment. If the sons of Israel were aware that someone had violated one of those, they were expected to execute the individual and thereby erase his name from Israel. Even if they did not do that, God would “cut him off from” Corporate Israel. That is, He would erase the individual’s name from the census book of Israel that He maintained. For that reason God alone knew who had been “cut off from” Corporate Israel, and no one else had the right to say anyone was still a member of Corporate Israel. I have already explained these things in *Not All Israel Is Israel*.

I explained that, the Truth is, Jesus Christ did not replace Corporate Israel, the Jews lost their position in Corporate Israel when God “cut” them “off from”

Corporate Israel just as John the Baptist told them He was already in the process of doing (Matt. 3:1–12)—and just as I explained in *Not All Israel Is Israel*.

I told you the very essence of John’s ministry is summed up in Matthew 3:10, where he *parabolically* depicts the *individual* members of Corporate Israel as “trees.” I sarcastically stated that, if you were not aware that the Prophets and Apostles repeatedly use the *parabolic image* of a “tree” to depict a person, you obviously haven’t paid all that much attention to what they say. I also told you Matthew 7:15–27 is a good example of how Jesus used that *parabolic image* to weave the *parabolic statements* of the Prophets into the parables He told. In it, He not only *parabolically* depicts men as “trees,” He also *parabolically* depicts Himself and Satan as two “houses” that will face the horror of events that are yet to come in our day.

I told you Jesus is mocking the fools among us who have not a clue as to how He *became* not only “The House” of Judah but also “The House” of Israel, when all the other Jews were “cut off from” those two “Houses.” But His ridicule of such fools fairly drips with sarcasm when He *parabolically* depicts Himself as “the Vine” that is Corporate Israel in John 15:1–7.

I warned you that if you are not familiar with what the Prophets tell us about the Messiah Who will become Corporate Israel, what Jesus says in John 15:1–7 will elude you; so I showed you Isaiah 5:1–30 to point it out for you. I also told you the *parabolic image* in which Corporate Israel is depicted as a “vineyard” forms the basis for the parables recorded in Matthew 21:33–46, Mark 12:1–12, and Luke 20:9–20. I said the part about God taking “the vineyard” away from the Jewish leaders and “giving” it to others should convince any rational person that something is going on that they don’t understand, but it won’t.

I told you the Truth is, anyone with a lick of common sense should be able to “see” that God changed things up a bit when He showed up here in this hell-hole in which we live. But I warned you He did not plan to let Corporate Israel off easy; He fully intended to make Him pay—and pay dearly. I said that is exactly what He did when Jesus Christ—Corporate Israel—hung on the cross, suffering in sheer agony. But I showed you that, in Jeremiah 5:1–14, the Prophet Jeremiah tells us God imposed the curses of the Old Covenant on Corporate Israel because no one in Corporate Israel even wanted to know the Truth.

I said that should be a warning to those who have no interest in knowing the Truth regarding the things God has done, or even the things He is planning to do. Then I pointed out that, if you were watching, you saw that Jeremiah used the term *bunch stems*. I said a bunch stem is the stem on a grape vine that produces grapes. I told you Jeremiah is *parabolically* depicting *Corporate Israel* as a "vine" "from" which God is going to "cut off" those who have been a part of that "vine."

I said Ezekiel uses the same *parabolic imagery* in Ezekiel 15:1–8. And I told you a couple of chapters later, in Ezekiel 17:1–24, he presents a "riddle" that can be a bit difficult to understand if one does not know the things I have written over the years in regard to *Corporate Israel* and also have insight into the fact that the Prophets depict men as both "trees" and "vines." The Prophet gives you all of the clues you need to understand what he says, but you have to pay close attention to detail if you really want to understand the point of the "riddle."

I told you my point in showing you all those things was to make sure you understood the Church did not "replace" *Corporate Israel*. Instead, the Jews in the time of Christ were "cut off from" *Corporate Israel* through the ministry of John the Baptist until only One Member of *Corporate Israel* remained. He thereby became *Corporate Israel* in and of Himself.

I told you the only good news in that message is, God "cut off" all the other Jews "from" *Corporate Israel* before He made Him endure the agony of death on a cross and then sent Him to Hell to endure all the curses of the Old Covenant in order to atone for the sins of all the other members of *Corporate Israel*, both past and present. I also said the Jews in the time of Christ were given the opportunity to be "grafted back in" to *Corporate Israel* just as the Apostle Paul tells us in Romans 11. I pointed out the fact that he plainly states the case in regard to that reality when he says the Jews have been "cut off" and have to be "grafted in" to the "Tree" that *Corporate Israel*—Jesus Christ—is before they can participate in God's plan for that *Corporate Body*.

I said anyone who has not been totally blinded by the lies of Satan should be able to understand that, when Paul uses the verbs translated "broken off" and "cut off" in Romans 11, he is using the Hebrew idiom "cut off from" to refer to the fact that God had "cut off" all the Jews save One "from" *Corporate Israel*, leaving Jesus as "The Remnant" of the sons of Israel.

Unfortunately, the Truth regarding that is just as Jesus stated in John 12:20–50.

The *parabolic image* in which Christ is "The Light" of the *Living Word* of God comes directly out of the *Passover Parable*. It depicts the Truth that God stated in Scriptures as a "Light" that comes on when someone believes it. Then I said, to those who read the things I have written and *choose* not to believe them, I say the same thing that Jesus said in Matthew 15:12–14 about those who *chose* not to believe the Truth in His day. I told you the Apostle Paul used the same *parabolic imagery* to say the same thing in 2 Corinthians 4:1–6. I told you the point is, there are some who can "see" the Truth in what I teach, but others—the vast majority—do not have the ability to "see" because they have not been "enlightened," as John says in John 1:9–13.

Those are a few of the things I have already explained; now I am going to tell you even more things you need to know if you intend to avoid the delusion of the Antichrist.

Did Jesus Leave a Will?

As the eighth and final item on my summary of the Old Testament message I gave you in the April 2017 newsletter, I said the following:

8. When Christ died, His death invoked the terms of the oral testament He had made prior to His death. Under the terms of that *oral testament*, all anyone has to do to *inherit the promise* is believe it—and apologize to God for the sins they have committed. Those who do that will be declared not guilty by God; those who don't, won't. I have also explained these things in the pages of *The Voice of Elijah*® newsletter and *The Voice of Elijah*® Update over the past quarter of a century.

I have already written the most succinct explanation of the things you need to know about the oral will that Jesus made in an article I wrote for the July 1991 issue of this newsletter. Therefore, I am going to have it reprinted here just for the record:

One basic principle governs the outcome of any scientific or legal inquiry: You'll never get the Truth until you ask the right question. But an old adage regarding the questioning of witnesses sometimes also applies: Never ask a question if you don't already know the answer. Having said

that, I ask just one simple question: Did Jesus leave a will? That may seem like a rather ludicrous question to many. After all, everyone knows that Jesus had nothing for anyone to inherit. He said as much Himself:

*"Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."
(Matthew 8:20)*

Greek Testaments

But a hasty answer to an unusual question is not necessarily the correct one. My reason for asking the question in the first place is a passage in the Book of Hebrews. The author of that unique book answers our question with a resounding: Yes! Jesus did leave a will. Look at what he has to say:

*But Messiah, having arrived as High Priest of the coming good things, by means of the greater and more complete tent, not made with hands (that is, not of this creation), entered once for all into the Holy place (not by means of the blood of goats and calves, but by means of His Own blood), obtaining eternal redemption. Because, if the blood of goats, bulls and ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled purify with regard to purity of the flesh, how much more will the blood of the Messiah, Who (by means of the Holy Spirit) offered Himself unblemished to God, cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the Living God. Because of this, **He is mediator of a new testament**, so that (a death having taken place for the ransom of those who transgressed against the first testament) **those who have been invited might receive the eternal inheritance**. Because where there is a testament, the death of the testator must be endured! Because only a testament of the dead is valid. It has no meaning whatsoever while the testator lives.*

(Hebrews 9:11-17) —my translation

The author of the Book of Hebrews has given us here but a brief glimpse into one of the key links between the message of the Old Testament and that of the New. He passed over it quickly, assuming that his readers were fully aware of this particular part of The Teaching of the Apostles.

Knowledge of the Old Testament message concerning The Inheritance of the Believer was considered by the Early Church to be such a fundamental part of The Teaching that it went without saying. Nowhere in the New Testament will one find all the necessary information concerning this essential part of The Teaching of the Early Church. For that, you must go back to the Book of Genesis and trace the message all the way through the Scriptures. (See Not All Israel Is Israel.)

*If you compare my translation of Hebrews 9:15-17 with other translations, you will find that all the other translations treat the Greek word **diatheke**—which can mean either "covenant" or "testament"—differently. The King James Version translates the Greek term as I have, always using the English term testament. The New American Standard, on the other hand, always translates the term as "covenant." The Revised Standard Version does a flip-flop, translating it "covenant" up to the point where the text mentions the "testator." But when it becomes obvious that **diatheke** refers to a "testament," the RSV then opts for the more common English term will.*

*The confusion of the translators concerning exactly what the writer of the Book of Hebrews intended by his use of the term **diatheke** is understandable. Their confusion stems from the fact that God in His wisdom knew beforehand the unique circumstances of the "fulness of time" into which our Savior would come. Consequently, He had, nearly two thousand years previously, begun the process of salvaging a remnant from this abominable world by "cutting a covenant" with the Hebrew patriarch, Abram.*

Even then, God knew full well that when the Greeks translated the Hebrew Scriptures into their own language, the translators would choose to translate the Hebrew term for "covenant" with a Greek term that had no meaning other than "testament." Why they did so has puzzled scholars for centuries. The answer to the conundrum is simple, yet adds nothing to its ultimate solution: In the wisdom of God, it would be so.

*The end result of the Greek translators' choice of words is that the Greek term **diatheke** has both a specific and a general meaning in the New Testament. Therefore, in those instances where the New Testament writers, who were also writing in the Greek language, used the same Greek term **diatheke**, their meaning has remained deliberately obscure. Commentators now come away puzzled after studying those passages in which the word occurs. What did the writer intend? Was he referring to the term's meaning as it was used in the Greek translation of the Old*

Testament? There it refers to one of the many “covenants” that God made with men. Or did he intend it to carry the specific legal meaning “testament,” which is what the term meant in the Greek language of Jesus’ time? The answer is again, in the wisdom of God, both.

Hebrew Covenants

The Greek translators used the Greek **diatheke** to translate the Hebrew **berith**. **Berith** is commonly found translated as “covenant” in the English translations of the Old Testament. A more precise definition of the word is actually “legal agreement.” And in the ancient Near East, as now, legal agreements were of various types. The Hebrew term **berith** could refer to as simple an agreement as the one between Abraham and Abimelech (Gen. 21:22–34), which stipulated that both parties to the agreement would recognize Abraham’s ownership of the well around which the village of Beersheba later grew up. Likewise, Jacob and Laban’s agreement that they would not seek to harm one another (Gen. 31:43–55) is also called a **berith**.

The most frequent use of **berith** in the Hebrew Scriptures, however, is in reference to the agreement between God and the people of Israel (Ex. 20–24). In that case, the type of legal agreement to which **berith** refers has long been recognized by scholars as a treaty between two kings. Amazingly enough, the Book of Deuteronomy, representing as it does a second ratification of the covenant/treaty between God and Corporate Israel, has exactly the same form as many of the treaty texts excavated at various archaeological sites in the Middle East.

The Hebrew noun **berith** (“legal agreement”) derives from the Hebrew verb **barah**, which means “to eat.” That is because a legal agreement at that time was ratified by the parties eating a meal together. Just as for many years in the United States, a handshake was all that was necessary to formalize a legal agreement, so also legal agreements in the ancient Near East were normally solemnized by a covenant meal.

The sacrifice of an animal provided the meat consumed at the covenant meal. For that reason the Hebrew idiom meaning “to make a legal agreement” literally says “to cut a **berith**.” The “cutting” involved was the butchering of the sacrificial animal eaten at the covenant meal. The sacrifice of the animal often took on symbolic significance when either of the parties to the agreement took a solemn oath vowing to adhere to the terms of the agreement. In so doing, the oath-taker formally accepted the fact that he deserved a fate identical to that suffered by the

sacrificial animal should he fail to keep the terms of the agreement. The oath-taker’s acceptance of the symbolic fate of the sacrificial animal makes God’s use of the parabolic image of sacrifice and the covenant meal in the parables of the Scriptures much more significant. We will discuss the implications of His use of the parabolic imagery related to sacrifice in future articles in this publication.

The participants in an ancient Near Eastern **berith** often included a written text or other form of documentation as a part of the agreement. The written documentation of the legal agreement was not essential, however. Although the tablets on which the Ten Commandments were written have long been recognized as a copy of the written agreement between God and Corporate Israel, other legal agreements were formalized by a covenant meal unaccompanied by written agreement (Gen. 21:22–34; 31:43–55).

The Testament of God

The crucial but unrecognized element in the Old Testament’s use of the term **berith** is the fact that one of the legal agreements it designated was what we ordinarily call a “testament” or “will.” There is also no small irony in the fact that the Christian Bible has two parts—the Old and the New Testaments. That is, in fact, what God intended them to be: Legal documents, testaments, what we ordinarily call “wills.” They set forth in some detail the specifics concerning who is and who is not qualified to **inherit** God’s estate.

The covenant God cut with Abraham as recorded in Genesis 15 is nothing more or less than a will. Examine the text for yourself. The legal agreement that God provided Abraham on that particular occasion was in response to a singular question that Abraham asked God concerning the Promised Land:

“How may I know that I will **inherit** it?”
(Genesis 15:8b) —my translation

What was God’s response? He made a will and designated Abraham as His **heir**. But, you say, God can’t die! That’s true, as Spirit, He can never die. But what about God incarnate? Not only could He die, He did die. The question I have asked here is, When He died on a cross between two thieves, whom had He legally designated as His **heirs**? But I am getting ahead of myself.

In explaining how Gentiles came into possession of the promise that had previously been the **heritage** of

the Jews, the Apostle Paul tells us clearly that God made a testament in which He designated Abraham as His **heir**:

Christ bought us back from the curse of the Law (having become a curse on our behalf), because it's been written: “EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE IS CURSED!” *so that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles* (in Christ Jesus); so that we might **receive the promise** of the Spirit through faith. Brothers, (I speak in accordance with man) nobody declares even a ratified *testament* of a man invalid or adds a *codicil* to it! But *the promises* were spoken to Abraham and to his “Seed.” It does not say, “and to seeds” (as of many), but (as of One), “and to your Seed” (which is Messiah). But I’m saying this: The law that came four hundred and thirty years later doesn’t void a *testament ratified by God* so as to nullify *the promise*. Because if the *inheritance* is from law, it isn’t any longer from *promise*. But **God had given it freely to Abraham through a promise**. (Galatians 3:13–18)—my translation

Three legal terms in this passage clearly indicate that Paul believed the plan of God was to convey salvation by means of a will. Those terms are testament, codicil, and inheritance. All three are Greek legal terms relating specifically to the disposition [sic: distribution] of an estate under the terms specified in a will. The only exception might be the term **diatheke** which, as explained above, the Greek translators used to translate the more general Hebrew term **berith**. The Greek term translated “codicil” however, had one specific meaning in the Greek language. It signified an addendum to an already existing will. That term by itself clearly confirms Paul’s usage of the term **diatheke** as meaning “will.”

The will to which Paul refers is God’s will—a will in which God left His entire estate to Abraham and His Seed “four hundred and thirty years” before the Law was given at Mt. Sinai. Abraham then passed title to **the inheritance** on to Isaac; Isaac passed it on to Jacob, etc. But you can read all about that for yourself. (See the explanation in Not All Israel Is Israel.) When the incarnate God died, His will became a valid testamentary document. That’s the way it is with wills. As the writer of the Book of Hebrews tells us:

Only a *testament* of the dead is valid. It has no meaning whatsoever while the *Testator* lives. (Hebrews 9:17)—my translation

Technically speaking, God’s testament is not the testament of Jesus Christ. On the one hand, it is; on the other hand, it isn’t. As Jesus said, “I and the Father are One” (John 10:30). But centuries of theological discussion have added little of value that could further elucidate the hypostatic union of God and man in the Person of Jesus Christ. So we can leave the resolution of that issue as it was decided by the Council of Nicaea in A.D. 324. But since God made His will nearly two thousand years before the birth of Jesus Christ, one has to say God’s will would not actually qualify under Roman law as a will that Jesus made. So we still haven’t answered our question: Did Jesus leave a will?

The New Covenant

Shortly before His death, as was His constant wont, Jesus orchestrated a detailed parabolic pantomime of the Old Testament covenant meal ritual with His disciples. (See “The Parabolic Pantomimes of Jesus Christ,” **The Voice of Elijah**®, January 1991.) To ensure that the reader understood that pantomime was intended to parabolically evoke the sacrificial imagery of the Old Testament, all four of the Gospel writers mention that the occasion for the pantomime was the Passover meal (Matt. 26:17–19; Mark 14:12–16; Luke 22:7–13; John 13:1). The synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke—all claim that Jesus openly identified Himself as the Passover sacrifice for this New Covenant meal:

And while they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.” And He took a cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is shed on behalf of many for forgiveness of sins.” (Matthew 26:26–28)—my translation

The parabolic imagery Jesus evoked on this one occasion through His words and actions span the total spectrum of the parabolic imagery of the Scriptures. The parabolic image of the Tabernacle, with its priesthood and sacrificial ritual is easy to see. But Jesus’ use of the Greek term **diatheke** raises the question: Did He mean “covenant,” or did He mean “testament”? The Truth is, He intended both. In His parabolic pantomime, Jesus pointed directly to that first Passover, the inaugural event in Israel’s Exodus from Egypt (Ex. 12). And just as God

had spoken the Ten Commandments from the top of Mt. Sinai (Ex. 20) as the terms of the Old Covenant, Jesus also announced the terms of His New Covenant as He ate the Passover meal with His twelve disciples, those who stood as representatives of the twelve tribes of the True Israel—the Messiah:

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another."
(John 13:34)

But the covenant God made with Corporate Israel at Mt. Sinai is not the only covenant that provides the parabolic imagery for Jesus' parabolic pantomime. He also intended to evoke the memory of a much earlier "covenant," the testament that God "cut" with Abraham when He made him His **heir**. Under the terms of that testament, God took upon Himself the solemn obligation of fulfilling its terms (Gen. 15:8–11). In spite of the fact that He can never die, God readily acknowledged He would someday suffer the fate of the covenant sacrifice when the time came to transfer the Promised Land to Abraham's **Heir** as an **inheritance**.

Through His parabolic pantomime, Jesus pointed to God's earlier testament and publicly proclaimed that the time had indeed come for the incarnate God to die so that His estate could then transfer to His **heirs**. Since the original **heir**, Abraham, had long since died, there was also a concomitant necessity to determine who Abraham's **heirs** were. Paul's discussion of God's testament in the Book of Galatians leaves no doubt those **heirs** were still alive, but they were not the Jews as one would assume. Paul wrote this to Gentiles:

If you are of Christ, you are seed of Abraham, **heirs** in accordance with **promise**.
(Galatians 3:29)—my translation

The Testament of Jesus

The Passover meal Jesus ate with His disciples just before His death was a parabolic pantomime. But the will He had made earlier was anything but pantomime. Jesus' will was, in some ways, nothing more than a necessary formality to ensure that the will God had previously made could never be challenged under Roman laws of succession. Those laws governed **inheritance** at the time when Jesus, the incarnate God, died. Otherwise, the testa-

ment of Jesus Christ had no new terms to add to the will God had made previously.

Jesus made an oral will. It was, however, supplemented by an already existing written one. All three of the synoptic Gospels record the event. Matthew's account is the most complete:

While He was speaking to the multitudes, behold, His mother and His brothers were standing outside, seeking to speak to Him. And someone said to Him, "Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside seeking to speak to You." But He answered the one who was telling Him and said, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" And stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He said, "Behold, My mother and My brothers! For whoever shall do the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother."
(Matthew 12:46b–50)

Mark's account is much the same:

His mother and His brothers arrived, and standing outside they sent to Him, and called Him. And a multitude was sitting around Him, and they said to Him, "Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are outside looking for You." And answering them, He said, "Who are My mother and My brothers?" And looking about on those who were sitting around Him, He said, "Behold, My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and sister and mother."
(Mark 3:31–35)

Do these accounts describe the occasion on which Jesus made His will? Judge for yourself. Four requirements determined whether a will was valid in the time of Jesus Christ:

1. The testator had to be a Roman citizen because:

Only a Roman citizen ... could make a will which was valid according to Roman Law.
(A. Watson, *The Law of Succession in the Later Roman Republic*, Oxford, 1971, pp. 11–12)

The Gospel of Luke makes much of the fact that Jesus was born just in time to be enrolled in a census of

the Roman Empire (Luke 2:1–7). Enrollment in that census made Him a Roman citizen.

2. The will of a Roman citizen was normally given orally, most often accompanied by a written testament:

The whole will could be given orally and there need be no writing on tabulae ... though it seems that in many or even most cases where provisions of the will were given orally there would also be writing. (Watson, pp. 11–12)

The oral will that Jesus made was, in fact, supplemented by a rather lengthy written testament—the entire Old Testament.

3. Three witnesses could establish the validity of an oral will, but:

Those taking part in the ceremony had to be present for the whole time. (Watson, p. 12)

The biblical text is careful to state that a “multitude” was there when Jesus made His brief oral testament.

4. The naming of the **heir(s)** was the single necessary statement in an oral will made under Roman law:

The heredis institutio was paramount and the **sole essential provision** of a will. (Watson, p. 40)

Jesus’ oral will met all four of these requirements. But when He named His **heir(s)**, Jesus made special concessions to the demands of Jewish laws of succession as well.

If a person died without children under Jewish law, his estate became the property of his nearest living relatives. That meant Jesus’ estate would have been divided among His immediate family. Roman law had similar provisions, but required the testator who wanted to name other **heirs** to first **disinherit** his family before he could name the other **heirs**.

So that He could leave His estate—the promise of God’s salvation—to True Believers outside His immediate family, Jesus first **disinherited** His immediate family by

declaring they were not His closest relatives. (See the explanation in Not All Israel Is Israel.) He then named others—those who met the required stipulations of the will—as His **heirs** by claiming them to be His nearest relatives. Thus He met the demands of both Jewish and Roman law.

The fact that Jesus first disavowed His mother, sisters, and brothers did not mean His family could not participate at all in the **inheritance** of His estate, however. Roman law allowed those who had been **disinherited** to be reinstated later as **heirs** under the terms of the will. The law simply required that the testator disinherit his legal **heirs** first to show that his intentions were to include others outside his own family.

Another legal technicality that has serious implications regarding the validity of Jesus’ will is the circumstances of His death. The Gospel writers are careful to document that Jesus was not, in fact, found guilty and condemned to death under Roman law. It was only at the insistence of Jewish leaders that Pilate sentenced Jesus to death. Pilate did so only after three times declaring Him innocent (Luke 23:13–22). This distinction is crucial because:

The will of a person condemned to death on a capital charge and who was in fact executed was void.

(Watson, p. 23)

Twelve Tribes, Seven Seals

In the final hours of this era, two additional peculiarities of Jesus’ will are central to a comprehensive understanding of God’s plan for these Last Days. God intends that His **heirs inherit** all that has heretofore belonged to Him. As Paul said, to this point those **heirs** have only had a pledge of that **inheritance**:

You were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of **promise**, who is given as **a pledge of our inheritance**.

(Ephesians 1:13–14)

Two distinctive features of Jesus’ will make the distribution of the **inheritance** to God’s **heirs** incontestable in court of human law. The first of the two is the twelve-fold division of God’s estate. It was not by accident that the **promised inheritance** of Israel in the Old Testament was divided into twelve parts and held in trust

by the twelve tribes of Israel. (See Not All Israel Is Israel.) That is but one more bit of evidence to the **heirs of the promise** that the omniscient God knew beforehand the laws of the "fulness of time" that would govern the distribution of His estate. Under Roman law it was:

traditional to divide the estate into twelfths.
(Watson, p. 47)

As a matter of fact, any will containing such a twelve-fold division was incontestable in a court of law. Since Jesus held title to **the promise** of all that had been **promised** to Corporate Israel, His estate had already been divided into twelfths. (See Not All Israel Is Israel.) After His death, the Twelve—those disciples who were also Apostles—merely stood as trustees for the twelve divisions of His estate (Matt. 19:27–29). (See "Where Are Jesus' Disciples?" **The Voice of Elijah**®, April 1991.)

Yet a second idiosyncrasy made the testament of a Roman citizen incontestable in a court of law. This peculiarity is of utmost importance for **the heirs of the promise** to understand what God is about in these, the Last Days:

A Roman will, when written, had to be sealed seven times in order to authenticate it.
(The Expositor's Greek Testament, Vol. 5, p. 383)

Sometime after the death of the testator, when the time came to divide the estate, the seven seals were then removed and the will read so that the **heirs** could **inherit** their share of the estate. The written testament of God has had seven parabolic "seals" on it for the more than twenty-five hundred years it has been in existence. Each parabolic "seal" seals and conceals a portion of the message contained in that testament. The time has now come, however, for the public reading of that will. Therefore, the parabolic "seals" must be removed. The Apostle John described that occasion for us in apocalyptic symbolism:

At the right hand of the One seated on the throne I saw a scroll that had been written on the inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. I also saw a powerful messenger proclaiming in a loud voice: "Who is worthy to open the scroll and do away with its seals?" Nobody (either in Heaven, on Earth, or under the Earth) was able to open the scroll or to look into it. I started to weep uncontrollably

because nobody was found worthy to open the scroll or look into it. Then one of the elders said to me, "Don't cry! Look! The Lion (Who is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David!) He has conquered, so as to open the scroll and its seven seals."
(Revelation 5:1–5)—my translation

John then goes on to describe in apocalyptic symbolism some of the events that occur as the seven seals are opened one by one (Rev. 6–8).

The prospective **heirs** of God are already receiving an invitation to hear the provisions of His will read and explained. As Jesus described the event in parable:

And when one of those who were reclining {at the table} with Him heard this, he said to Him, "Blessed is everyone who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!"

But He said to him, "A certain man was giving a big dinner, and he invited many; and at the dinner hour he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for everything is ready now.'

But they all alike began to make excuses. The first one said to him, 'I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it; please consider me excused.' And another one said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please consider me excused.' And another one said, 'I have married a wife, and for that reason I cannot come.'

And the slave came {back} and reported this to his master. Then the head of the household became angry and said to his slave, 'Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor and crippled and blind and lame.'

And the slave said, 'Master, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.'

And the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and compel {them} to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste of my dinner.'"

(Luke 14:15–24)

The one who has ears to hear will hear.

("Did Jesus Leave a Will?" **The Voice of Elijah**®, July 1991) ■



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: We receive a lot of comments and questions from folks who have visited our website voiceofelijah.org but here is a letter sent from one such visitor who tells us what she has gained from the information she has read on our website. I thought it important to share with our contributors so they can see how their contributions are working to reach others in need of Truth and thought you might also like to see it and comment on it:

"I have felt compelled to write a letter to you for several months, but something always seemed to say wait. And although I am starting to put my thoughts down on paper, I don't know if or when I will send it. At this point I'm not sure if this is something I need to do for myself or if my recorded thoughts will have something that is relevant enough to send to you. I pray that God will show me.

Let me first say ... I am grateful for those people who know God's calling and spend their life working to deliver the ministry they were called to. Larry Harper and those of you at The Voice of Elijah definitely fall into that category. Although we know that God uses all of us to fulfill his purposes here on earth, most of us seldom get to know when He has done so. I also know how grateful I am when He occasionally lets me see that I have played a small part in one of His plans. It is so encouraging! It is with that thought that I want you to know that you are playing a part in His plan (although I think you know that already). Thank you for your work.

I'm sure you receive letters from others with far more knowledge and sophistication than I, who are far more advanced in their understanding of the scriptures than I, and many who have followed Christ far better than I. After all, this letter is probably just one more in a long line of others you have received. However, I also believe none of God's children are insignificant in His eyes and you never know when He can use something He has you do. So ... I continue!

God called me when I was very young (about age 6). I did not come from a family who went to church, but I always knew my mother believed in God and prayed. That knowledge, and a surprising answer to a small child's prayer, set me on my path. Over the years I would find ways to learn about God. I would seek out friends who did go to church, and if offered, I would go with them. But even as a child, I saw and heard things that just didn't make sense to me ... especially as it pertained to the legalistic practices I was being introduced to. So, I decided I had to get it 'straight from the source,' and started reading 'the bible from the beginning around 4th grade. Obviously, I didn't have the maturity to understand much of anything back then, and I had a LONG way to go ... but it was a start. And I'm still seeking the Truth!

Now don't get me wrong ... I've not been a saint. Far from it! Without a solid, consistent Christian influence in my life, I have made some major wrong turns. Those deep valleys were ultimately very painful, and I couldn't help wonder where He was and why He seemed to 'let go' of me. But then there were other times when there was no doubt that He was there holding my hand. You might even say He has even granted me a few miracles. I'm convinced now that both the highs and lows were all a part of a necessary plan to get me to the place I am today ... certainly not perfect ... but in a far better place in my walk with my Lord than in my earlier life. But I also have to confess ... I sure wish it had been an easier and shorter process! I have had much to confess, but I'm so eternally grateful that He does forgive!

I'm a nurse by profession. As such, I guess you could say I have a scientific mind. I'm more of a 'black and white' type of person. I'm not so staunch that I can't handle those occasional 'gray' areas, but (as you may have guessed) I want the truth. And I prefer knowing how and why things are the way they are ... and work the way they do. So when I accidentally came across your site last summer, I couldn't help but spend time reading some of the publications that were available. The more I read, the

more I wanted to read. Not only was I getting new information and understanding, I was also finding that the 'cracked door' was beginning to open much wider concerning things I already questioned. So much of what I wanted to have answers to started to become clear. I had MANY 'ah ha' moments! And there were times when I found verification for things I had already started to believe. All that and I'm still going through the newsletters and publications you have freely available. (Yes ... I'm a bit slow!)

There is so much information, and it is so deep, that I know that I will have to go back and re-read much of what I have already read. Not so I can understand it, as I understood it at the time I read it (well ... there may have been a 'few' things that went over my head), but more so I can put the pieces together and remember it all.

Just a side note ... I really enjoyed reading the 'Questions and Answers' sections of the newsletters. I particularly liked the 'Questions and Answers' in the July 1992 newsletter (as it hit a personal note) and the July 1994 newsletter. The 'diatribe' in the July 1994 newsletter was priceless. It was both educational and comical. I found myself wishing I had Larry Harper's skill for such outstanding 'argument.' But I also found myself laughing out loud over some of the points he made concerning the letter writer who had some really absurd comments.

It has been several months since I wrote the above, but now that I have completed all of the available newsletters/documents, I am praying for direction in ordering a subscription to The Voice of Elijah newsletter ... or more if He directs.

In closing ... here I am ... sensing that major changes are coming quickly ... and seeking to understand the direction God is taking me now. Praying that the Holy Spirit grants me knowledge, wisdom, discernment, understanding, and strength to keep me on the path He has set before me ... regardless of things to come ... good or bad. I pray He does the same for all of you."

Shortly afterwards, the same lady called our home office and then sent this note:

"Let me first say ... I so enjoyed our conversation on the phone today and can't wait to get all the additional publications that you will be sending. It always amazes me when God answers prayer AND He allows you to see it. I can't help but believe that was the case today ... both as it pertained to IF I should order more information (and

what I should order) and IF I should support your ministry financially. It just became so very clear during our conversation on the phone. It certainly wasn't clear to me when I woke up this morning! How awesome He is! And may God bless you all."

Elijah: It is always encouraging to hear reports about the impact the Truth that God called me to restore is having on those who have chosen to believe it. I am absolutely amazed by the things the Lord is doing in the lives of people from all walks of life, just because the simple logic of the Truth somehow captured their attention.

The first word of caution I have in regard to what this reader wrote concerns the need for sorrow for sin and an honest repentance. I say that because the Truth is, those who have been born again can understand so much more than those who approach an understanding of the Truth on the basis of human intellect alone. That is because the person who has been born again has the Spirit of God within them confirming the Truth of what they have heard. Jesus put that simple Truth this "Way":

²⁰"Remember the word that I told you: 'A slave is not more important than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept watch over My word, they will also keep watch over your own. ²¹But they will do all these things to you because of My name—because they do not know the One Who sent Me.

²²If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin. But now they do not have any pretense about their sin. ²³The one who hates Me also hates My Father. ²⁴If I had not done among them the works that nobody else has done, they would not have sin. But now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father, ²⁵but only so that the word that has been written in their Law would be fulfilled, that 'THEY HATED ME FOR NO REASON.'

²⁶When the Advocate that I will send to you from the Father comes—the Spirit of the truth that is going to come out from the Father—That Individual will provide testimony about Me. ²⁷But you will also provide testimony, because you are with Me at the beginning."

(John 15:20–27) —HSSB

¹⁴"I have spoken these things to you, so that you would not be offended. ²They will cause you to be expelled

from the synagogue, but an hour is going to come, so that anyone who has killed you will assume he is bringing and presenting a priestly service to the living God. ³And they will do these things because they have not known the Father or Me. ⁴But I have spoken these things to you so that when their hour comes, you would remember that I told you about them. But I did not tell you these things from the beginning, because I was with you.

⁵But now I am going to the One Who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?' ⁶But because I have spoken these things to you, anguish has completely filled your heart. ⁷**But I am telling you the truth: It is advantageous to you that I go. For if I did not go away, the Advocate would not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.** ⁸And after coming, **That Individual will reprimand the world**

- (1) with regard to sin and
- (2) with regard to a declaration of not guilty and
- (3) with regard to sentencing.

⁹(a) On the one hand, with regard to sin, because they do not believe God's promise about Me;

¹⁰(b) but on the other hand, with regard to a declaration of not guilty, because I am going to the Father and you are no longer going to observe Me;

¹¹(c) and then, with regard to sentencing, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

¹²I still have many things to tell you, but you can not bear them at this time. ¹³But when That Individual—the Spirit of the truth—comes, He will guide you into the whole truth. For

- (1) He will not speak of His Own accord, but
- (2) He will speak only as much as He hears, and
- (3) He will divulge to you the things that are going to come.

¹⁴That Individual will glorify Me, because He will take some of what is Mine and divulge it to you. ¹⁵Everything—as much as the Father has—is Mine; for this reason I said that 'He is going to take some of what is Mine and divulge it to you.' ¹⁶**In a little while, then, you will no longer observe Me; and again in a little while, then, you will see Me."**

(John 16:1–16) —HSSB

I chuckle a bit every time I read the last statement Jesus made in that context just because He has been talking about the role the Holy Spirit plays in the True Believer's understanding of the Truth regarding *the promise*. Then He says this:

"In a little while, then, you will no longer observe Me; and again in a little while, then, you will see Me."

(John 16:16) —HSSB

Jesus used two different verbs in that verse to refer to the two different ways we "see" the people we "know." That is because He is playing on the fact that we can "observe" the people that we think we know physically, or we can "see" them as they really are—as the being that is made up of all the things they have chosen to believe. That is just another way of saying we sometimes discover the people *we think we know* are not actually what they appear to be. That is because *we are what we have chosen to believe*, and *we all act in accordance with what we choose to believe*. So we can get to know people a bit more intimately than we care to, if you know what I mean.

The point is, Jesus Christ is, was, and always will be the Truth that He *chose* to believe, rather than the physical body He inhabited. John puts it this way:

¹In the beginning, there was the Word; and the Word was with the living God, and God was the Word.

²This Individual was with the living God in the beginning. ³Everything has come into being via Him, and not even one thing that has come into being has come into being apart from Him. ⁴Life was in Him, and His life was the Light of men. ⁵So the Light appears in the darkness, yet the darkness has never grasped it.

(John 1:1–5) —HSSB

Now you can believe it if you care to, or you can disbelieve it if you dare to; it makes me no never mind what you ignorantly choose to believe. Your beliefs will never change the fact that Jesus Christ is the Truth of *the promise* that the living God revealed to mankind via the cryptic statements of Moses and the other Prophets of Israel. Jesus said so Himself, so get over it:

¹**"Do not let your heart be disturbed; you believe God's promise about the living God; you must also**

believe God's **promise** about Me. ²There are a lot of dwelling places in My Father's house; but if not, I would have told you, because I am going to prepare a place for you. ³So if I go and prepare a place for you, I am going to come again and take you to Myself, so that you also are wherever I am. ⁴And you know the way to where I am going."

⁵Thomas tells Him, "Your Majesty, we do not know where You are going; how could we know the way?"

⁶Jesus tells him: "I am the way and the truth and the life; nobody is going to come to the Father except through Me. ⁷If you have known Me, you will also know My Father; and from this point on you are going to know Him. And You have already seen Him."

⁸Philip tells Him, "Your Majesty, show us the Father, and it is enough for us."

⁹Jesus tells him: "Am I with you so long a span of time, and you do not know Me, Philip? The one who has seen Me has seen the Father! How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? I am not making the statements that I am making to you of My Own accord, but the Father Who remains in Me is doing His works." (John 14:1-10) —HSSB

That is another passage that makes me chuckle every time I read it. The Early Church leaders lost the Truth of *The Teaching* regarding the nature of the Trinity when they gave up the Truth regarding God as the totality of the *Logos* Moses and the other Prophets of Israel revealed in the Hebrew Scriptures and slipped off into speculating about things they had no way of comprehending. To give but one example, they drifted off into speculating in terms of *Monarchism*, moved on to *Modalism*, and finally settled on "seeing" God as the Trinity of three Persons in One. While that view is not completely in error, it is certainly inferior to the Truth that *everyone is what they choose to believe*. The leaders of the Church never would have engaged in three hundred years of speculating if Church leaders had stayed with the Truth of *The Teaching* that had been **handed down** to them.

But I digress; the point is, the Person that Jesus is, was, and always will be is the Truth of *The Teaching* that He understood—and believed. So if you *choose* to "see" Him as the *physical* body that the Truth occupied, you are as stupid as the Church leaders who spent three hundred years trying to figure out something they had

no "way" of comprehending. Just accept the fact that Jesus was talking about Himself as the Person Who was embodied in His perfect knowledge of the God He "saw" revealed in the things that Moses and the other Prophets of Israel recorded so that subsequent generations could "see" the same God for the Person that He actually is rather than the Person they want Him to be:

⁵Thomas tells Him, "Your Majesty, we do not know where You are going; how could we know the way?"

⁶Jesus tells him: "I am the way and the truth and the life; nobody is going to come to the Father except through Me." (John 14:5-6) —HSSB

Now that I have totally confused every unregenerate individual who might happen to read what I just explained, I'll move on to something that will most likely provoke them completely. The Apostle Paul is talking about the single most important benefit of the new birth when he says this:

¹(1) When I came to you, Brothers,

(a) I also did not come proclaiming the mystery of the living God to you with superiority of word or wisdom. ²For I decided not to know anything among you except Jesus, the Anointed One—and This Individual crucified.

³(b) I also came to you

(i) with an infirmity and

(ii) with fear and

(iii) with a lot of trembling.

⁴(2) So my word and my preaching were

(a) not with persuasive* words of wisdom,

(b) but with a demonstration* of the Spirit and supernatural power, ⁵so that your belief in God's **promise** would not be based

(i) on men's wisdom,

(ii) but only on God's supernatural power.

⁶(3) Now

(a) we do speak a wisdom among those who are complete, yet not the wisdom of this current age nor of the rulers of

this current age, who are going to be abrogated; ⁷but
(b) we speak God's wisdom, which had been tucked away
in

(i) a mystery that the living God decided on before-
hand—before the past ages—as our glory;

⁸(ii) a mystery that none of the rulers of this current
age has known; for they would not have crucified the
Master of our glory if they had known it. ⁹But

(iii) a mystery just as it has been written:

“WHAT EYE HAS NEVER SEEN
AND EAR HAS NEVER HEARD
AND WHAT HAS NEVER COME UP ON A MAN'S HEART
IS WHAT THE LIVING GOD HAS PREPARED
FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM.”

**¹⁰(4) Yet the living God has revealed those things to
us via the Spirit;**

(a) for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of
the living God.

¹¹(b) For who among men is aware of the thoughts of the
man except the spirit of the man that is in him? So also
nobody knows the thoughts of the living God except the
Spirit of the living God.

¹²(i) So we did not receive the spirit of the world,
but the Spirit that is from the living God, so that
we would be aware of the things that have been
granted to us as a favor by the living God, ¹³which
things we also talk about—not in words taught by
human wisdom, but only in words taught by the Spirit,
words that compare spiritual things to spiritual things.

¹⁴(ii) But a soulish man does not accept the things
of the Spirit of the living God, for it is stupidity to
him, so he is not able to know that he is being
interrogated spiritually.

¹⁵(iii) But the spiritual man examines every last
thing, yet he is not going to be interrogated by any-
body.

¹⁶(c) For who has known His Majesty's mind? Who
is the one who will put it all together for Him? But
then we have the mind of the Anointed One.

¹(5) So, Brothers,

(a) I can not speak to you

(i) as to {those who are} spiritual,
(ii) but only

(a) as to {those who are} made of flesh—

(b) as to {those who are} Toddlers in The Anointed
One.

²(b) I have given you Milk to drink, not Food;

(i) for

(a) you were not yet able {to understand spiritual
things}; but

(b) you still can not {understand spiritual things},
even now,

³(ii) for you are still fleshly.

(iii) For where Jealousy and Contentiousness {are}
among you, are you not fleshly and walking in agree-
ment with Mankind?

(1 Corinthians 2:1–3:3) —HSSB

Paul's point is, the Truth that Moses and all the
other Prophets of Israel sealed up in the Hebrew
Scriptures is not something that a person caught up in
the flesh and its incessant stream of wants and desires
will ever comprehend. It is, in fact, something that only
those who allow themselves to take on a completely
different mind-set will ever be able to “see.” What that
means is, those True Believers who seek to understand
the complete Truth of *The Teaching* must begin with the
Gospel message and allow whatever part of the Truth
that they are able understand to completely transform
their minds through the agency of the Holy Spirit that
resides within them, just as Paul says in this passage:

¹(1) Therefore, I implore you, Brothers, via the compas-
sion of the living God,

(a) to present your bodies as a living, holy sacrifice,
well-pleasing to the living God—your logical priestly
service; ²and

(b) to not be shaped by this current age, but

(c) to be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so
that you approve of what the will of the living God is—
which is

- (i) good and
- (ii) well-pleasing and
- (iii) complete.

(Romans 12:1–2) —HSSB

The first bit of Truth one must understand and accept is the basic Gospel message that Paul preached when he established the local church in Corinth. Without an accurate understanding of the wrath of God that demands an honest apology on our part, a person cannot be born again; and without that life-changing experience, one will never be able to accept the Truth that fills in the details of the basic Gospel message. Paul talks about that in the following passage:

¹(1) *Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or not? Do we, like some, need letters of commendation**

- (a) to you or
- (b) from you?

²(2) *You are our letter of commendation:*

- (a) *one that has been inscribed in our hearts;*
- (b) *one that is known and read by all men;*
- ³(c) *one that is becoming well-known, because you are a letter from the Anointed One;*
- (d) *one that was served by us;*
- (e) *one that has been inscribed:*
 - (i) *not with black ink,*
 - (ii) *but only with a living God's Spirit;*
 - (iii) *not on tablets made of stone,*
 - (iv) *but only on tablets of hearts made of flesh.*

⁴(3) *So we have a confidence like this before the living God through the Anointed One, ⁵not because we are worthy of consideration of ourselves, to reckon anything as from ourselves; but our consideration* is from the living God, ⁶the One Who also made us worthy of consideration as servants*

- (a) *of a New Testament—*
- (b) *not of something that has been written,*
- (c) *but of the Spirit. For*

- (i) *the thing that has been written kills, but*
- (ii) *the Spirit gives life.*

⁷(3) *But if the serving of death in something that had been written—that had been engraved*—on stones came with glory, so the sons of Israel could not stare at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, which glory is going to be abrogated, ⁸how could the serving of the Spirit not be with even more glory?*

⁹(a) *For if there was glory in the serving of the death sentence, the serving of the declaration of not guilty is going to exceed that glory with a lot more glory.*

¹⁰(b) *For even the face that had been glorified on this part of Israel had not actually been glorified on account of the incredible glory of God.*

¹¹(c) *For if the face that is going to be abrogated was with glory, the face that is going to remain is with a lot more glory.*

¹²(4) *Therefore, we who have a hope like this use a lot of candor, ¹³and are not at all like Moses. He used to put a covering down over his face so that*

- (a) *the sons of Israel could not stare at the consummation of the face that is going to be abrogated. ¹⁴But*
- (b) *their thoughts were turned to stone;*

(i) *for up to the time of day today, at the reading of the Old Testament the same covering—which has not been uncovered—remains, because it is abrogated in the Anointed One.*

¹⁵(ii) *But up to today, whenever it might be that Moses is read, a covering lies over their hearts.*

¹⁶(a) *Yet whenever it may be that one turns back to His Majesty, the covering is removed.*

¹⁷(b) *Yet His Majesty is the Spirit, so freedom is wherever the Spirit of His Majesty is.*

¹⁸(c) *Yet we who are looking at a reflection of the glory of His Majesty in a mirror* with a face that has been uncovered are all being transformed into the same image from one glory into another glory, even as from His Majesty's Spirit.*

¹(6) *For this reason, just as we have been shown mercy,*

(a) *we who have this service do not get discouraged.*

²But

(b) *we who are*

- (i) not walking in dishonesty
- (ii) nor counterfeiting* the word of the living God, but
- (iii) commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of the living God by our disclosure of the truth have renounced* their shameful secrets.

³(7) So even if the good news of the fulfillment of the promise we have is covered, it is covered

(a) in those who are being done away with—

⁴(b) those in whom the God of this current age has blinded the thoughts of those who do not believe God's promise so that they can not distinctly see* the illumination of the good news of the fulfillment of the promise of the glory of the Anointed One, Who is the image of the living God.

(2 Corinthians 3:1–4:4) —HSSB

Paul is talking about the supernatural event in which the totality of *The Teaching* is “written” on the “heart” of the person who comes to God in total contrition for sin and asks for forgiveness. At that time, that individual *inherits the promise* of God and *parabolically* comes to life as a Child of God in the “womb” of “*The Harlot*.” Thus *the promise* of the New Testament prophesied by both Jeremiah and Ezekiel is *fulfilled* just as the author of the Book of Hebrews explains:

¹But here is a summary on the basis of the things that are stated here:

(1) We have a High Priest like this One, the One Who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens ²as a Priestly Minister of the holy things and the tent—

- (a) the one that is real,
- (b) the one that His Majesty pitched*, not man.

³(2) For every high priest is appointed so as to bring and present both

- (a) offerings and
- (b) sacrifices.

(3) Consequently, it was also necessary that this individual have something that he could bring and present.

⁴(4) Therefore, if He were, in fact, on Earth, He would not even be a priest, since

(a) those who bring and present the offerings are in accordance with Law,

⁵(b) those who serve as priest in a perfect example and shadow of the things in Heaven, just as Moses had been given divine communication when he was about to finish the tent; for He declares, “See to it that you make everything in accordance with the pattern that was shown to you on the mountain.”

⁶(5) But He has now obtained a much different priestly ministry, by as much as He is also Mediator of a better testament—one that has law made on the basis of better promises.

⁷(a) For if that first testament had been faultless, a place would not have been sought for a second testament.

⁸(b) For finding fault with them, He says:

“GUESS WHAT! DAYS ARE GOING TO COME,”

SAYS HIS MAJESTY,

“WHEN I WILL COMPLETE A NEW TESTAMENT WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL

AND FOR THE HOUSE OF JUDAH;

⁹NOT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TESTAMENT THAT I MADE FOR THEIR FATHERS

ON THE DAY THAT I TOOK HOLD OF THEIR HAND

TO LEAD THEM OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT;

BECAUSE THEY DID NOT CONTINUE ON IN MY TESTAMENT, I ALSO NEGLECTED THEM,” SAYS HIS MAJESTY.

¹⁰“BECAUSE THIS IS THE TESTAMENT THAT I WILL MAKE AS A BEQUEST TO THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL BY A TESTAMENT AFTER THOSE DAYS,” SAYS HIS MAJESTY:

“WHILE PUTTING MY LAWS INTO THEIR UNDERSTANDING, I WILL ALSO INSCRIBE THEM ON THEIR HEARTS.

AND I WILL BECOME THEIR GOD,

AND THEY WILL BECOME MY PEOPLE.

¹¹AND EACH ONE WILL DEFINITELY NOT TEACH HIS FELLOW CITIZEN;

AND EACH ONE, HIS BROTHER, SAYING,

‘KNOW HIS MAJESTY,’

BECAUSE ALL OF THEM, FROM SMALLEST UP TO LARGEST, WILL KNOW ME.

¹²BECAUSE I WILL BE GRACIOUS REGARDING THEIR INJUSTICE,

AND I WILL DEFINITELY STILL NOT RECALL THEIR SINS.”

¹³When He said, “new,” He has made the first testament grow old; but the thing that is growing old and becoming old is near to disappearance*.
(Hebrews 8:1–13) —HSSB

The Old Testament passage that the author of the Book of Hebrews was quoting comes from Jeremiah 31. This is what Jeremiah says:

²⁷“[Guess what!] [Days] [are coming],” [declares] [His Majesty], “[when I will sow] [{the} House] [of Israel] [and] [{the} House] [of Judah], [a Seed] [of Adam] [and a Seed] [of a Beast]. ²⁸[Then it will be that] [just as] [I kept watch] [over them] [to uproot] [and to tear down] [and to break down] [and to send to Hell] [and to do bad things {to them}], [so also] [I will keep watch] [over them] [to build] [and to plant {them}],” [declares] [His Majesty].

²⁹“[In [those] Days] [they will [no] [longer] say]: ‘[{The} Fathers] [ate] [Sour Grapes], [And [{the} Sons]’ Teeth] [tingle].’

³⁰[But] [everyone] [will die] [for his own Reprehensible Activity]; [{the} Teeth of] [every] [Descendant of Adam] [who eats] [The Sour Grapes] [will tingle].

³¹[Guess what!] [Days] [are coming],” [declares] [His Majesty], “[when I will cut] [a [new] Legal Agreement] [with] [{the} House] [of Israel] [and] [{the} House] [of Judah], ³²[not] [like {the} Legal Agreement] [that] [I cut] [with] [their Fathers] [on {the} Day] [when I took hold] [of their Hand] [to bring them out] [of {the} Land] [of Egypt]—[when] [they] [made [My Legal Agreement] null and void], [even though I] [owned] [them],” [declares] [His Majesty]. ³³“[Because] [this] {is} [The Legal Agreement] [that] [I will cut] [with] [{the} House] [of Israel] [after] [Those] [Days],” [declares] [His Majesty], “[I will put] [My Teaching] [within them], [and [I will write it] on] [their Heart]; [then I will become] [their] [God], [and they will become] [My] [People]. ³⁴[And they will [no] [longer] teach]—[each one] [his Neighbor] [and each one] [his Brother]—[saying], ‘[Know] [His Majesty],’ [because] [all of them] [will know] [Me]—[from {the} least of them] [even up to] [{the} greatest of them],” [declares] [His Majesty], “[because] [I will forgive] [their Reprehensible Activity],

[and [I will [no] [longer] remember] their Sinful Act].”

³⁵[This is what] [His Majesty] [has said]—
[{The} One Who gives] [The Sun] [for Light] [by Day],
[{The} Statutes {regarding}] [The Moon] [and Stars]
[by Night],

[{The} One Who disturbs] [The Sea]
[so that [his Waves] raise a ruckus];

[His [Supreme] Majesty] {is} [His Name]:

³⁶[If] [These] [Statutes] [depart]
[From My Presence],” [declares] [His Majesty],
[Even] [{the} Seed] [of Israel] [will keep Sabbath]
[Rather than [always] being] [a Nation] [before Me].”

³⁷[This is what] [His Majesty] [has said]:
“[If] [The Sea of Waters] [extending upwards]
[can be measured]

[And [{the} Foundations of] [{the} Earth]
[can be examined] [downwards],

[I] [will [also] reject] [all] [{the} Seed] [of Israel]
[On account of] [everything] [that] [they did],”
[declares] [His Majesty].

(Jeremiah 31:27–37) —my interim translation

There are a multitude of things I could tell you with regard to that passage, not the least of which is the fact that “*The House*” of Israel had long since become Gentile by the time Jeremiah and Ezekiel conveyed *the promise* of the New Testament to “*The House* of Israel and *The House* of Judah.” I could also tell you how those two Prophets tell us the “new legal agreement” would be made with the *individual* members of *Corporate* Israel rather than with *Corporate* Israel, that is, with the Jews as one person. That happened when the Lord sent John the Baptist to demand an apology and warn the Jews that God would “cut them off from” *Corporate* Israel if they did not repent.

Since I have already explained most of those things in articles and books I have written over the past three decades, I will simply remind you that *the fulfillment of the promise* regarding the “new legal agreement” included the “Spirit” of God dwelling within *individual* Believers as *The Teaching* rather than dwelling in the midst of the *Corporate* Body of Believers in a tent or a temple. But *The Teaching* being “written on the heart” of both Jewish and Gentile Believers was *fulfilled* as a result of the oral testament that Jesus made on the occasion described in this passage:

⁴⁶Guess what! While He was still speaking to the crowds, His mother and brothers were standing around outside, seeking to speak to Him. ⁴⁷So someone told Him, “Guess what! Your mother and Your brothers are standing around outside seeking to speak to You.”

⁴⁸But in response, He said to the one who was telling Him, “Who is My mother, and who are My brothers?”

⁴⁹And after stretching out His hand over His disciples, He said: “Guess what! These are My mother and My brothers! ⁵⁰For whoever it might be who acts in accordance with the will of My Father, Who is in the heavens, he is My brother and sister and mother.”

(Matthew 12:46–50) —HSSB

I explained the *significance* of that passage nearly thirty years ago, and the things I told you at that time are just as true now as they were when I wrote them. So I am just going to briefly summarize what I just told you and move on.

The first thing is, Paul tells us “a covering lies over” the “heart,” (the mind) of those who have not been born again, so that they cannot understand what Moses *meant* by what he wrote:

¹⁵(ii) *But up to today, whenever it might be that Moses is read, a covering lies over their hearts.*

¹⁶(a) *Yet whenever it may be that one turns back to His Majesty, the covering is removed.*

¹⁷(b) *Yet His Majesty is the Spirit, so freedom is wherever the Spirit of His Majesty is.*

¹⁸(c) *Yet we who are looking at a reflection of the glory of His Majesty in a mirror* with a face that has been uncovered are all being transformed into the same image from one glory into another glory, even as from His Majesty’s Spirit.*

(2 Corinthians 3:15–18) —HSSB

The second thing you need to keep in mind is what Jeremiah said about God’s *promise* that He would “write” *The Teaching* on the “heart” (the mind) of the *individual* members of *Corporate* Israel.

³¹“[Guess what!] [Days] [are coming],” [declares] [His Majesty], “[when I will cut] [a [new] Legal Agreement] [with] [{the} House] [of Israel] [and] [{the} House] [of

Judah], ³²[not] [like {the} Legal Agreement] [that] [I cut] [with] [their Fathers] [on {the} Day] [when I took hold] [of their Hand] [to bring them out] [of {the} Land] [of Egypt]—[when] [they] [made [My Legal Agreement] null and void], [even though I] [owned] [them],” [declares] [His Majesty]. ³³“[Because] [this] {is} [The Legal Agreement] [that] [I will cut] [with] [{the} House] [of Israel] [after] [Those] [Days],” [declares] [His Majesty], “[I will put] [My Teaching] [within them], [and [I will write it] on] [their Heart]; [then I will become] [their] [God], [and they will become] [My] [People].”

(Jeremiah 31:31–33) —my interim translation

The third thing you need to understand is how God *fulfills the promise* that He would “write” *The Teaching* on the “heart” (the mind) of the *individual* members of *Corporate* Israel. He does so through the agency of the Holy Spirit each one *receives* when they are born again and “grafted in” to the Body of Christ—that is, *Corporate* Israel (Rom. 11:17–23). Just as Jesus said, the Holy Spirit’s role is to confirm the Truth when He hears it and then remind the Believer of the Truth he has heard:

¹²“I still have many things to tell you, but you can not bear them at this time. ¹³But when That Individual—the Spirit of the truth—comes, He will guide you into the whole truth. For

(1) *He will not speak of His Own accord, but*

(2) *He will speak only as much as He hears, and*

(3) *He will divulge to you the things that are going to come.”*

(John 16:12–13) —HSSB

The fourth thing you must remember is, the Truth of *The Teaching* is an amazingly detailed story of how God has worked in human history to *fulfill the promises* He made to a long list of individuals and groups, beginning with *the promise* He made to Adam and Eve when He booted them out of the Garden to die here on Earth, just as He *promised* them would happen if they *chose* to believe the Liar. The intricacies of that story, which one finds recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures is not something one can master with only a modicum of time spent in study. It is also something that the most intelligent, but unregenerate individual

will never be able to accept and understand. That is what Paul *meant* when he said this:

⁶(3) *Now*

(a) *we do speak a wisdom among those who are complete, yet not the wisdom of this current age nor of the rulers of this current age, who are going to be abrogated;*⁷*but*
(b) *we speak God's wisdom, which had been tucked away in*

(i) *a mystery that the living God decided on before-hand—before the past ages—as our glory;*
⁸(ii) *a mystery that none of the rulers of this current age has known; for they would not have crucified the Master of our glory if they had known it.*⁹*But*
(iii) *a mystery just as it has been written:*

“WHAT EYE HAS NEVER SEEN
AND EAR HAS NEVER HEARD
AND WHAT HAS NEVER COME UP ON A MAN'S HEART
IS WHAT THE LIVING GOD HAS PREPARED
FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM.”

¹⁰(4) *Yet the living God has revealed those things to us via the Spirit;*

(a) *for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of the living God.*

¹¹(b) *For who among men is aware of the thoughts of the man except the spirit of the man that is in him? So also nobody knows the thoughts of the living God except the Spirit of the living God.*

¹²(i) *So we did not receive the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from the living God, so that we would be aware of the things that have been granted to us as a favor by the living God,*¹³*which things we also talk about—not in words taught by human wisdom, but only in words taught by the Spirit, words that compare spiritual things to spiritual things.*

¹⁴(ii) *But a soulish man does not accept the things of the Spirit of the living God, for it is stupidity to him, so he is not able to know that he is being interrogated spiritually.*

¹⁵(iii) *But the spiritual man examines every last thing, yet he is not going to be interrogated by anybody.*

¹⁶(c) *FOR WHO HAS KNOWN HIS MAJESTY'S MIND? WHO IS THE ONE WHO WILL PUT IT ALL TOGETHER FOR HIM? But then we have the mind of the Anointed One.*
(1 Corinthians 2:6–16) —HSSB

My point in all of the foregoing is twofold. I am first warning the unregenerate reader that they need to apologize to the Lord and ask forgiveness if they truly want to gain anything more than an intellectual understanding of the Truth. But I am also warning the True Believer that the new birth is not the be-all and end-all that Pretenders have made it out to be. It is instead just the beginning of a lifelong quest to be transformed by the “renewing of the mind” that Paul mentions in this passage:

¹(1) *Therefore, I implore you, Brothers, via the compassion of the living God,*

(a) *to present your bodies as a living, holy sacrifice, well-pleasing to the living God—your logical priestly service;*²*and*

(b) *to not be shaped by this current age, but*

(c) *to be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you approve of what the will of the living God is—which is*

(i) *good and*

(ii) *well-pleasing and*

(iii) *complete.*

(Romans 12:1–2) —HSSB

Editor: *One of our Monthly Contributors has requested your help with regard to being born again in the following letter:*

“I am writing to you today in hopes that you can help me. I have been subscribing and contributing to your ministry for a couple of years now because I truly believe in Mr. Harper's calling and what he is teaching.

My problem arose when I read the questions on the application for the Next Step program. As I was confronted with the essay on myself and my rebirth experience I had to admit I don't think I have had one. I read some of the testimonies that I found in Mr. Harper's book and your newsletters and found I have never experienced anything like that, I have truly enjoyed reading them and find hope in them for me. I have read some of Charles Finney's

works and I believe Marcia Woody's testimony of rebirth and discovered I am too old to be reborn—or at least that is what I gleaned from those articles.

Is there an age limit or is it possible for us older folks to be reborn? I want to believe that God has no such limitation on who He saves and at what age. However, here I sit at 53 fervently believing the Gospel of Jesus Christ and everything I have learned so far from Mr. Harper yet no rebirth, I don't know what to do. I used to pray continuously to God that I just wanted to know the truth, that's it, just the truth—I couldn't stand this world and the way people are and the way society is, it was driving me mad. Somehow I found your website and ordered the free booklets and as I read the information in them and the newsletters online I felt such a relief and freedom from them, crying my way through each article, sometimes—most with tears of joy just knowing I was hearing the truth. Things finally started to make sense to me and I cannot describe to you how wonderful it felt and still feels to hear from someone who knows, understands and can explain the Gospel and Scriptures as Mr. Harper can. I give Thanks to God everyday for him and all of you that help him and work so hard so that others can have the opportunity to hear.

I don't know what to do now; I know I have much more to learn, much more than time I have left in my life I am sure; however I feel as if I shouldn't continue if I am a pretender—I feel like I am being yet even more disobedient to God to keep receiving the information if I have not been reborn. I have done that enough in my life, I don't wish to do it anymore.

Now these feelings and thoughts have been exacerbated by the death of my dad this week. I find myself struggling yet again with guilt, regret and a lot of anger (almost rage) toward myself for failing him, not being able to share my faith with him that he might be saved and not being willing to get to him before he died. I have found through my life that I have a much harder time forgiving myself than I do others. Yet I found out I was still angry with my dad even though I had forgiven him, I am still angry with him for some of the decisions he made to be so far away from me. So there it is; another lost sheep that can't seem to find or won't let myself find my way home. Usually when I am going through a trying time like this I recite to myself the Truths that Larry is teaching and that seems to help but my doubt creeps in about the rebirth experience and I cannot ignore it. I am writing to you because I want the truth no matter how much it hurts

and I can't/unwilling to talk to my 'christian' friends because they are saying the same old stuff to try to make me feel better, but that is just making things harder.

Thank you for your time and I am sorry if this seems incoherent, I have found that this grief is very challenging."

Elijah: Before I respond to this reader's question, let me show you what the Evangelist Charles Finney wrote that caused her such consternation. You will find it quoted on page 6 of the January 1997 newsletter:

Come then, repent and believe the gospel, if you would be saved. No election will hinder you, and neither will it save you without your own repentance unto life. How then shall the case turn with you? Almost all who are ever converted are brought in, early in life. Not one in a hundred is converted after the age of forty. The old among the converts are always few—only one among a host—one in a long space of time; like scattering beacon lights upon the mountain tops, that the aged may not quite despair of salvation.

(Charles Finney, *Sermons on the Way of Salvation* [Oberlin, Ohio: 1891], p. 161)

I am always amazed at how easily the "winds" (evil spirits) are able to interpret things that are written or said so that a person will believe something that was not actually meant. As you should be able to see, it does not say a person cannot be born again after the age of fifty. The individual who wrote you is being tested by the "winds" to see whether she will continue to seek the Truth or find comfort in believing a lie. Finney did not say an older person cannot be born again, he was merely stating what he found to be true in his ministry as an Evangelist in his own era. What he has stated may well not be true today.

If this bit of information provides any comfort, I have a very close friend who readily admits she made a total mess of her life before she found the Truth, yet she was born again when she was over the age of fifty. So here is my answer to the question asked: No, there is no age limit. All it takes is an honest sorrow for sin and a sincere apology. Those two requirements may be much more difficult for an older person to meet, considering the fact that we tend to be more stubborn and set in our "ways." But the good Lord knows when a person has met them, and He responds accordingly. ■

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And yet no temptation, when aiming at the discovery of the point which prompts the temptation by its doubtfulness, falls upon one so abruptly, as not to be preceded by the question which compels the temptation whilst raising the doubt.

Now, since the nativity of Christ had never come into question, how can you contend that they meant by their temptation to inquire about a point on which they had never raised a doubt? Besides, if He had to be tempted about His birth, this of course was not the proper way of doing it,—by announcing those persons who, even on the supposition of His birth, might possibly not have been in existence. We have all been born, and yet all of us have not either brothers or mother. He might with more probability have had even a father than a mother, and uncles more likely than brothers.

Thus is the temptation about His birth unsuitable, for it might have been contrived without any mention of either His mother or His brethren. It is clearly more credible that, being certain that He had both a mother and brothers, they tested His divinity rather than His nativity, whether, when within, He knew what was without; being tried by the untrue announcement of the presence of persons who were not present. But the artifice of a temptation might have been thwarted thus: it might have happened that He knew that those whom they were announcing to be “standing without,” were in fact absent by the stress either of sickness, or of business, or a journey which He was at the time aware of. No one tempts (another) in a way in which he knows that he may have himself to bear the shame of the temptation. There being, then, no suitable occasion for a temptation, the announcement that His mother and His brethren had actually turned up recovers its naturalness.

Tertullian, “On the Flesh of Christ,” Chap. vii, in Roberts and Donaldson (Eds.), *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (1885), Vol. 3, pp. 527–528.

The Voice of Elijah
P.O. Box 2257
Rockwall, TX 75087-2257
(972) 635-2021

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