



THE VOICE of ELIJAH

Restoring the hearts of the fathers to the children

If Time Were Not a Mobing Thing, ...

1. And now, since there is one of the articles of the Church which is held principally in consequence of our belief in the truth of our sacred history, viz., that this world was created and took its beginning at a certain time, and, in conformity to the cycle of time decreed to all things, is to be destroyed on account of its corruption, there seems no absurdity in re-discussing a few points connected with this subject. And so far, indeed, as the credibility of Scripture is concerned, the declarations on such a matter seem easy of proof. Even the heretics, although widely opposed on many other things, yet on this appear to be at one, yielding to the authority of Scripture.

Concerning, then, the creation of the world, what portion of Scripture can give us more information regarding it, than the account which Moses has transmitted respecting its origin? And although it comprehends matters of profounder significance than the mere historical narrative appears to indicate, and contains very many things that are to be spiritually understood, and employs the letter, as a kind of veil, in treating of profound and mystical subjects; nevertheless the language of the narrator shows that all visible things were created at a certain time.

But with regard to the consummation of the world, Jacob is the first who gives any information, in addressing his children in the words: "Gather yourselves together unto me, ye sons of Jacob, that I may tell you what shall be in the last days," or "after the last days." If, then, there be "last days," or a period "succeeding the last days," the days which had a beginning must necessarily come to an end. David, too, declares: "The heavens shall perish, but Thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old as doth a garment: as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end." Our Lord and Saviour, indeed, in the words, "He who made them at the beginning, made them male and female," Himself bears witness that the world was created; and again, when He says, "Heaven

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A Note From the Editor

One Truth vs. Speculation

From what has been published in the following articles, it is certain that the Truth is not something to be trifled with in the eyes of God:

When the leaders of the Church accepted Origen's assertion that he knew of an exegetical methodology whereby individual Church leaders could interpret the meaning of the Scriptures for themselves, it sounded the death knell for the concept of one Truth in Scripture that had for nearly two hundred years remained inherent in The Apostolic Teaching.

The Voice of Elijah®, January 1993, p. 24

*Wouldn't it be great to fellowship with True Believers who exhibit the unity of the Early Church? If you feel that way, keep one simple fact in mind: **The Early Church had unity only because True Believers had but "one faith" that is, one understanding of the Old Testament Gospel message of Jesus Christ.** Therefore, the unity the Early Church knew would only be possible today if we could somehow regain The Apostolic Teaching that was the original basis for it. Not likely, is it? But who knows? The One who walked on the Sea once can certainly do it again should He decide. (That's intended parabolically).*

The Voice of Elijah®, January 1993, p. 30

God did not create us to find the Truth on our own. He created us to learn the Truth from Him. If that were not the case, the revelation He provided in the Scriptures would not even be necessary. Therefore, those who have sought, or are still seeking, to find the Truth for themselves are nothing more than fools. And none are more foolish than those who take such great pride in their own stupendous mental capacity that they look for the Truth within themselves.

The Voice of Elijah®, April 1994, pp. 1, 3

*God requires belief in a specific content! If you focus on that content and **stay away from stupid speculation** about things that have no significance whatsoever, you will be able to "walk" in total freedom.*

The Voice of Elijah®, April 2011, p. 28

*The Law was a tutor (Gal. 3:23-4:5). The lesson it taught was "**our inability to enter into the kingdom of God of ourselves.**" The Pharisees failed to get the message, so the Jews went off into legalism. Origen and his cronies failed to get the message, so the Church went off into speculation. **The majority in the Church today will fail to get the message, so they'll go off into eternal damnation.***

The Voice of Elijah® Update, February 1994, p. 10

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Called to Teach

Fortunately, we are not left to our own devices to speculate and guess about the meaning of Scripture. Let us not “fail to get the message” like the majority of those who have gone before us have. In 1966, God called a Teacher, one last time, to set the record straight:

As I have stated repeatedly over the past decade, I am a Teacher. My goal as a Teacher is first to restore, and then to explain, The Apostolic Teaching for the benefit of True Believers. That is, I have been called to teach those who have already understood and believed the simple Truth of the Gospel.

In the Image and Likeness of God, Larry D. Harper, p. 4

If you are one of the very few in our generation who have had the incredibly humbling spiritual experience (what is commonly called the “new birth”) of an encounter with the living Word of God (what is commonly called “the Gospel”), I must tell you the Lord called me to show you the rest of “The Way.”

God Called; I Answered, Larry Dee Harper, p. 248

Questions & Answers

With that being said, if you have questions about the meaning of Scripture, you have come to the right place to ask those questions. No need to speculate. As Larry has always done, in this issue he responds to a question submitted to *The Voice of Elijah*® for the Q&A column publicly (in the pages of this newsletter) so that many will benefit from the response rather than privately, directly to the person who submitted the question. As a beneficiary of this format of public response, I’m grateful that Larry has chosen to take this approach. He’s been responding to questions in nearly every issue since the “Questions & Answers” column was first introduced in April 1991, so that we may all have access to the “one Truth.”

The main article in this issue is one such example: “Sheep Tend to Follow; Dogs Prefer to Do Whatever They Want.” This article is a 14-page response to a question submitted to *The Voice of Elijah*® for the

Q&A column. The question he addresses is, “Is there any sin more dangerous than another one before God?”

Questions Already Answered

Here are a few questions that have been answered in back issues through the years:

Another subscriber wanted to know why the logo for The Voice of Elijah® is a mushroom cloud. Would you explain what that image represents?

The Voice of Elijah®, January 2001, p. 27

Did the Garden of Eden that Adam and Eve “tended” prior to their fall exist here on Earth or somewhere else? If on Earth, do you have any insight as to where the Garden of Eden might have been located?

The Voice of Elijah®, July 2005, p. 25

Would you please explain to our readers the meaning and significance of “keeping the Sabbath day holy” and also explain why God included that particular commandment among the Ten Commandments?

The Voice of Elijah®, January 2006, p. 16

Do you think there is much hope of many folks being born again between now and the End?

The Voice of Elijah®, October 2006, p. 28

When the body dies, it turns to dust and ceases to exist, but what happens to the soul when it “dies”? ... Could you explain some things about the relationship between soul, body, blood, the death of the body, and the death of the soul?

The Voice of Elijah®, April 2007, p. 22

I’d love to include more, but space is limited. Answers to so many questions fill the pages of *The Voice of Elijah*® newsletters. Please submit your questions by email to webmaster@voiceofelijah.org or mail them to Voice of Elijah, P.O. Box 2257, Rockwall, TX 75087-2257. Larry will get to them as time and space allow—in the “Questions & Answers” column of *The Voice of Elijah*®.

In Him,

Marcia Harper

Sheep Tend to Follow; Dogs Prefer to Do Whatever They Want

Among the many questions I received for the “Questions & Answers” column of this newsletter was one question that required a bit more explaining than the others, so I decided to respond to it with this article. The question? “Is there any sin more dangerous than another one before God?” The answer to this question is a bit difficult to explain to folks who are locked into the definition of “sin” as a legalistic “you can do this, but you can’t do that.” But I will do the best I can to point out the basics. James tells us the following regarding things folks do not normally consider “sin”:

¹(1) My brothers, do not hold your **belief in God’s promise** concerning the glory of our Master, Jesus, the Anointed One with partiality. ²For if

(a) a man with a gold ring* comes into your synagogue in splendid apparel, and then

(b) a poor man also comes in, in filthy apparel, ³and then

(c) you look with favor on the one who is wearing the apparel that is splendid and say, “You sit here exceptionally well,” and

(d) you tell the one who is poor, “You stand over there or sit under my footstool,” ⁴have you not made a distinction among yourselves and become judges with nasty speculations?

⁵(2) Listen, my beloved brothers:

(a) Has the {living} God not chosen those who are poor in the world {to become}:

(i) wealthy through **belief in God’s promise** and

(ii) **heirs** of the kingdom that He **promised** to those who love Him? ⁶Yet you have dishonored the one who is poor.

(b) Do those who are wealthy not oppress you? They even drag you into lawsuits!

⁷(c) Do they not make false religious claims about the exceptionally good name that was called over you?

⁸However,

(3) if you complete {the} royal law in accordance with the Scripture—“YOU WILL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS MUCH AS YOURSELF,”—you are going to do exceptionally well. ⁹But

(4) if you are respecters of persons*, you are committing sin—being reprimanded by the law as violators.

¹⁰(a) For whoever keeps the entire law but trips over one thing has become {one who is} held accountable for everything {in the law}.

¹¹(b) For the One Who said, “YOU MUST NOT COMMIT ADULTERY” also said, “YOU MUST NOT MURDER.” So if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a violator of law.

¹²(5) Speak this way, and act this way: like those who are going to be judged by a law of freedom. ¹³For the sentence {is} without mercy* on the one who did not act in accordance with mercy. Mercy speaks derisively about sentencing.

(James 2:1–13) —HSSB

Did you hear what James said? He slipped the Truth in so deftly that most folks never stop to consider

the implications of what he said. So let me spell it out for you. This is what Jesus said about the issue:

³⁴So then, when the Pharisees heard that He had muzzled the Sadducees, they were gathered at the same place; ³⁵and one of them—a lawyer—asked {Him} a question, testing Him, ³⁶“Teacher, in the Law, which commandment {is} most important?”

³⁷So He declared to him: “**YOU MUST LOVE HIS MAJESTY, YOUR GOD, WITH YOUR ENTIRE HEART AND WITH YOUR ENTIRE SOUL AND WITH YOUR ENTIRE UNDERSTANDING.**’ ³⁸**This is the first and most important commandment;** ³⁹**but a second {is} just like it, ‘YOU MUST LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS MUCH AS YOURSELF.’** ⁴⁰**The entire Law—as well as the Prophets—hangs on these two commandments.”**
(Matthew 22:34–40) —HSSB

At the risk of being redundant, let me ask you again: Did you hear what James said? Perhaps you didn’t notice where he is recapitulating what he heard his older Brother, Jesus, say on more than one occasion:

⁸However,

(3) if you complete {the} royal law in accordance with the Scripture—“**YOU WILL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS MUCH AS YOURSELF,**”—you are going to do exceptionally well. ⁹But

(4) if you are respecters of persons*, you are committing sin—being reprimanded by the law as violators.

¹⁰(a) For whoever keeps the entire law but trips over one thing has become {one who is} held accountable for everything {in the law}.

¹¹(b) For the One Who said, “**YOU MUST NOT COMMIT ADULTERY**” also said, “**YOU MUST NOT MURDER.**” So if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a violator of law.

(James 2:8–11) —HSSB

What Jesus said also bears repeating, so here it is:

³⁷So He declared to him: “**YOU MUST LOVE HIS MAJESTY, YOUR GOD, WITH YOUR ENTIRE HEART AND WITH YOUR ENTIRE SOUL AND WITH YOUR ENTIRE UNDERSTANDING.**’ ³⁸**This is the first and most important**

commandment; ³⁹**but a second {is} just like it, ‘YOU MUST LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS MUCH AS YOURSELF.’** ⁴⁰**The entire Law—as well as the Prophets—hangs on these two commandments.”**

(Matthew 22:37–40) —HSSB

The Apostle Paul says exactly the same thing in the Book of Romans:

¹(1) Every soul must submit to authorities who are superior; for there is no authority except {those that are} subject to God, so those who are, are those who have been assigned by God. ²So then the one who prepares himself to fight against authority has withstood the direction of the {living} God, so those who have withstood {authority} will receive judgment against themselves.

³(a) For the rulers are not {a source of} fear for good work, but only for awful {work}. So do you want not to be afraid of their authority? Do what is good, and you will have commendation because of it.

⁴(b) For to you he is God’s servant for what is good; but be afraid if you are doing what is awful, for he is not wearing his sword for no good reason.

(c) For he is God’s servant, an avenger, for anger on the one who is involved in what is awful. ⁵Wherefore, {there is} a pressing need to submit, not only because of His anger, but also because of your conscience.

⁶(d) For you also complete taxes for this reason; for God’s priestly ministers are those who are dedicated to this very thing.

⁷(i) Pay everyone what you owe:

(a) the tax to the one to whom {you owe} the tax;

(b) the custom to the one to whom {you owe} the custom;

(c) the fear to the one to whom {you owe} the fear;

(d) the honor to the one to whom {you owe} the honor.

⁸(ii) Do not owe {anyone} anything at all except to love one another;

(a) for the one who loves has fulfilled the other law.

⁹(b) For the {commandment is}:

*"YOU WILL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY;
YOU WILL NOT MURDER;
YOU WILL NOT STEAL;
YOU WILL NOT DESIRE,"*

*and if {there is} any other commandment,
it is summarized in this word, in the: "YOU
WILL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS MUCH AS YOUR-
SELF." ¹⁰Your love for your neighbor does not
do any awful work; therefore, your love {is
the} fulfillment of law.*

(Romans 13:1–10) —HSSB

On another occasion, Jesus spells it out clearly:

³³"Little children, I am going to be with you for a little while more. You will look for Me, and just as I told the Jews that 'where I am going, you cannot come,' I also tell you at this time. ³⁴**I am going to give you a new commandment—that you should love one another just as I loved you—so that you would also love one another.** ³⁵By this {love} everyone will know that you are My disciples—when you have love for one another."
(John 13:33–35) —HSSB

In his first epistle, John elaborates on what Jesus said about the eleventh commandment:

¹(4) Beloved brothers, you must not believe every spirit, but prove the spirits—{to determine} whether {a spirit} is part of the {living} God—because a lot of false prophets have gone out into the world.

²(a) you know the Spirit of the {living} God by this:

- (i) every spirit that acknowledges Jesus as the Anointed One Who has come in flesh is part of the {living} God, ³and
- (ii) every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not part of the {living} God. And this {spirit} is

- (a) the {spirit} of the one who opposes the anointing,
- (b) the one whom you have heard about—that he is going to come, yet he is now already in the world.

⁴(b) You are part of the {living} God, little children; so you have triumphed over them, because the One Who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

⁵(c) They are part of the world; for this reason they speak as part of the world, and the world listens to them.

⁶(d) We are part of the {living} God;

- (i) the one who knows the {living} God listens to us;
- (ii) whoever is not part of the {living} God does not listen to us. On this basis, we know the spirit of the truth and the spirit of the deception.

⁷(5) Beloved brothers, we must love one another, because

(a) our love is part of the {living} God; and
(b) everyone who loves has been engendered as part of the {living} God and knows the {living} God.

⁸(c) The one who does not love does not know the {living} God, because the {living} God is love!

⁹(d) The love of the {living} God has become well-known among us by this: because the {living} God sent His Son—His only engendered {Son}—into the world, so that we could live through Him.

¹⁰(e) His love is in This Individual,

- (i) not because we loved the {living} God,
- (ii) but because He loved us; and He sent His Son as a means of atonement for our sins!

¹¹(6) Beloved brothers, if the {living} God showed His love for us in this way, we also have an obligation to love one another.

¹²(a) Nobody has ever gotten a good look at God; if we love one another, the {living} God remains in us; and His love is completed by us. ¹³We know that we remain in Him and He in us by this: because He has given part of His Spirit to us.

¹⁴(i) So we have gotten a good look at {the Anointed One}, and we are providing testimony that the Father sent the Son as Savior of the world.

¹⁵Whoever it may be who acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of the {living} God, the {living} God remains in him, and he in the {living} God.

¹⁶(ii) So we know and trust the love that the {living} God has for us.

(b) The {living} God is love, and the one who remains in His love remains in the {living} God, and the {living} God remains in him.

¹⁷(i) His love for us has been completed by this, so that we may have self-assurance on the day of the sentencing. Because, just as That Individual is, we also are in this world.

¹⁸(ii) There is no fear in His love; but His complete love casts out our fear, because our fear has to do with chastening.

(c) So the one who is afraid has not been completed by His love.

¹⁹(d) We love because He first loved us.

²⁰(e) If anyone says that "I love the {living} God!" and hates his brother, he is a liar. For the one who does not love his brother—whom he has seen—cannot love the {living} God—Whom he has not seen! ²¹And we have this commandment from Him: that the one who loves the {living} God should also love his brother.

(1 John 4:1–21) —HSSB

Paul says essentially the same thing in his letter to the church in Galatia; but in that instance, he adds more context, which allows us to get to the crux of the issue:

¹(1) *The Anointed One freed us into His freedom;*

(a) stand {in His freedom}, therefore; and

(b) do not be ensnared again by a yoke of slavery.

²Take a look!

(i) I, Paul, tell you that if you are circumcised {by them}, the Anointed One will not provide you {any} benefit {at all}. ³So

(ii) I testify again to every man who is circumcised {by them}, that he is obligated to act in accordance with the entire Law.

⁴(2) You who are going to be acquitted by law have been discharged from the Anointed One; you have fallen away from His favor:

⁵(a) For we—in Spirit, on the basis of **belief in God's promise**—are eagerly looking forward to a hope of a declaration of not guilty.

⁶(b) For in the Anointed One, Jesus, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is capable of anything; but a **belief in God's promise** working in {us} through love {is capable}.

⁷(3) You were running exceptionally well; who hindered you so that {you} are not persuaded by the truth?

⁸(a) The persuasion* {is} not from the One Who is inviting you.

⁹(b) A small amount of leaven leavens the entire lump.

¹⁰(4) I have confidence in you in His Majesty that you will have your mind set on nothing else, but the one who is disturbing you will bear His judgment—whomever it may be that he is.

¹¹(a) But I, brothers, if I am still preaching circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? Then the deadfall trap of the cross would have been abrogated.

¹²(b) So I really wish that those who are causing you problems would cut themselves away from {you}!

¹³(i) *For you were invited into freedom, brothers; only not the freedom for an opportunity for the flesh; but you must be slaves to one another through His love.*

¹⁴(ii) *For the whole Law is fully complete in one word, in the {commandment}, "YOU WILL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS MUCH AS YOURSELF."*

¹⁵But if you bite* and devour one another, watch out, so that you are not consumed by one another.

¹⁶(5) *But I say, "Walk in {the} Spirit, and you will definitely not complete a selfish desire of {the} flesh."*

¹⁷For

(a) the flesh desires {things that are} against the Spirit, but then

(b) the Spirit {desires things that are} against the flesh; for these {two} are opposed to one another, so that whatever it may be that you want to do, these things you do not do.

¹⁸(i) *But, if you are being led by {the} Spirit, you are not subject to Law.*

¹⁹(ii) But the works of the flesh is well-known, which is:

- (a) sexual promiscuity,
- (b) uncleanness,
- (c) licentiousness,
- ²⁰(d) idolatry,
- (e) drug dealing,
- (f) hostilities,
- (g) contentiousness,
- (h) jealousy,
- (i) rages,
- (j) self-centeredness,
- (k) disagreements,
- (l) sects,
- ²¹(m) envy,
- (n) drunkenness,
- (o) festivities, and
- (p) the things that are just like these things, which I tell you in advance—just as I told {you} before—that those who are involved in such things will not **inherit** God's kingdom.

²²(iii) But the fruit of His Spirit is

- (a) love,
- (b) joy,
- (c) peace,
- (d) patience,
- (e) benevolence,
- (f) goodness,
- (g) **belief in God's promise**,
- ²³(h) gentleness,
- (i) self-control.

(6) There is no law against such things. ²⁴So those who are part of the Anointed One, Jesus, have crucified the flesh along with its impulse and selfish desires. (Galatians 5:1–24) —HSSB

Did you notice the first “fruit” of the “Spirit” Paul mentions? It's love. But the seventh “fruit” on the list is “**belief in God's promise**,” and that one holds the key to understanding how the “Spirit” of God works in the True Believer to produce the “fruit” God requires.

To understand what I am going to explain, you first need to know what the Greek-speaking folks in the time of Christ had in mind when they used the Greek term that is normally translated “spirit” in the New Testament. Without delving too deeply into the Stoic/Canaanite/Hebrew origin of the Greek mind-set

with regard to the Greek term *pneuma*, I will simply tell you a “spirit” was anything that passed through the conscious mind. It included, but was not limited to, what an individual perceived through the five senses. In short, it was any word, thought, concept, or image that made a person act a certain way. That is what Moses had in mind when he wrote this:

¹[And it will happen] [when] [all] [These] [Words] [have come] [upon You]—[**The Blessing**] [and The Curse] [that] [I have put] [before You]—[and You have been restored] [to] [Your Heart] [among all] [The Gentiles] [where] [His Majesty], [Your God], [has banished You], ²[and You return] [to] [His Majesty], [Your God], [and listen to] [His Voice] [in accordance with everything] [that] [I] [am commanding You] [Today]—[You] [and Your Sons]—[with all] [Your Heart] [and with all] [Your Soul], ³[then [His Majesty], [Your God], will bring {You} back from] [Your Captivity]; [and He will have compassion on You] [and return] [and gather You] [out of all] [The Peoples] [where] [His Majesty], [Your God], [has dispersed You]. ⁴[If] [Your Banished One] [is] [at {the} End of] [The Sea of Waters], [His Majesty], [Your God], [will gather You] [from there]; [and from there] [He will take You]. ⁵[And [His Majesty], [Your God], will bring You] [into] [The Land] [that] [Your Fathers] [have taken possession of]; [and You will take possession of it], [and He will do good things for You] [and increase You] [more than Your Fathers].

⁶[And [His Majesty], [Your God], will circumcise] [Your Heart] [and The] [Heart] [of Your Seed], [to love] [His Majesty], [Your God], [with all] [Your Heart] [and with all] [Your Soul]—[so that] [You live]. ⁷[And [His Majesty], [Your God], will put] [all] [These] [Oaths] [on] [Your Enemies] [and on] [those who hate You], [who] [pursued You]. ⁸[So You] [will come back] [and listen] [to {the} Voice] [of His Majesty], [and You will act in accordance] [with] [all of] [His Commandments]—[the ones that] [I] [am commanding You] [Today].

⁹[Then [His Majesty], [Your God], will leave You a remnant] [because of all] [That Your Hand Has Done]—[in {the} Fruit of] [Your Belly] [and in {the} Fruit of] [Your Beasts] [and in {the} Fruit of] [Your Ground]—[for What Is Good]:

(1) [because] [His Majesty] [will return] [to being elated] [over You] [for What Is Good], [just as] [He was elated] [over] [Your Fathers];

¹⁰(2) [because] [You will listen] [to {the} Voice] [of His Majesty], [Your God], [to stand watch over] [His Commandments] [and His Statutes]—[the thing that is written] [in [This] Scroll] [of The Teaching];

(3) [because] [You will come back] [to] [His Majesty], [Your God], [with all] [Your Heart] [and with all] [Your Soul];

¹¹(4) [because] [This] [Commandment] [that] [I] [am commanding You] [Today] [is] [not] [too [incomprehensible] for You] [and [is] not] [far away].

¹²(a) [It is] [not] [in The Sea of Waters], [saying], [Who] [will ascend] [for us] [to The Sea of Waters] [and take it] [for us] [so that we may hear it] [and act in accordance with] [it]?'

¹³(b) [And [it is] not] [from {the} Area Beyond] [{the} Sea], [saying], [Who] [will cross over] [for us] [to] [The Area Beyond] [The Sea] [and take it] [for us] [so that we may hear] [it] [and act in accordance with it]?'

¹⁴(5) [because] [The Word] {is} [very] [near] [to You]—[in Your Mouth] [and in Your Heart]—[so that {You} may act in accordance with it]."

(Deuteronomy 30:1–14) —my interim translation

If you don't know the things I explained about the Hebrew idiom "cut off from" in a book titled *Not All Israel Is Israel*, you have no way of knowing why all the second person singular pronouns (You) in that passage are speaking to Jesus Christ as *Corporate Israel* after His Baptism. More than that, if you don't know what I explained in an article titled "Did Jesus Leave a Will?" (*The Voice of Elijah*®, July 1991), you have no idea as to how True Believers come to stand in the same relationship to God that Jesus had after His Baptism. Lacking that understanding, you certainly will not be able to understand why, in the following passage, the Apostle Paul quotes what Moses said in Deuteronomy 30:

³⁰(1) Therefore, what can we say? That

(a) Gentiles, who were not pursuing a declaration of not guilty, grasped a declaration of not guilty—but a declaration of not guilty that is on the basis of **belief in God's promise**; ³¹but

(b) Israel—those who are pursuing a law with a declaration of not guilty—have not attained to {such} a law. ³²Why? Because

(i) {their pursuit is}

(a) not on the basis of **belief in God's promise**,
(b) but only as if it were on the basis of works.

(ii) They have stumbled over the stone of the thing that causes stumbling, ³³just as it has been written:

"GUESS WHAT! I AM GOING TO PUT A STONE OF SOMETHING THAT CAUSES STUMBLING DOWN IN ZION—

EVEN A ROCK OF A DEADFALL TRAP,

AND THE ONE WHO **BELIEVES GOD'S PROMISE** REGARDING HIM WILL NOT BE EMBARRASSED."

¹(2) Brothers, the thing that is delightful to my heart and my petition to the {living} God for their sake {is}, in fact, for {their} salvation.

²(a) For I provide testimony about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with full knowledge of the truth.

³(b) For, not understanding the declaration of not guilty of the {living} God and seeking to make their own declaration of not guilty stand, they have not submitted to the {living} God's declaration of not guilty.

⁴(3) For the Anointed One {is}—in a declaration of not guilty—the consummation of Law for anyone who **believes God's promise**.

⁵(a) For Moses writes the declaration of not guilty that is on the basis of the law—that "THE MAN WHO HAS ACTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEM WILL LIVE BY THEM."

⁶But the declaration of not guilty on the basis of **belief in God's promise** says {it} this way:

(i) "DO NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART, 'WHO WILL GO UP INTO HEAVEN?'" That is, to bring the Anointed One down. ⁷Or

(ii) "WHO WILL GO DOWN INTO THE ABYSS?" That is, to bring the Anointed One up from those who are dead. ⁸But what does it say?

(iii) "THE STATEMENT {He} MADE IS NEAR YOU—IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART." *That is, the statement {He} made concerning the belief in God's promise that we are preaching, ⁹that if:*

- (a) *you acknowledge Jesus as His Majesty with your mouth; and*
- (b) *you believe in your heart that the {living} God raised Him from those who are dead, you will be saved.*

¹⁰(b) *For one believes God's promise in {his} heart, resulting in a declaration of not guilty, but the truth {of God's promise} is acknowledged with {the} mouth, resulting in salvation.*

¹¹(i) *For the Scripture says: "ANYONE WHO BELIEVES GOD'S PROMISE REGARDING HIM WILL NOT BE EMBARRASSED."*

¹²(ii) *For there is no difference between both Jew and Greek.*

(a) *For the same {Person is} Master of every-one—One Who is wealthy for all who make an appeal to Him.*

¹³(b) *For "ANYONE WHO IT MIGHT BE WHO MAKES AN APPEAL TO THE NAME OF HIS MAJESTY WILL BE SAVED."*

¹⁴(i) *How, therefore, could they make an appeal to the One about Whom they have not believed God's promise? And then*

(ii) *how could they believe God's promise about the One Whom they have not heard? And then*

(iii) *how could they hear about {God's promise} without one who is preaching?*

¹⁵*And then*

(iv) *how could they preach {God's promise} if they have not been sent? Just as it has been written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL {are} THE FEET OF THOSE WHO PROCLAIM GOOD THINGS AS THE GOOD NEWS OF THE FULFILLMENT OF THE PROMISE!"*

¹⁶(4) *But they did not all attentively listen to the good news of the fulfillment of the promise and comply with its demands.*

(a) *For Isaiah says:*

"YOUR MAJESTY!

WHO HAS BELIEVED THE NEWS WE HAVE?"

¹⁷(i) *So then your belief in God's promise {is} on the basis of hearing,*

(ii) *but your hearing {is} via a statement made concerning the Anointed One.*

¹⁸(b) *But I say, "Have they absolutely not heard {what He said}?" On the contrary:*

"THE SOUND THEY MAKE HAS GONE OUT
INTO THE WHOLE EARTH;
AND THE STATEMENTS THEY MADE,
TO THE ENDS OF THE CIVILIZED WORLD."

¹⁹(c) *But I say, "Did Israel absolutely not know {what God said}?"*

(i) *First, Moses says:*

"I WILL NOT MAKE YOU JEALOUS
BY {just any} GENTILE;
I WILL MAKE YOU ANGRY
BY A GENTILE LACKING INSIGHT."

²⁰(ii) *But Isaiah is very forthright*, and {with regard to the Gentiles} he says:*

"I WAS FOUND BY THOSE WHO
WERE NOT LOOKING FOR ME;
I BECAME APPARENT TO THOSE WHO
WERE NOT ASKING ME A QUESTION."

²¹(iii) *But with regard to Israel He says:*

"I HAVE EXTENDED* MY HANDS THE ENTIRE DAY
TO A PEOPLE WHO IS DISPUTING
AND NOT PERSUADED BY GOD'S PROMISE."

(Romans 9:30–10:21) —HSSB

If you are having difficulty following my train of thought, it could be that you have a completely different mind-set than I do. If that is the case, let me remind you Paul said something that may pertain to your situation:

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

(i) of this current age nor

(ii) 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 beforehand—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 {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 2:1–16) —HSSB

Now, how do you suppose Believers in Paul's day could have come to have the mind of the Lord? Well, it's like this: They listened to the things Paul and the other Apostles taught them about the meaning and significance of the things stated in the Hebrew Scriptures. As a result of that, they were able to "see" how the Lord thinks and acts. The Prophet Isaiah puts it this way:

⁶[Diligently seek] [His Majesty] [while He can be found];
[Call out to Him] [while He is] [near].

⁷[Let [a guilty {man}] abandon] [his Way];
[And a [contentious] Man], [his Thoughts],
[So that he may return] [to] [His Majesty],
[So that He may have compassion on him],
[And to] [our God];

(1) [Because] [He will [forgive] much].

⁸(2) “[Because] [My Thoughts]
{are} [not] [your Thoughts],
[And your Ways] {are} [not] [My Ways],”
[declares] [His Majesty].

⁹(3) “[Because] [{the} Sea of Waters] [are higher]
[than {the} Earth],
[So also] [My Ways] [are higher] [than your Ways];
[And My Thoughts], [than your Thoughts].”

¹⁰(4) [Because],

(a) [just as] [The Rainfall] [and The Snow]
[Comes down] [from] [The Sea of Waters],
[And [he does [not] return] there]
[Unless]:

(i) [He satisfies the thirst of] [The] [Earth],
(ii) [And causes her to engender]
(ii) [And causes her to sprout],
(iv) [And gives] [Seed] [for {the}
one who is sowing]
[And Bread] [for {the}
one who is eating].

(b) ¹¹[So also] [My Word] [will be]
[One Who] [goes out] [of My Mouth];
[He will [not] return] [to Me]
[without {doing} anything]
[Unless]:

(i) [He does] [what] [I want],
(ii) [And makes [what] [I sent Him {for}]
successful].

(Isaiah 55:6–11) —my interim translation

The “Word” mentioned in verse 11 is the same
“Word” John had in mind when he said this:

¹*In the beginning, there was the Word; and the Word was with the {living} God, and the Word was God.* ²*This Individual was with the {living} God in the beginning.* ³*Everything has come into being via Him, and not even one thing that has come into being has come into being apart from Him.* ⁴*Life was in Him, and His life was the Light of men.* ⁵*So the Light appears in the darkness, yet the darkness has never grasped it.*

⁶*A man who had been sent from God came; his name {was} John.* ⁷*This individual came for a testimony,*

(1) so that he could provide testimony about the Light,

(2) so that everyone could **believe God’s promise** via him.

⁸*That individual was not the Light, but {he came} so that he could provide testimony about the Light.*

⁹*The Light was the real {Light}, the One Who provides light for every man who comes into the world.* ¹⁰*He was in the world, and the world came into being via Him, yet the world did not know Him.* ¹¹*He came to His Own, and His Own did not take Him to themselves.* ¹²*So then, to as many as accepted Him, to them—to those who **believe God’s promise** about His name—He gave authority to become God’s children:* ¹³*those who were not engendered*

(1) by blood or
(2) by {the} will of flesh or
(3) by {the} will of man,

but {were} only {engendered} by {the will} of God.

¹⁴*So the Word became flesh and camped out among us; and we got a good look at His glory—like {the} glory of an only engendered {son} from a father, {a glory} completely full of a favor and truth.* ¹⁵*John was providing testimony about Him. He even shouted, saying, “This Individual was the One about Whom I said, ‘The One Who is going to come after me was before me, because He was better than me.’”*

¹⁶(1) *Because we have all **received** some of His fullness, even a favor in exchange for a favor.*

¹⁷(2) *Because the Law was given via Moses; the favor and the truth came via Jesus, the Anointed One.*

¹⁸*Nobody has ever seen God; {the} only engendered God, Who is in the fold of the Father’s garment, That Individual has described {Him} at length.*
(John 1:1–18) —HSSB

Now that I have shown you just a few of the many passages that feed into the mind-set required to understand the most “dangerous” sin, it’s time for me to put up or shut up. That most “dangerous” sin is normally called “the unpardonable sin”:

²⁴*But when the Pharisees heard {what they were saying}, they said, “This Individual does not cast out the demons except by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons.”*

²⁵So then, aware of their contemplations, He told them: "Any kingdom that has been divided against itself is going to be deserted, and any city or house that has been divided against itself will not stand. ²⁶So if Satan is casting out Satan, he has been divided against himself; therefore, how can his kingdom stand? ²⁷So, if I am casting out the demons by Beelzebul, by whom are your sons casting {them} out? For this reason they will be your judges. ²⁸But if I am casting out the demons by God's Spirit, then the kingdom of the {living} God has overtaken you. ²⁹Or how can anyone come in to the house of the one who is mighty and snatch up his containers if he does not bind the one who is mighty first? And then he can carry off his house as plunder.

³⁰The one who is not with Me is against Me, and the one who is not gathering with Me is dispersing. ³¹For this reason I tell you, **every sin and false religious claim will be forgiven men, but the false religious claim about the Spirit will not be forgiven.** ³²And whoever it may be who has spoken a word against the Son of the man, it will be forgiven him; but **whoever it might be who has spoken against the Spirit that is holy, it will not be forgiven him, neither in this current age nor in the one that is going to come.**"
(Matthew 12:24–32) —HSSB

Mark records the same event this way:

²⁰Then He comes into a house; and the crowd comes together again, with the result that they could not eat—not even a loaf of bread. ²¹And when those who were with Him heard {what was happening}, they came to grab hold of Him; for they were saying that He was beside Himself. ²²And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying that "He has Beelzebul," and that "He is casting out the demons by the ruler of the demons."

²³So, after summoning them, He was saying to them in comparisons: "How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴And if a kingdom has been divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵And if a house has been divided against itself, that house cannot stand. ²⁶So if Satan has risen up against himself and has been divided, he cannot stand; but he is going to have a consummation. ²⁷But nobody, after coming into the house of the one who is mighty, can ever carry off his containers as plunder unless he has bound the one who is mighty first. And then he can carry off his house as plunder.

²⁸Without doubt, I tell you that all the sinful acts and false religious claims of the sons of men will be forgiven—

as much as it may be that they make false religious claims about—²⁹but **whoever it might be who makes false religious claims about the Spirit that is holy is not going to have forgiveness in the current age, but is going to be held accountable for an eternally sinful act,**" ³⁰because they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit."
(Mark 3:20–30) —HSSB

Luke puts a slightly different slant on the issue when he describes another occasion on which Jesus broached the topic:

⁸"So I tell you, anyone, whoever it might be **who has acknowledged the truth with regard to Me** in front of men, the Son of the man will also acknowledge the truth with regard to him in front of the messengers of the {living} God. ⁹But the one **who denies Me** before men will be emphatically denied before the messengers of the {living} God. ¹⁰And **anyone who speaks a word against the Son of the man, it will be forgiven him; but it will not be forgiven the one who has made false religious claims about the Holy Spirit.** ¹¹So then, whenever they bring you in before the synagogues and the rulers and authorities, you should not be concerned about how or what defense you should present, or what you should say. ¹²For the Holy Spirit will teach you at that very hour what {you} should say."
(Luke 12:8–12) —HSSB

Did you see how Jesus contrasts the phrase "who has acknowledged the truth with regard to Me" with the phrase "who denies Me"? He did that in order to equate denial of the Truth regarding Him with a denial of Him. And He did it intentionally because He is the "Word" one must believe in order to be saved, and that "Word" is also the Holy "Spirit" that lies hidden in the true meaning and significance of the Hebrew Scriptures. It is, in fact, a revelation of God Himself simply because He is what He believes in the same way that we are what we believe.

Look at it this way: The only way to really know a person is to listen to what they say and compare it to what they do. If those two don't match, you know full well you are dealing with a person who is a liar, which means you can pretty much discard everything they say and beware of everything they do. In other words, you can't trust anything they say or do.

Now that you know denial of the Truth hidden in the Hebrew Scriptures is a denial of Christ, let's talk about "the unpardonable sin"—the most "dangerous" sin you can commit. In the passages I showed you, Matthew, Mark, and Luke all agree "the unpardonable sin" is making "false religious claims about the Holy Spirit." That being the case, logic dictates the commission of that sin is only possible by someone who is familiar with the Truth, which is precisely what the Apostle Peter had in mind when he wrote the following with regard to those who turned back from the Truth:

¹(1) But there were also false prophets among the people, as also there will be false teachers* among you, who will

(a) surreptitiously introduce* sects of eternal damnation and

(b) deny the Slave Owner Who bought them, bringing upon themselves an imminent eternal damnation.

²(2) And many will take off after {them} in their licentiousness, because of whom the way of the truth will have false religious claims made about it.

³(3) And in selfishness they will trade on you with fabricated* words, for whom the judgment from long ago is not idle*, and their eternal damnation is not nodding off.

⁴(4) For if:

(a) the {living} God did not spare messengers who sinned, but after imprisoning {them} in Tartarus* with cords* of nether gloom,

(b) He handed those who are being kept over for sentencing; ⁵and

(c) He did not spare the ancient world; but

(d) He kept an eighth, Noah, a preacher of a declaration of not guilty, after bringing a flood upon the world of {the} depraved; ⁶and

(e) He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah when {He} burned {them} to ashes* in an overthrowing that was put down as a perfect example of those who are going to be depraved; ⁷and

(f) He delivered blameless Lot, who was being harassed by the behavior of those who were morally corrupted by licentiousness—⁸for the one who was blameless, by seeing* and hearing {them} while dwelling* among them day after day, was tormenting {his} blameless soul by {their} lawless works—⁹His Majesty knows how to

(i) deliver a godly {person} from testing, yet
(ii) keep watch over those who are unjust—those who are being detained for {the} day of sentencing; ¹⁰yet in particular,

(a) those who go after flesh with a selfish desire for defiling {themselves*} and

(b) those who despise lordship.

(5) As pig-headed risk takers*, they do not tremble when making false religious claims about {His} glory, ¹¹where messengers, who are more tremendous in might and supernatural power, do not bring a false religious claims sentence against them before His Majesty.

¹²(6) But these individuals {are} like irrational natural living creatures that have been engendered for capture* and a perishable body; about which {things} those who are making false religious claims do not understand.

(a) They will also be beguiled by their own perishable body:

¹³(i) those who are going to be harmed as a wage for injustice;

(ii) those who deem pleasure during {the} day-time as their luxury;

(iii) those who are stains and blemishes* living luxuriously* in their deceit, while feasting together with you;

¹⁴(iv) those who have restless* eyes full of an adulteress and sin;

(v) those who are enticing unsettled souls;

(vi) those who, having a heart that has been trained in selfishness, {are} children of a curse;

¹⁵(vii) those who straightaway leave {the} way behind.

(b) They have been led astray after taking off after {them} in the way of Balaam, the {son} of Beor*, who loved a wage of injustice; ¹⁶but he had a public rebuke* for his own illegality*. A pack animal without a voice that spoke something openly in a man's voice, prevented the insanity* of the Prophet.

¹⁷(7) These individuals are:

(a) *springs without water and*
 (b) *mists* that are being propelled by a gale force*
wind, for whom the nether gloom of the nether
darkness has been kept.

¹⁸(i) *For those who openly speak pompous things*
about futility are—through {the} selfish desires of
{the} flesh for licentiousness—enticing those who
briefly escape from*

(a) *those who conduct themselves within a*
deception—

¹⁹(b) *those who are promising them freedom*
while being slaves of their perishable body
themselves. For by whatever someone is
overcome, to this he has been made a slave.

²⁰(ii) *For if those who have escaped from the*
defilements of the world by full knowledge of*
the truth concerning our Master and Savior,
Jesus, the Anointed One, are then overcome by
being entangled again in these things, for them
the last has become worse than the first.

²¹(iii) *For it was better for them not to have*
realized that the way of the declaration of not
guilty is true, rather than, after realizing {it}
is true, to turn back from the holy command-
ment that was handed over to them.

²²(8) *The {reality} of the true proverb has happened to them:*

"A DOG THAT HAS RETURNED TO HIS OWN VOMIT,*
and

"A sow, after bathing, to a wallow* of slime*."*

(2 Peter 2:1–22) —HSSB

Did you see what Peter says in verses 10 and 11? He says exactly the same thing that Jesus said about folks making "false religious claims about His glory." That is, they have made false claims regarding the Truth that God is. But in that passage, Peter also repeats a phrase that alludes to yet another bit of information you need to know to understand the nature of the most "dangerous" sin. It is clearly a "sin" that only a True Believer can commit. Peter confirms he has this in mind when he quotes the two proverbs in the final verse of the chapter.

The numbskulls Peter is talking about are folks who have gone back to believing the same lies they

believed before they heard and believed the Truth. That is, they have gone back to listening to the same "spirit" that dominated their thinking before they responded to the "Spirit" of God that is hidden in the Truth Moses and the Prophets explained in the Hebrew Scriptures. Peter reveals that when he says this:

²⁰(ii) *For if those who have escaped from the*
defilements of the world by full knowledge of*
the truth concerning our Master and Savior,
Jesus, the Anointed One, are then overcome by
being entangled again in these things, for them
the last has become worse than the first.

²¹(iii) *For it was better for them not to have*
realized that the way of the declaration of not
guilty is true, rather than, after realizing {it} is
true, to turn back from the holy commandment
that was handed over to them.

(2 Peter 2:20–21) —HSSB

When Peter says, "the last has become worse than the first," he is pointing to something Jesus said about the same thing. Matthew tells us Jesus said this:

³⁸At that time, some of the scribes and Pharisees responded to Him, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You."

³⁹But in response, He told them: "A nasty and adulterous generation diligently seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to her except the sign of Jonah the Prophet. ⁴⁰For indeed, just as JONAH WAS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER* THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS, so also the Son of the man will be in the heart of the Earth three days and three nights.

⁴¹Ninevite men will rise up with this generation at the sentencing and condemn it, because they apologized at the preaching of Jonah. So guess what! Something greater than Jonah {is} here! ⁴²{The} Queen of the South will arise with this generation at the sentencing and condemn it, because she came from the ends of the Earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon. So guess what! Something greater than Solomon {is} here!

⁴³But when the unclean spirit has come out of the man, it passes through places without water, seeking refreshment; and it does not find {any}. ⁴⁴Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came out.' And after coming back, it finds one who has leisure time, one who has been swept clean and put together. ⁴⁵Then it goes and

takes seven other spirits nastier than itself with it. And after coming in, it dwells in there; and **the last days of that man becomes worse than the first.** It will also be like this for this generation, which is nasty.”
(Matthew 12:38–45) —HSSB

In the following passage, Luke ties the statements Jesus makes in that passage to the things He says about “the unpardonable sin” in the passages I have shown you to this point; but to see that, you have to pay close attention to the context in which He makes all those statements:

¹⁴Then He was casting out a demon, and it was a deaf-mute {demon}; so it happened that, after the demon came out, the deaf-mute man spoke; and the crowds were amazed. ¹⁵But then some of them said, “**He is casting out the demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons.**”

¹⁶And then others, who were testing {Him}, were seeking a sign out of Heaven from Him. ¹⁷But He, aware of the train of their thoughts*, told them: “Any kingdom that has been divided up against itself is going to be deserted, and a house {divided up} against a house is going to fall. ¹⁸So then, if Satan has also been divided up against himself, how can his kingdom stand? Because **you say that I am casting out the demons by Beelzebul.** ¹⁹So then, if I am casting out the demons by Beelzebul, by whom are your sons casting {them} out? For this reason they will be your judges. ²⁰But if I am casting out the demons by God’s finger, then the kingdom of the {living} God has overtaken you.

²¹When the one who is mighty—who has been fully armed*—guards his own courtyard, his possessions is at peace. ²²But whenever one mightier than he, after coming upon {him}, triumphs over him, he takes away all of his armor in which he had confidence and hands out his spoils*. ²³The one who is not with Me is against Me, and the one who is not gathering with Me is dispersing.

²⁴When the unclean spirit has come out of the man, it passes through places without water seeking refreshment. And, not finding {any}, then it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came out.’ ²⁵And after coming back, it finds one who has been swept clean and put together. ²⁶Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits nastier than itself. And after coming in, it dwells in there; and **the last days of that man becomes worse than the first.**”

(Luke 11:14–26) —HSSB

Let me sum it up this way: The most “dangerous” sin a person can commit is to accuse God of lying. That’s the one that Eve committed when she believed Satan’s lie. So any person who has believed the Truth at any time and then gone back to believing the nonsense the “winds” are constantly peddling has done the very same thing that Eve did. In their case, forgiveness is not possible simply because they voluntarily turned themselves over to Satan. The following passage describes the *parabolic imagery* in *The Teaching of Moses* that depicts their circumstance:

¹[Now these] {are} [The Judgments] [that] [You must set] [before them]: ²[When] [You acquire] [a [Hebrew] Slave], [he may be a slave] [six] [Years]; [but in {the} seventh] [he must go out] [free]—[for nothing]. ³[If] [he comes in] [by himself], [he must go out] [by himself]. [If] [he is] [{the} Owner] [of a Woman], [then [his Woman] must go out] [along with him]. ⁴[If] [his Master] [gives] [him] [a Woman] [and she engenders] [Sons] [or] [Daughters] [for him], [The Woman] [and her Children] [belong] [to her Master]; [so he must go out] [by himself]. ⁵[But if] [The Slave] [emphatically] [says], ‘I love] [my Master], [my Woman], [and] [my Sons]; [I will [not] go out] [free],’ ⁶[so [his Master] must bring him] [to] [The {living} God], [then bring him] [to] [The Door] [or] [to] [The Doorframe]; [and [his Master] must puncture*] [his Ear] [with a Punch], [and he will be his slave] [for a Burning Eternity].”

(Exodus 21:1–6) —my interim translation

The point of what Moses says there and Peter says in 2 Peter 2:22 is, the proverbial “dog” who returns to its “vomit” or the “pig” that goes back to wallowing in the “mire” cannot come back to the Truth. Moreover, there is other biblical evidence that suggests Believers in the Apostolic Church considered those who at one time accepted the Truth and then turned back from it to be “dogs.” Paul says this about them:

¹(1) Finally, my brothers, rejoice in His Majesty. I do, in fact, have no hesitation to write the same things to you, but for you {I am} certain:

- ²(a) **you must watch out for those who are dogs;**
- (b) you must watch out for those who are awful workers;
- (c) you must watch out for those who are circumcised in the flesh*.

³(2) For we are those who are circumcised, those who:

- (a) are serving God's Spirit as priests and
- (b) are boasting about the Anointed One, Jesus, and
- (c) have no confidence in {the} flesh, ⁴even though I {am} one who has confidence even in {the} flesh.

(Philippians 3:1–4a) —HSSB

In the Book of Revelation, Jesus uses the same derogatory term to describe those who believe the Truth, then discard it and go back to believing lies:

¹²(b) "Guess what! I am going to come quickly; and My wage {is} with Me, to pay each one back as much as his work is.

¹³(i) I {am}

- (a) the A and the Z,
- (b) the first and the last,
- (c) the beginning and the consummation.

¹⁴(ii) Those who wash their long robes so that

- (a) their authority may be over the tree of life and
- (b) they may come into the city through her gates are fortunate.

¹⁵(iii) **The dogs** and

- (a) the drug dealers and
- (b) the sexually promiscuous individuals and
- (c) the murderers and
- (d) the idolaters and
- (e) everyone who is fond of—and acts in accordance with—a lie {will be} outside!"

(Revelation 22:12–15) —HSSB

It appears that Peter's use of the terms *dog* and *pig* to describe Believers who have turned back from the Truth is a carryover from the Jews' use of those terms to refer to anyone who was not a member of Corporate Israel. Even Jesus used them that way. In the following passage, He refers to some people positively as "sheep" and others negatively as "dogs":

²¹[And] [after leaving] [there], [Jesus] [withdrew] [into] [The] [Parts] [of Tyre] [and] [Sidon]. ²²[And] [grew

what!] [A [Canaanite*] Woman] [who came out] [of] [Those] [Environs] [was shouting], [saying]: "[Have mercy on] [me], [Your Majesty], [Son] [of David]! [My] [Daughter] [is [awfully] demon-possessed]."

²³[But] [He] [did [not] respond] [to her] [with a Word]. [So], [after [His] [Disciples] approached], [they were asking [Him] {to respond to her}], [saying], "[Dismiss] [her], [because] [she is shouting] [behind] [us]."

²⁴[So], [in response], [He] [said], "[I was [not] sent] [except] [to] [The] [Sheep] [of Israel's] [House] [that] [have been done away with]."

²⁵[But then], [after coming] [to Him], [she] [was paying homage {to Him}], [saying], "[Your Majesty]! [Help] [me]!"

²⁶[But] [in response], [He] [said], "[It is] [not] [at all good] [to take] [The] [Children's] [Bread] [and] [throw {it}] [to The] [Little Dogs]."

²⁷[But] [she] [said], "[Yes it is], [Your Majesty], [for] [even] [The] [Little Dogs] [eat] [some of] [The] [Scraps] [that] [fall] [from] [The] [Table] [of] [their] [Owners]."

²⁸[At that time], [in response], [Jesus] [told] [her], "[O] [Woman], [Your] [Belief in God's Promise] {is} [tremendous]; [let it be done] [for You] [as] [You want]."

[And] [her] [Daughter] [was healed] [at] [That] [very] [Hour].
(Matthew 15:21–28) —HSSB

That is not the only time Jesus used a derogatory term to describe the reality in which those who do not know the Truth reject logic and reason in favor of the lies in which they take great comfort. On another occasion, the Lord says those who know the Truth had best watch out for how much they say about *The Teaching* to those who don't accept it as valid:

"[Do [not] give] [what is] [holy] [to The] [Dogs] [or] [throw] [your] [Pearls] [in front] [of The] [Pigs], [lest perhaps] [they might trample on] [them] [with] [their] [Feet] [and]—[after turning around]—[rip [you] apart]."

(Matthew 7:6) —HSSB

The "dogs" and "pigs" who haven't even bothered to read—much less try to understand—the *meaning* and *significance* of the Bible they claim to believe don't know it, but the "Spirit" hidden in that sacred text is about to reveal His "glory" in the fire billowing out of the pillar and cloud of a nuclear holocaust. It's "wake-up" time! ■



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

Editor: A recent question came in asking, “Is there any sin more dangerous than another one before God?”

Elijah: That question requires a lot more space to answer than the others, so I’ll respond to it in the main article for this issue.

Editor: A gentleman called our home office and asked this question about election:

“My question is if we are predestined by God’s Sovereign election to be saved and if not, what is the point of trying to read the Bible or understand the scriptures when the natural man can’t understand spiritual things. I am struggling with assurance. What if I am one who did not receive the effectual calling from the Holy Spirit. I guess my question is if one isn’t one of God’s elect can one truly be saved without being called?”

Elijah: My first reaction on reading this question is exactly the same reaction Jesus had when asked a question based on completely erroneous presuppositions:

²³On that day, Sadducees—those who say that there is no resurrection—approached Him and asked Him a question ²⁴saying: “Teacher, Moses said, ‘If SOMEONE WHO DOES NOT HAVE CHILDREN DIES, HIS BROTHER MUST, AS NEXT OF KIN, MARRY* HIS WOMAN AND RAISE UP A SEED FOR HIS

BROTHER.’” ²⁵So then, there were seven brothers with us; and after the first married, he came to an end; and, not having a seed, he left his woman to his brother. ²⁶Likewise also the second, and the third, up to the seventh. ²⁷And then later, the woman {that} all {of them} had died. ²⁸Therefore, of the seven, whose woman will she be in the resurrection; for all {of them} had her?”

²⁹So, in response, Jesus told them: “Not being aware of the Scriptures or the supernatural power of the {living} God, you are being led astray. ³⁰For they neither marry nor are given in marriage in the resurrection, but are like {the} messengers in Heaven. ³¹But about the resurrection of the dead, have you not read the statement that was made to you by the {living} God, which says, ³²‘I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM AND THE GOD OF ISAAC AND THE GOD OF JACOB?’ He is not the God of those who are dead, but only of those who are alive.” ³³And when the crowds heard {what He said}, they were astounded by His doctrinal teaching. (Matthew 22:23–33) —HSSB

The individual who asked this question is focused myopically on Satan’s lie regarding the definition of the following two terms:

1. predestination
2. election

For rabid Calvinists, one’s understanding (or should I say, “misunderstanding”) of the following text depends on how those two terms are defined:

²⁷(1) So then the One Who searches our hearts is aware of what the mind-set of His Spirit is, because He files petitions in agreement with God for the sake of holy ones.

²⁸(a) So then we are aware that He works everything together for good for those who love the {living} God—those who are invited in accordance with {His} plan. ²⁹Because:

- (i) He knew beforehand and decided beforehand on those who {would be} in conformity with the image of His Son, so that He would be a Firstborn among many brothers; ³⁰and then
- (ii) He also invited these individuals whom He decided on beforehand; and

(iii) He also acquitted these individuals whom He invited; and then
 (iv) He also glorified these individuals whom He acquitted.

³¹(b) Therefore, what can we say about these things? If the {living} God {is} for us, who is against us?

³²(2) Indeed, how could the One Who did not spare His Own Son, but handed Him over for all of us, not also—together with Him—grant us every last thing as a favor?

³³(a) Who can bring charges against God's chosen ones? God {is} the One Who acquits {us}!

³⁴(b) Who is the one who condemns {us}? The Anointed One, Jesus, {is}:

- (i) the One Who died—but rather, arose;
- (ii) the One Who is also at the {living} God's right hand;
- (iii) the One Who also files petitions for us.

(Romans 8:27–34) —HSSB

The term *predestination*, as it is defined by Calvinists seeking refuge in a lie (the “once-saved, always-saved” nonsense), is normally defined on the basis of this verse:

Because He knew beforehand and decided beforehand on those who {would be} in conformity with the image of His Son, so that He would be a Firstborn among many brothers.
 (Romans 8:29) —HSSB

The fools who think they have an irrevocable ticket on the express train to Heaven have no idea what the phrase “on those who would be in conformity with the image of His Son” is even referring to. They don't know it, but their belief in a lie is going to result in a monumentally horrifying feeling in the pit of their stomach when they realize Satan pulled a fast one on us all and they swallowed it—hook, line, and sinker. In Matthew 7, Jesus warns folks like them and gives a graphic account of the experience awaiting them if they continue to hold on to the lie:

¹³“[Come in] [through] [The] [narrow] [Gate], [because] [The] [Gate] [that] [leads {men} away] [to]

[Eternal Damnation] {is} [a Thoroughfare]; [and] [The] [Way] {is} [spacious*], [and] [those who] [come in] [through] [it] [are] [many]. ¹⁴[How] [narrow] {is} [The] [Gate] [and] [constricted] [The] [Way] [that] [leads {men} away] [into] [His] [Life]? [And] [those who] [find] [it] [are] [just a few].

¹⁵[Beware] [of] [The] [False Prophets], [who] [come] [to] [you] [in] [Sheep's] [Clothing], [but] [are] [avaricious] [Wolves] [on the inside]. ¹⁶[You can recognize] [them] [by] [their] [Fruits]. [They do] [not, by any means], cull] [Bunches of Grapes] [from] [Thorns] [or] [Figs] [from] [Thistles]! ¹⁷[So also], [every] [good] [Tree] [produces] [exceptionally good] [Fruit]; [but] [The] [rotten] [Tree] [produces] [nasty] [Fruit]. ¹⁸[A [good] Tree] [can] [not] [produce] [nasty] [Fruit]; [neither] [does] [a [rotten] Tree] [produce] [exceptionally good] [Fruit]. ¹⁹[Every] [Tree] [that is] [not] [producing] [exceptionally good] [Fruit] [is going to be cut off] [and] [thrown] [into] [a Fire]. ²⁰[So then] [you can, [indeed], recognize] [them] [by] [their] [Fruits].

²¹[Not] [everyone] [who] [says], ‘[Your Majesty]! [Your Majesty]!’ [to Me] [will come in] [to] [The] [Kingdom] [of The] [Heavens], [but only] [the one who] [acts in accordance with] [The] [Will] [of] [My] [Father], [Who is] [in] [The] [Heavens]. ²²[Many] [will say] [to Me] [on] [That] [Day], ‘[Your Majesty]! [Your Majesty]! [Did we] [not] prophesy] [in] [Your] [Name] [and] [cast out] [Demons] [in] [Your] [Name] [and] [do] [a lot of] [Supernaturally Powerful Things] [in] [Your] [Name]?’ ²³[And] [then] [I will acknowledge the truth about] [them], [that] ‘[I [never] knew] [you]! [YOU [WHO] [ARE COMMITTING] [THE] [LAWLESS DEED], DEPART] [FROM] [ME]!’

²⁴[Therefore], [anyone] [who] [hears] [These], [My] [Words], [and] [acts in accordance with] [them] [will be like] [a [sensible] Man] [who] [built] [his] [House] [on] [The] [Rock]. ²⁵[And] [The] [Rain] [came down], [and] [The] [Rivers] [came up], [and] [The] [Winds] [blew]. [Then] [they prostrated themselves] [in] [That] [House], [and] [it did] [not] [fall], [for] [it had been founded] [on] [The] [Rock]. ²⁶[And] [anyone] [who] [hears] [These], [My] [Words], [and] [does] [not] act in accordance with] [them], [will be like] [a [stupid] Man] [who] [built] [his] [House] [on] [The] [Sand]. ²⁷[And] [The] [Rain] [came down], [and] [The] [Rivers] [came up], [and] [The] [Winds] [blew]. [Then] [they stumbled] [in] [That] [House], [and] [it fell], [and] [its] [Fall] [was] [tremendous].”

(Matthew 7:13–27) —HSSB

The fools who are disseminating the “once-saved, always-saved” nonsense have no insight at all into what Jesus is referring to when He mentions “*The Way*” in that passage. The Truth is, He has in mind exactly the same thing He had in mind when He said this:

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.” (John 14:1–7) —HSSB

Folks today have no idea what “*The Way*” is, but it appears the leaders of the Jews in the time of Christ still understood it to be *The Teaching of Moses*, even if they had no idea what Moses taught. “*The Way*” of Moses is what they are referring to in this passage:

¹⁹Then the scribes and the high priests sought to put their hands on Him at that very hour, for they knew that He had spoken this comparison about them, yet they were afraid of the people. ²⁰So after carefully watching {Him}, they sent infiltrators* who were pretending* to be blameless themselves, so that they could take hold of Him because of {His response to} a question, so as to hand Him over to the rule and authority of the esteemed leader. ²¹So they asked Him a question, saying: “Teacher, we are aware that You speak and teach correctly, and You do not show partiality to anyone, but **You teach the way of the {living} God in truth.**” ²²Is it permissible for us to give a tax to Caesar or not?” (Luke 20:19–22) —HSSB

The Jews who asked that question mistakenly believed “*The Way*” to be “*The Way*” they were supposed to act. That is, they believed it to be a legalistic “do this,

and don’t do that.” The Truth is, “*The Way*” is, and always has been, the content of *The Teaching of Moses*, as I have long since explained in *The Mystery of Scripture, Volume 1*. From what Moses says in the following passage, you should be able to see “*The Way*” has to do with “*The Way*” we are supposed to think about God—*what we believe*—rather than the way we act. But that is the case only because God knows *what we believe* determines *what we do*:

⁷[Then [His Majesty] spoke] [to] [Moses]: “[Go]! [Go down]! [Because] [Your People]—[whom] [You brought up] [from {the} Land] [of Egypt]—[is corrupt].” ⁸[**They have [quickly] turned aside**] [from] [**The Way**] [that] [I commanded them]. [They made] [a [Cast Image] Calf] [for themselves] [and prostrated themselves] [to it] [and sacrificed a communal sacrifice] [to it] [and said], ‘[These] {are} [Your Gods], [O Israel], [who] [brought You up] [from the Land] [of Egypt]!’”

(Exodus 32:7–8) —my interim translation

When Moses crafted the third Old Covenant between the sons of Israel and the Lord, he warned them about those who would cause a “turning aside” from *The Teaching*:

¹“[When] [a Prophet] [or] [one who dreams] [Dreams] [stands up] [in Your midst] [and gives You] [a Sign] [or] [a Harbinger], ²[and [The Sign] [or The Harbinger] [that] [he spoke] [to You], [saying], ‘[Let’s walk] [behind] [other] [Gods]—[those whom] [You have [not] known]—[and let’s be their slaves]’ comes to pass], ³[**You must [not] listen**] [to] [{the} Words of] [**That**] [**Prophet**] [or] [to] [**That**] [**one who dreams**] [Dreams] [because] [His Majesty], [your God], [is testing] [you] [to know], [Are you] [those who love] [His Majesty], [your God], [with all] [your Heart] [and with all] [your Soul]? ⁴[You must walk] [behind] [His Majesty], [your God], [and [you must fear] Him], [and [you must observe] His Commandments], [and [you must listen to] His Voice], [and you must be [His] slave], [and [you must cling] to Him]. ⁵[But [That] Prophet] [or] [That] [one who dreams] [Dreams] [must be put to death], [because] [he spoke] [a **Turning Aside**] [against] [His Majesty], [your God]—[the One Who brought [you] out] [of {the} Land] [of Egypt] [and ransomed You] [from a House] [of Slaves]—[to banish you] [from] [**The Way**] [in] [which] [His Majesty], [Your God],

[commanded You] [to walk]. [So You must burn] [The Bad Person] [out of Your midst]."
(Deuteronomy 13:1–5) —my interim translation

If you think those are the only times the Hebrew Scriptures refer to *The Teaching of Moses* as “*The Way*,” you would be sadly mistaken. As I have explained in *The Way, The Truth, The Life* more than thirty years ago and am planning to explain in more detail in *The Mystery of Scripture, Volume 2*, the sons of Israel gave up the Truth time after time to believe nonsense. Each and every time that happened, God would call a Prophet to restore “*The Way*.” That is why Luke quotes Isaiah’s description of the calling of John the Baptist:

¹[And then], [in] [the fifteenth*] [Year] [of The] [Esteemed Leadership*] [of Tiberius*] [Caesar], [while] [Pontius] [Pilate] [was the esteemed leader] [of] [Judea], [and] [Herod] [was tetrarch] [of] [Galilee]—[but] [his] [Brother] [Philip] [was tetrarch] [of The] [Country] [of Ituraea*] [and] [Trachonitis*]—[and] [Lysanias*] [was tetrarch] [of] [Abilene*], ²[at the time] [of {the} High Priest] [Annas] [and] [Caiphas], [a Statement Made] [by God] [came] [to] [John], [The] [Son] [of Zacharias], [in] [The] [Desert]. ³[So] [he came] [into] [The] [whole] [Area Around] [The] [Jordan], [preaching] [a Baptism] [of an Apology] [for] [Forgiveness] [of Sins]; ⁴[as] [it has been written] [in] [{the} Book] [of {the} Words] [of [The] Prophet] Isaiah]:

“[{The} VOICE] [OF ONE WHO IS CRYING OUT]
[IN] [THE] [DESERT],
[PREPARE] [THE] [WAY] [OF HIS MAJESTY];
[MAKE] [HIS] [WELL-WORN PATHS] [A STRAIGHTAWAY].
⁵[EVERY] [RAVINE*] [WILL BE COMPLETELY FILLED],
[AND] [EVERY] [MOUNTAIN] [AND] [HILL]
[WILL BE BROUGHT DOWN],
[AND] [THE] [CROOKED PLACES]
[WILL BECOME] [A STRAIGHTAWAY];
[AND] [THE] [JAGGED PLACES], [A [SMOOTH*] WAY].
⁶[AND] [ALL] [FLESH] [WILL SEE] [THE] [SALVATION]
[OF THE] [{Living} GOD].”
(Luke 3:1–6) —HSSB

When the leaders of the Early Church gave up *The Apostolic Teaching*, God began waiting for the time when the Church would lose it all. That happened just a few decades ago, when the Church wholeheartedly

embraced the lie that tells them, “God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life.” That cliché is every bit as much nonsense as the “once saved, always saved” nonsense. It is every bit as much a lie. Now that I have gotten those things out of the way, let me explain how the one simple statement “He knew beforehand and decided beforehand” could be so sorely misunderstood.

As I have explained repeatedly over the past three, going-on-four, decades the image and likeness of God is the Truth of the Word of God that He is. That Word lies hidden in the *meaning* and *significance* of the things that Moses and all the other Prophets of Israel recorded to document Who the *Living* God is. Therefore, it is absolutely impossible for anyone to be made in the image and likeness of God if they do not know and believe the Truth of that *Living* Word. For that reason, “those who {would be} in conformity with the image of His Son” must be those who know and believe that Truth.

The reality is, conventional wisdom in our generation tells us Adam and Eve were created in the image and likeness of God. That is a lie Satan crafted to herd the majority of mankind down that broad way to Hell. The few who have seen the Truth in the little booklet titled *In the Image and Likeness of God* have at least a fighting chance of being one of “those who {would be} in conformity with the image of His Son.”

Did you notice I said “fighting chance”? I said it that way because that is what it is. As I explained in the article titled “It Ain’t No Fun Tryin’ ta Stand Up in a Hurricane” (*The Voice of Elijah*®, January 2017), you are going to fight the “winds” for the remainder of your life if you intend to be one of the “male and female” Believers who are made in the image and likeness of God—that is, to be one of “those who {would be} in conformity with the image of His Son.”

You see, God’s only role in *predestination* has to do with the qualifying standard He set; it has nothing to do with bringing it about. That’s up to you. Does God already know the outcome? Sure He does, but that is only because there is no time in the dimension where God dwells. Any dullard who thinks otherwise doesn’t have brainpower sufficient to blow his nose (or should I say “blow his knows”?). If God dwelled in a dimension with time, He would be limited by it. That ain’t ever gonna happen, so get over it.

As far as the term *election* is concerned, I can, with confidence, tell you what Jesus says about it:

¹Then in response, Jesus spoke to them again in comparisons, saying: ²"The kingdom of the heavens is like a man—a king—who made a wedding feast for his son. ³And he sent his slaves to summon those who had been invited to the wedding feast, and they did not want to come. ⁴He again sent other slaves, saying, 'Tell those who have been invited: "Guess what! I have prepared my breakfast—my bulls and fattlings* that have been sacrificed—and everything {is} ready! Come on into the wedding feast!"' ⁵But those who neglected {the invitation} went away—one to his own field, another on to his trade*. ⁶But the rest of {them}, after grabbing hold of his slaves, insulted and killed {them}.

⁷Then the king became angry and, after sending his troops, did away with those murderers and set their city on fire*. ⁸At that time, he tells his slaves: 'On the one hand, the wedding celebration is ready; but on the other hand, those who were invited were not worthy. ⁹Therefore, go on over to the intersections* of the ways and invite as many as it may be that you find to the wedding feast.' ¹⁰And after those slaves went out into the ways, they gathered everyone that they found, both nasty and good; and the wedding celebration was filled full of those who were lying back and relaxing.

¹¹But then, when the king came in to get a good look at those who were lying back and relaxing, he saw a man there who had not slipped on clothing for a wedding celebration. ¹²So he says to him, 'Buddy, how could you, one who does not have clothing for a wedding celebration, come in here?' And then he was speechless.

¹³Then the king told his servants: 'After binding him hand and foot, throw him out into the nether darkness that is farther outside! The weeping and the gritting of the teeth will be there.' ¹⁴**For many are going to be invited, but just a few {are going to be} chosen."**

(Matthew 22:1–14) —HSSB

The term I translated as "chosen" in the last verse of that passage is the same word that is sometimes translated "elect" in other translations. In Harper's Standardized Study Bible (HSSB) I have done my best to always translate the same word the same way every time—taking into account that any word may be used as a noun one time and as an adjective the next. That's why I translated the following verse the way I did:

Who can bring charges against God's **chosen** ones? God {is} the One Who acquits {us}!
(Romans 8:33) —HSSB

The only question that remains to be answered is this, On which basis does God *choose* those who are saved? No surprise there, He lets you decide your own fate! That is, He has already decided to *choose* those who decide to believe the Truth that He is and be one of "those who {would be} in conformity with the image of His Son." The ball is in your court; you decide whether you will listen to the Truth long enough to be "invited" to believe it. Then you study it long enough to become one of "those who {would be} in conformity with the image of His Son" so that God *chooses* you. It's your *choice*—at every step of "The Way." Believe it if you care to; disbelieve it if you dare to. I'm just doing what God called me to do.

Editor: A woman who states she doesn't identify herself as a Dispensationalist asked a question regarding the things Paul says in 2 Thessalonians 2:7:

"I had come to believe in a pre-trib rapture, having studied God's Word as best I can. You state the case for a post-trib rapture, and I don't dispute what you say, but must ask this question: What say you about II Thess. 2:7—Who do you say is the Restrainer? I had always thought it was the Body of Christ, the true believers, which would 'come out of the midst' at the coming of our Savior in the clouds, and that the church age, begun at Pentecost, would then end to start the prophetic clock ticking for Daniel's 70th week. Didn't mean to be so wordy. But who is the Restrainer? Thank you, and I appreciate your work."

Elijah: Upon reading this question, the first thought that came to mind is the old adage that goes something like this:

If it:
Looks like a duck,
Walks like a duck, and
Quacks like a duck,
It's a duck.

The woman may not identify as such, but the beliefs she espouses are Dispensationalist, through and through:

1. "The Church Age?" Never a part of Christian beliefs prior to the publication of John Darby's Dispensational Theory.

2. *The Pre-Tribulation Rapture? Never a part of Christian beliefs prior to the publication of John Darby's Dispensational Theory.*

She doesn't mention it, but she undoubtedly believes "all Israel"—that is, the Jews—will be saved during the final week. That also was never a part of Christian beliefs prior to the publication of John Darby's Dispensational Theory. The Truth is, there are a lot of folks today who don't know they have been trained by the "winds" to believe Dispensational doctrine. And they certainly don't know that it flatly contradicts the beliefs of the Early Church. Too bad for them if they continue to hold on to the things they have been trained to believe. The Truth is, those things are all part of "The Lie" that Paul mentions in the passage to which she refers:

¹(1) *So, brothers, we are asking you {to do the following}*

(a) for the sake of

- (i) the coming of our Master, Jesus, the Anointed One, and*
- (ii) our assembling to Him,*

²(b) *so that you:*

- (i) would not be quickly shaken out of your mind, or*
- (ii) be alarmed—*

- (a) neither by a spirit*
- (b) nor by a word*
- (c) nor by a letter*

- (i) as if it were {written} by us—*
- (ii) as though it is currently the day of His Majesty.*

³(2) *Do not let anyone dupe you in any way at all, that it may not be that:*

- (a) the apostasy must come first and*
- (b) the man of the lawless one—the son of eternal damnation—must be revealed,*

⁴(i) *the one who is opposed to, and exalts himself over, everything that is called "god" or an object of*

worship, with the result that he sits down in the sanctuary of the {living} God, presenting himself as convincing evidence that he is God. ⁵(Do you not remember that I was telling you these things while {I} was still with you? ⁶So you are aware of what is holding {them} fast now so that he can be revealed in his own time. ⁷For the mystery of the lawless one is already working in {them}—the one who is only holding {them} fast at this time until he comes out of {their} midst.) ⁸So then the one who is lawless will be revealed.

(ii) The one whom His Majesty, Jesus,

- (a) will put away by the spirit of His mouth and*
- (b) abrogate by the appearance of His coming;*

⁹(iii) *the one whose arrival is in accordance with Satan's energy: with all*

- (a) supernatural power and*
- (b) signs and*
- (c) wonders—lies—¹⁰and with all*
- (d) {the} deceitfulness of injustice*

- (i) for those who are going to be done away with*
- (ii) because they did not accept the love of the truth so that they could be saved.*

¹¹(1) *So for this reason the {living} God will send them a deceptive energy*

- (a) so that they believe the lie,*
- ¹²*(b) so that all who did not believe the truth but were delighted with his injustice can be judged.*

(2 Thessalonians 2:1–12) —HSSB

Let me explain once again how metaphysical beings work within the physical: We are *what we believe*, and we all *act in accordance with what we believe*. That being the case, Satan controls people by controlling *what they believe*. That is, he tells them lies. But the lies he tells people are *what he believes*, and *what he believes* controls him. Got it?

The godless Communist Vladimir Lenin clearly understood the basic principle of controlling people by telling them lies; and knowing his hatred for religion in

general and Christianity in specific, I firmly believe he got his insight from Satan himself. His espousal of the principle I just explained is why Communists still work to control *what people believe* through the use of propaganda, misinformation, disinformation, and outright lies. They do it to control *what people do*. Although they currently appear to be winning, never fear; their day of reckoning is rapidly approaching.

Given what I just told you, you should be able to understand the “restrainer” Paul has in mind is Satan himself—that is, *what he believes*. But the lies that he has propagated not only control his own actions, they also control the actions of those who believe them; and therein lies the source of the impending nuclear holocaust. His lies are going to hold this final generation fast until he “comes out of {their} midst” as the Antichrist, and “*The Harlot*”—Mother Earth, the one who is *parabolically* the “Sea of El”—goes up in flames:

¹⁵(4) *Then he tells me:*

(a) *“The waters that you saw—where the prostitute is sitting—are*

- (i) *peoples and*
- (ii) *crowds and*
- (iii) *nations and*
- (iv) *tongues.* ¹⁶*And*

(b) *the ten horns and the beast that you saw?*

- (i) *These individuals will hate the prostitute; so*
- (ii) *they will make her*

- (a) *deserted and*
- (b) *naked, and*

(iii) *they will*

- (a) *eat her flesh and*
- (b) *burn her up in a fire.*

¹⁷(c) *For the {living} God has put {it} in their hearts*

- (i) *to act in accordance with His opinion—even*
- (ii) *to act in accordance with one opinion—and*
- (iii) *to give their kingdom to the beast up to the time when the words of the {living} God are completed.*

¹⁸(d) *And the woman that you saw is the city—the great one—that has a kingdom over the kings of the Earth.”*

(Revelation 17:15–18) —HSSB

The Prophet Zephaniah describes that same thing this way:

¹⁴[{The} [great] Day] [of His Majesty] {is} [near],
[Near], [and moving [very] quickly];
[The Sound] [of {the} Day] [of His Majesty] {is} [bitter]!
[A **Gibbor**] [will sound a war-cry] [there].

¹⁵[That] [Day] {is} [A Day] [of Unbounded Rage],
[A Day] [of Distress] [and a Reason for Anxiety],
[A Day] [of a Devastating Storm] [and Total Devastation],
[A Day] [of Darkness] [and Nether Gloom],
[A Day] [of Cloud] [and Dense Fog],

¹⁶[A Day] [of Trumpet] [and **Teruah**]
[Against] [The [enclosed] Cities]
[And against] [The [high] Corners].

¹⁷[Then I will be hostile] [to {the} Descendants of Adam];
[And they will walk] [like those who are blind],
[Because] [they sinned] [against His Majesty];
[So their Blood] [will be poured out] [like Dust]
[And their Bowels] [like Dung].

¹⁸[Neither] [their Silver] [nor] [their Gold]
[Will be able] [to snatch them away]
[On {the} Day] [{of the} Unbounded Rage]
[of His Majesty],

[When [The [entire] Earth] [will be consumed]
by {the} Fire] [of His Jealousy];
[Because] [He will make] [a Complete End]—
[One that is [definitely] frightening]—
[Of all] [the Inhabitants of] [The Earth].

(Zephaniah 1:14–18) —my interim translation

It’s headed our way, folks, so you had best be stayin’ wide awake and ready for it. (You know, trying to avoid what Jesus says in the Parable of the Ten Virgins in Matthew 25:1–12.) The lies believed by the idiots in charge of the ten nations that possess nuclear weapons are going to keep “holding {them} fast” until that stupid little man “comes out of {their} midst” and takes his seat in the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem. Then all hell is going to break loose here on Planet Earth, and nothin’ you can do will change the outcome. Jesus Christ is going to come riding on the nuclear clouds billowing out of the pillars that display the awesome power of God.

Editor: *This question pertains to a previous seminar that The Elijah Project presented:*

"In reading your newsletters, I see mention of the Isaiah Seminar years ago. Is this still available? I feel so inadequate in wading thru Isaiah on my own."

Elijah: I presented The Isaiah Seminar more than twenty years ago, in 1999; but the audio recording was not suitable for distribution. So I have had it on my list of things to redo ever since. But as someone once said, there is a time for everything under Heaven; and it appears the time may have finally come for me to get it done. Sometime after I presented that seminar, the woman who is currently Chairwoman of Voice of Elijah's Board of Directors transcribed the audio for me. Over the years since, as I have had time, I have edited the text of that transcription little by little, trying to get it into a form I felt was finally ready for publication. Within the last month or so, that woman's daughter volunteered to edit the reworked transcript for me. That's where it stands at this point in time, but believe me, it is one of the top ten things I have yet to complete.

Editor: *The following excerpt from The Voice of Elijah® Update, September 1995, page 17, was posted on our Facebook page a while back:*

"The Truth is, everybody alive here on Earth has already been judged and sentenced to death for committing capitol [sic: capital] crimes against God. We are all in prison, doing time on death row, awaiting execution. That is the simple message of the New Testament. Anyone who tells you differently is a liar, either ignorantly or by choice."

A woman who read this post left the following note requesting references:

"Verses, please, for references."

Would you reply to her request?

Elijah: First of all, I did not misspell the term *capital* in the September 1995 issue of *The Voice of Elijah® Update*. I know that for a fact because I checked, but only so that I could wallow in regret over yet another of my many mistakes. I was sorely disappointed to find

I didn't do that, and very sadly so. But enough about my commiseration with myself. The lack of any references in the article the person has quoted is a perfect example of my ineptitude. I did not take into account the fact that, due to a convergence of several unhappy circumstances that have evolved over the past eighty years, this generation has completely lost sight of a fact that previous generations knew full well: We are not here on Planet Earth because God loves us but because we are all guilty and—if we do not present evidence sufficient for an acquittal—merely awaiting sentencing. So let me tell you something else I know for a fact.

The Greek word that is normally translated "condemnation" in the New Testament actually refers to a judge's verdict of guilty. It occurs in the two passages below, where it clearly reveals the desperate circumstances we face in this God-forsaken place as well as the only thing we can do to gain a dismissal of all charges. But first, you need to keep the following things in mind as you read the passages I show you:

1. I have translated the Greek noun that is normally translated "faith" as "**belief in God's promise**" and its cognate verb (which is normally translated "believe") as "**believe in God's promise.**" The basic meaning of the two terms is respectively "belief" and "believe." But because it is impossible to believe nothing at all, I have imbued the terms with the meaning they had in the time of Christ. That is, saving "faith" at that time was **belief in the promise of God** with regard to the purpose and work of Jesus Christ as the Messiah that God **promised** in 2 Samuel 7. In essence, however, **the promise** is nothing less than resurrection (creation) in the image and likeness of the living God that Moses describes in Genesis 1:26–27.

2. I have translated the Greek verb that is normally translated "justify" as "**acquit**" and one of its cognate nouns (which is normally translated "justification") as a "**declaration of not guilty**" and the other noun (which is normally translated "righteousness") as "**acquittal**" since those two nouns are somewhat equivalent in meaning. My translation carries the same meaning as the original Greek terms, which is essentially the same meaning that was carried by the terms justify, justification, and righteousness when the King James Bible was published in 1611.

3. In keeping with what Paul explains regarding the **inheritance of the promise** in the following passage as well as in Galatians 3–4 and Hebrews 9, I have translated two Greek terms that are sometimes translated as “gift” with their technical sense of “**bequest**” and “**as a bequest**” because Paul obviously has in mind the Believer’s **inheritance of the promise** “**as a bequest**” under the terms of the oral will (testament) that Jesus made prior to His death on the cross (see Matt. 12:46–50; Mark 3:31–35; Luke 8:19–21).

4. I have translated the Greek term that is normally translated “grace” as “**favor**” simply because that is exactly what it refers to—the “**favor**” that God granted the descendants of Adam and Eve in allowing them an opportunity to achieve what Eve was seeking when she made the mistake of calling God a liar—to be made in the image and likeness of God.

If you keep those four things in mind as you read the passages below, it should eventually become clear to you that God has, as a “favor,” granted us an opportunity to hear and believe the Truth of the Living Word of God that the Prophets hid in the Hebrew idioms and *parabolic imagery* of the Hebrew Scriptures. To those who believe the Truth they hear, God grants the ability to understand even more of the Truth “**as a bequest**” under the terms of the oral will that Jesus made. That being the case, it will be obvious to those who believe that Paul was explaining things the Church somehow lost along the way when he wrote the following:

¹(1) Therefore, what can we say that Abraham, our forefather*—in accordance with flesh—has found?

²(a) For if Abraham was **acquitted** on the basis of works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.

³(b) For what does the Scripture say? “SO ABRAHAM BELIEVED THE {living} GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS A **DECLARATION OF NOT GUILTY**.”

⁴(i) Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as **a favor**, but as an obligation.

⁵(ii) But to the one who does not work, but **believes God’s promise** regarding the One Who is going to **acquitt** the one who is depraved,

his **belief in God’s promise** is reckoned to {him} as a **declaration of not guilty**.

⁶(iii) {It is} also even as David talks about the good fortune of the man to whom the {living} God reckons a **declaration of not guilty** apart from works:

⁷“THOSE WHOSE LAWLESS DEEDS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN ARE FORTUNATE, EVEN THOSE WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED OVER*.”

⁸A MAN TO WHOM HIS MAJESTY WILL DEFINITELY NOT RECKON SIN IS FORTUNATE.”

⁹(2) Therefore, {is} this good fortune on the circumcised or on the uncircumcised also? Since we say, “His **BELIEF IN GOD’S PROMISE** WAS RECKONED TO ABRAHAM AS A **DECLARATION OF NOT GUILTY**,” ¹⁰on what basis, therefore, was it reckoned to {him}? While {he} was circumcised or while uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised; ¹¹and he received {the} sign of circumcision as a seal of the **declaration of not guilty** that he had on the basis of his **belief in God’s promise** while he {was} uncircumcised, so that he would be:

(a) father of all who **believe God’s promise** while uncircumcised so that the **declaration of not guilty** could also be reckoned to them ¹²and

(b) father of a circumcision

(i) not only in those who are part of the circumcised,

(ii) but also in those who fall in line with the footsteps of the **belief in God’s promise** that our father Abraham had while uncircumcised.

¹³(a) For **the promise** to Abraham—or to his seed—that he would be **the heir** of {the} world {was} not via Law, but via a **declaration of not guilty** on the basis of **belief in God’s promise**.

¹⁴(b) For if **the heirs of the promise** {are heirs} on the basis of Law, our **belief in God’s promise** has been emptied and the **promise** has been abrogated.

¹⁵(c) For the Law brings about anger, but where there is no law, {there is} no violation either.

¹⁶(3) For this reason {the **declaration of not guilty**} is on the basis of **belief in God's promise**:

(a) so that {it would be} in accordance with a **favor**,
(b) so that **the promise** would be confirmed for the whole seed,

(i) not only for the {seed} who is on the basis of the Law,

(ii) but also for the {seed} who is on the basis of Abraham's **belief in God's promise**—the one who is father of all of us,

¹⁷(iii) just as it has been written that "I HAVE PUT YOU DOWN AS FATHER OF A LOT OF GENTILES"—right in front of the One Whose **promise** he believed, God, the One Who gives life to the dead and calls the things that are not as if they were things that are.

¹⁸(4) In hope—contrary to hope—he **believed God's promise**, so that he has become FATHER OF A LOT OF GENTILES in accordance with what had been stated, "YOUR SEED WILL BE LIKE THIS."

¹⁹(5) And not one who was weak in his **belief in God's promise**,

(a) he took a close look at his own body—which had already been deadened, being somewhere around one hundred years old*—and the deadness of Sarah's womb; ²⁰but

(b) he was not doubtful about **the promise** of the {living} God with a lack of **belief in God's promise**, but

(c) he was empowered by his **belief in God's promise**—giving glory to the {living} God ²¹and becoming completely convinced that the One Who **promised** is also able to do {it}. ²²Wherefore, IT WAS ALSO RECKONED TO HIM AS A DECLARATION OF NOT GUILTY.

²³(1) But it was not written only for him that "IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM," ²⁴but also for us,

(a) those to whom it is going to be reckoned,

(b) those who **believe God's promise** regarding the One Who raised our Master, Jesus, from those who are dead, ²⁵the One Who was handed over because of our transgressions and arose because of our **acquittal**.

¹(2) Therefore, we who have been **acquitted** on the basis of **belief in God's promise**

(a) have peace with the {living} God via our Master, Jesus, the Anointed One, ²via Whom we also—by our **belief in God's promise**—

(b) have access to this **favor** in which we stand and

(c) boast about a hope of the glory of the {living} God. ³Yet not only {this}, but we also

(d) boast about the things that cause turmoil, aware that

(i) the turmoil is going to bring about perseverance; ⁴then

(ii) the perseverance, approval; then

(iii) the approval, hope.

⁵(1) And our hope is not going to embarrass {us}, because the love of the {living} God has been poured out into our hearts via a Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

⁶(a) For while we were still weak, the Anointed One still died

(i) on time,

(ii) for the sake of those who are depraved.

⁷(a) For with great difficulty someone might die for the sake of one who is blameless,

(b) for it could be that someone might even dare to die for the sake of the one who is good;

⁸(c) but the {living} God commends His Own love for us, because while we were still sinners, the Anointed One died for us. ⁹Much more, therefore, will we—those who have now been **acquitted** by His blood—be saved from His anger via Him.

¹⁰(b) For if we who were enemies were reconciled to the {living} God via the death of His Son, much more will we who have been reconciled be saved by His life; ¹¹yet not only {reconciled}, but also boasting about the {living} God through our Master, Jesus, the Anointed One, through Whom we have now **received** reconciliation.

¹²(i) For this reason, indeed, just as via one man the sin came into the world—and death via his sin—so also death passed through to all men, because everyone sinned.

¹³(ii) For up to the time of Law, sin was in the world; but sin is not charged to one's account when there is no law. ¹⁴But **death was king** from Adam until Moses, even over those who did not sin in the likeness of the violation of Adam—who is a pattern of the One Who was going to come.

¹⁵(2) But {it is} not: as the transgression, so also the gift.

(a) For if the many died in the transgression of the one, the **favor** of the {living} God—and **the bequest** in His **favor** for the one Man, Jesus, the Anointed One—produced a lot more excess for the many, ¹⁶then **the {bequest}** that is given {is} not like {**the bequest** that came} via one who sinned.

(b) For:

(i) on the one hand, His judgment {came} in a **verdict of guilty** because of one {transgression}; but
(ii) on the other hand, His gift {of **the bequest** came} in a legal requirement because of many transgressions.

¹⁷(c) For:

(i) if, by the transgression of the one, **death became king** via the one,
(ii) much more will those who **receive** the abundance of His **favor** and **the bequest** of His **declaration of not guilty** be king for life via the One—Jesus, the Anointed One.

¹⁸(d) So then, therefore, since

(i) {**there was**} a transgression resulting in a **verdict of guilty** on all men via one, so also
(ii) {**there is**} a legal requirement for an **acquittal** resulting in life for all men via One.

¹⁹(e) For indeed, just as:

(i) via the one man's unwillingness to attentively listen and comply, the many were appointed as sinners; so also
(ii) via the One {Man's} willingness to attentively listen and comply, the many will be appointed as those who are blameless.

²⁰(f) But Law also came in so that the transgression would become more than enough;

(i) so then where

(a) the sin became more than enough,
(b) the **favor** abounded even more,

²¹(ii) so that

(a) indeed, just as the sin became king through death;
(b) so also **the favor** may become king resulting in eternal life via a **declaration of not guilty** through our Master, Jesus, the Anointed One.

(Romans 4:1–5:21) —HSSB

After Paul says that, he then explains what he means by saying “death was/became king.” In so doing, he discloses he has in mind something completely other than physical death. But then he comes back to talking about the “verdict of guilty” under which we all stood until we accepted the “favor” of the Living God and began to enjoy the benefits of the “bequest” we *received* when we *inherited the promise* and gained the opportunity to *inherit what was promised* when the time arrives for *the fulfillment of the promise*—that is, resurrection in the same image and likeness of the Living Word of God that Jesus Christ now bears:

¹(1) So then, {there is} not any **verdict of guilty** now on those who are in the Anointed One, Jesus:

²(a) for the law of the Spirit of the life in the Anointed One, Jesus, has freed you from the law of the sin and the death;

³(b) for the inability of the Law {was} because it was weakened by the flesh. The {living} God, after sending His Own Son in a likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned the sin in the flesh, ⁴so that the legal requirement of the Law could be fulfilled by us—those who are not walking in agreement with flesh, but in agreement with Spirit;

⁵(i) for those who are in agreement with flesh have their mind set on the things of the flesh,

but those who are in agreement with Spirit,
the things of the Spirit;
⁶(ii) for the mind-set of the flesh {is} death, but the
mind-set of the Spirit {is} life and peace, ⁷because
the mind-set of the flesh {is} hostility toward God;
for it is not submitted to the law of the {living}
God, for it cannot even be {submitted}.

⁸(2) So then, those who are in flesh cannot please God.

⁹(a) But you are not in flesh but in Spirit—if indeed
God's Spirit is residing in you;

(b) but if anyone does not have the Anointed One's
Spirit, this individual is not His;

¹⁰(c) but if the Anointed One {is} in you,

(i) on the one hand, the body {is} a dead man
because of sin; but

(ii) on the other hand, the spirit {is} life because of
a declaration of not guilty.

¹¹(d) So if the Spirit of the One Who raised Jesus from
those who are dead is residing in you, the One Who
raised the Anointed One from those who are dead will
also give life to your mortal bodies via His Spirit
residing in you.

¹²(1) So then, therefore, brothers, we are not obligated to
the flesh—to live in agreement with flesh:

¹³(a) for

(i) if you live in agreement with flesh, you are
going to die; but

(ii) if you are putting the activities of your body to
death by {the} Spirit, you will live;

¹⁴(b) for as many as are being led by God's Spirit,
these individuals are God's sons;

¹⁵(c) for

(i) you have not **received** a spirit of slavery
again, resulting in fear; but

(ii) you have **received** a spirit of adoption, by which
we shout, "Abba! Father!" ¹⁶The Spirit Himself is
testifying with our spirit that we are God's children.

¹⁷(2) So then, if {we are} children, {we are} also **heirs**,

(a) on the one hand, **heirs** of God; but

(b) on the other hand, joint **heirs** with the Anointed
One, if indeed we suffer with {Him} so that we may
also be glorified together with* {Him}:

¹⁸(i) for I reckon that our suffering during the
present time {is} not worthy of the glory that is
going to be revealed to us;

¹⁹(ii) for the ardent longing of His creation is
eagerly looking forward to the revelation of the
sons of the {living} God;

²⁰(a) for His creation was made to submit to
futility—

(i) not voluntarily,

(ii) but only because of the One Who made
{her} submit—

(iii) with a hope ²¹that His creation
would itself also be freed from the
slavery of our perishable body into the
freedom of the glory of the children
of the {living} God;

²²(b) for we are aware that the whole
creation is groaning together* and is
in labor together* until now; ²³yet not
only {this creation}, but also those who have
the first fruits of His Spirit—even we
ourselves—are groaning within ourselves,
eagerly looking forward to adoption—the
emancipation of our body;

²⁴(c) for we have been saved by our hope,
but a hope that is seen is not hope.

For who hopes for what he sees?

²⁵(d) So then, if we hope for what we do
not see, we eagerly look forward to {it} with
perseverance. ²⁶And then, in the same way,
His Spirit also takes up the effort with our
infirmity; for

(i) we do not know what we should pray
for—what is in accordance with whatever
one should {pray for}—but

(ii) the Spirit Himself files urgent petitions
with* unutterable* groanings.

(Romans 8:1–26) —HSSB

When Paul uses the Greek term translated “Spirit” in that passage, he is referring to the Truth of the *Living Word of God* he understands as a result of his insight into both the *meaning* and *significance* (rather than just the *meaning*) of the things Moses and the other Prophets of Israel recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures. He refers to the same distinction between them in several places, but the following is one of the most explicit statements he makes in regard to the Truth that lies hidden in an accurate understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures:

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(4) *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(5) *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.***

(2 Corinthians 3:1–18) —HSSB

In that last verse, Paul is saying the same thing that he says in the following 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; 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.

³(2) For I tell everyone who is among you—via the favor that was given to me—

(a) to not have a mind-set more high-minded* than {the} mind-set that one should have, but
 (b) to have a mind-set so as to have good common sense—in each one as much as the {living} God has divided out a measure of **belief in God's promise**.

(Romans 12:1–3) —HSSB

How do you suppose God expects you to avoid being “shaped by this current age” and be “transformed by the renewing of your mind”? That’s a “softball” question! It’s easy to “see” the correct answer, provided you have the “Spirit” of the Lord. Just look at the “reflection of the glory of His Majesty” hidden in the *significance* of things stated in the Hebrew Scriptures. In Romans 5:1–8:26 Paul clearly says we are all guilty; the only thing that remains to be determined is the sentence we receive when we stand before the *Living* God and confess *why* we did *what* we did. He also explains what awaits anyone who refuses to believe the Truth that He is:

¹(1) Wherefore, O man—anyone who judges {others}—you are without excuse.

(a) For by whatever {standard} you judge another, you condemn yourself.
 (b) For you who judge {others} are involved in the same things.

²(2) But we are aware that the judgment of the {living} God is against those who are involved in such things in accordance with truth. ³So

(a) do you reckon this, O man—the one who judges those who are involved in such things and does them {himself}—that you will escape the judgment of the {living} God? ⁴Or
 (b) do you despise the wealth of His benevolence and forbearance and patience, not understanding that the beneficence of the {living} God leads you to an apology?

⁵(3) But—in accordance with your impenitence* and unapologetic* heart—you are storing up anger for yourself for a day of anger and {the} revelation of {the} impartial judgment* of the {living} God, ⁶Who WILL PAY EACH ONE BACK IN ACCORDANCE WITH HIS WORKS:

⁷(a) on the one hand, glory and honor and an imperishable body for those who are seeking eternal life by perseverance in good work; ⁸but
 (b) on the other hand, anger and rage for those who, because of self-centeredness, and not being persuaded by the truth, and then allowing themselves to be persuaded by their injustice. ⁹{There will be}
 (c) turmoil and confinement for every soul of man who brings about what is awful—on both Jew, first, and Greek—¹⁰but
 (d) glory and honor and peace for anyone who works for what is good—on both Jew, first, and Greek:

¹¹(i) for there is no partiality with the {living} God;
¹²(ii) for as many as have sinned without Law will also be done away with without Law, and as many as have sinned with Law will be judged by Law;
¹³(iii) for the hearers of Law {are} not those who are blameless before the {living} God, but only the doers of Law will be acquitted;
¹⁴(iv) for when Gentiles who do not have a Law do by nature the things that are {required} by the Law, these individuals who do not have a Law are their own law—¹⁵those who are going to present the work of the Law written* on their hearts as evidence, while their conscience is going to testify with {them}, and their conclusions are—between one another—going to make accusations against {them} or else present a defense for {them}, ¹⁶on {the} day when, in accordance with the good news of **the fulfillment of the promise** {that} I have, the {living} God will judge the secrets of men through the Anointed One, Jesus.

(Romans 2:1–16) —HSSB ■

Continued from front cover

and earth shall pass away, but My word shall not pass away," He points out that they are perishable, and must come to an end.

The apostle, moreover, in declaring that "the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God," manifestly announces the end of the world; as he does also when he again says, "The fashion of this world passeth away."

Now, by the expression which he employs, "that the creature was made subject to vanity," he shows that there was a beginning to this world: for if the creature were made subject to vanity on account of some hope, it was certainly made subject from a cause; and seeing it was from a cause, it must necessarily have had a beginning: for, without some beginning, the creature could not be subject to vanity, nor could that (creature) hope to be freed from the bondage of corruption, which had not begun to serve. But any one who chooses to search at his leisure, will find numerous other passages in holy Scripture in which the world is both said to have a beginning and to hope for an end.

2. Now, if there be any one who would here oppose either the authority or credibility of our Scriptures, we would ask of him whether he asserts that God can, or cannot, comprehend all things? To assert that He cannot, would manifestly be an act of impiety. If then he answer, as he must, that God comprehends all things, it follows from the very fact of their being capable of comprehension, that they are understood to have a beginning and an end, seeing that which is altogether without any beginning cannot be at all comprehended.

Origen, "De Principiis," Book iii, Chap. 6, in Roberts and Donaldson (Eds.), *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (1885), Vol. 4, pp. 340-341.

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