

Sealed and Kept Secret: What Herbert W. Armstrong Never Understood

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About the Cover Photo

Platanthera camtschatic

In 1983, I crossed Kodiak Island's Ugak Bay, climbed Gull Point, and above the island's tree line, in the domain of wind and eagles, I photographed the orchid, its foliage spotted Christianity requires a host as do orchids. Until the single kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of the Father and His Christ, Christians cannot establish a kingdom of God here on earth. Nevertheless, being a *Christian* requires separating oneself from this world while still living in it and taking sustenance from it; separating oneself without becoming spotted by the world—Homer Kizer.

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Argument: A self-educated theologian, Herbert W. Armstrong as the Pastor-General of the former Radio Church of God and Worldwide Church of God never understood the basic structure of Hebrew poetics, that the visible, physical things of this world reveal and precede the invisible spiritual things of God, with outwardly circumcised Israel forming the chiral (or left hand) image of circumcised of heart Israel, the assembly of inner selves born of spirit through the indwelling of Christ Jesus. Because Armstrong never understood theological chirality, Armstrong placed importance on the surfaces of things and people; importance on appearances, gender, skin color, and genealogy, with these “surfaces” preventing him from understanding the mysteries of God. Hence, Armstrong was and remained a spiritual novice throughout his ministry that extended from 1931 to 1986.

1.

Twenty-nine years have passed since members of the former Worldwide Church of God (WCG) learned their Pastor General died shortly before 6:00 a.m. PST, January 16, 1986 ... Herbert W. Armstrong had been ailing for several months, but as the beloved Pastor General of perhaps the most energetic ministry of an era, Armstrong wasn't expected to die prior to the return of Christ Jesus. From podiums, any number of WCG ministers had identified Armstrong as the endtime Zerubbabel who had begun the work of rebuilding the House of God and who would finish that work.

Then the word of [YHWH] came to me, saying, “The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also complete it. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you. For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel.” (Zech 4:8–10)

However, in the summer of 1985, I was visited by a long time WCG member, Jack Etsel, who, during dinner conversation, said, *Mr. Armstrong preaches that time is short because time is short for him.* I was mildly shocked by what I heard; by what Jack said. I assumed the end of the age was or nearly was upon humanity: how could things get much worse than they were. The famine in sub-Saharan Africa, especially Ethiopia, wasn't yet over. The Soviet Union was in trouble. The world was one hot spot after another. And trickledown economics hadn't trickled down to anyone I knew. So without then responding to what Jack said, I nevertheless remembered his words—

When Jack Etsel said what he did about the senior Armstrong, I didn't know Jack all that well. I had, the previous fall, killed a moose on a hunt with Jack. Otherwise, I knew Jack as a two year Washington (Seattle area) transplant to Alaska. Of course, I was an Oregon transplant from eleven years earlier. I knew other members of the Anchorage and Kenai WCG congregations better than I knew Jack.

I, too, was a WCG member, attending services since 1972, baptized prior to Passover 1973, journeying north to Alaska spring 1974, opening a chainsaw-outboard dealership on Poppy Lane just off K-Beach Road in late 1976. So what I will write about Herbert Armstrong doesn't come from the perspective of an outsider, but from having heard what was preached from pulpits and having read what was written in Co-Worker letters during the 1970s and 1980s. However, I was then busy making a living, trying to get a woefully under-capitalized business operational; so though I heard what was preached and what wasn't, I didn't spend time worrying about whether chicanery was occurring in Pasadena. Armstrong's racism troubled me less than it should have. And how tithe moneys were spent was between the administration and Christ Jesus (my responsibility for my tithe ended when I put the check in the mail).

After Armstrong's death, I stayed with WCG, and probably stayed longer than I should have ... I kept the Feast of Tabernacles with WCG in 1997, but I had quit attending weekly Sabbath services late in 1995.

I attended with Seventh Day Adventists for a few months in fall 1998 ... I had attended Adventist services throughout high school, thanks mainly to Mom marrying a Seventh Day Adventist a year and a half after Dad died suddenly; so I was familiar with Adventist doctrine, and knew where I disagreed with what was taught from the pulpit.

I couldn't resist, however, correcting the member of the Orofino, Idaho, Seventh Day Adventist Church that was leading an adult Bible study about Jonah. When this man said that Jonah didn't want to go to Nineveh because he knew that preaching repentance to Nineveh would do no good, I stopped him, saying, *No, Jonah knew Nineveh would repent and Jonah wanted Nineveh, Israel's enemy, wiped out.* From the response on the man's face, evidently correcting the leader of a Bible study wasn't proper form, but the pastor confirmed what I said; then after the study took me aside and said, *There's a United Church of God (UCG) congregation meeting in Lewiston ...* UCG was a splinter of the former WCG, and I really wasn't interested in fellowshipping with rebels. However, in January 1999, I called Earl Roemer, then the UCG pastor in Hawaii, but formally the WCG minister in Anchorage from 1977 to 1987 and a friend with whom I had hunted deer on Kodiak when living there.

We spoke for three-plus hours ... I was teaching as adjunct faculty for Lewis-Clark State College in Lewiston, Idaho; teaching outreach [off-campus] courses at Orofino, living in the Clearwater Canyon just upriver from Peck. So the call represented an unbudgeted expense that couldn't be repeated—and didn't need to be repeated for Earl contacted UCG's headquarters on my behalf. From 1999 through 2001, I kept the Passover with UCG.

In the years since summer 1985, Jack Etsel's words have remained with me. They will be concealed in what I write for however long I write.

The senior Armstrong's time was indeed short—is my time short? Is that why I too declare that time is now short, that the generic *time of the end* is upon humanity?

In applying Jack's words to myself and to what I write about time being short since being audibly called to reread prophecy on January 17, 2002, forty years to the day and to the hour from when Garner Ted Armstrong told the Advanced Prophecy Seminar at Ambassador College (AC), Pasadena (the seminar consisting of the senior men then at Headquarters, assembled together by the Pastor General) that there would be no new

revelation, that everything was known, that his father was merely having doubts about what had been revealed to him, I acquired a much broader perspective of who is and who isn't a "Christian" than I had while attending Adventist services or as a member of the former WCG. Living in the Clearwater Canyon, I could get no radio or television signal except of that of a Riverside repeater broadcasting Moody Radio from five miles away—and in listening to Moody Radio, program after program was faithful to Scripture for 27 minutes of a 30 minute broadcast, then in the last three minutes the commentator destroyed all of the good work down in the previous 27 minutes. But in listening to Moody Radio—as with living in a Southeastern Idaho town of almost all Latter Day Saints—I realized that Christianity as an ideology was greater than just disciples willing to believe God and then manifesting their belief through becoming living personifications of Christ Jesus to the best of their knowledge. Christianity also included a great many individuals who are living personifications of Christian traditions originating in the scrambling of Greek paganism with presumed teachings of Jesus, these traditions being careful to avoid the taint of Judaism, a condition left over from Emperor Hadrian's anti-Semitic decrees following the Bar Kokhba Revolt (ca 132–135/6 CE).

The senior Armstrong during the initial Advanced Prophecy Seminar session in January 1962, told his evangelists that all wasn't known, that the Church had prophecy wrong, that the Church had to get prophecy right, that all ideas would be welcomed and explored. But he taught only this first seminar section. He left teaching following sessions to his son.

Did the senior Armstrong ever know that his son squelched any exploration of biblical prophecy at a time when the senior Armstrong knew he had prophecy wrong and sought to correct error? I don't know. In January 1962, I was a junior in high school and not connected in any way to Armstrong's ministry ... so how do I know what was said in that Advanced Prophecy Seminar?

I was given the names of the men in the seminar by Ray Dick, who in spring 1962 was a senior at Ambassador College and taking fourth year Bible from Al Portune, an evangelist in the Advanced Prophecy Seminar. Ray gave me the names of the men in the seminar and told what was said and by whom as Al Portune had reported this information to his fourth year Bible class.

The story of the Advanced Prophecy Seminar seemed significant; for rejection of revelation was serious. I sought to verify or dismiss the story by writing to Garner Ted and to Roderick Meredith in 2002 (my third letter to Garner Ted was in early spring 2003). I pointedly asked both men if the story as told to me (to each I relayed what had been told to me) about the Advanced Prophecy Seminar was true. Garner Ted in gracious responses to my three separate letters neither confirmed nor denied the story. However, Roderick Meredith confirmed the story and told me that I needed to return to the senior Armstrong's understanding of prophecy—understanding that Meredith had heard the senior Armstrong say was wrong.

Is Meredith's testimony, coupled with Ray Dick's, sufficient to establish the story of the Advanced Prophecy Seminar? For me, the story is established by being audibly called to reread prophecy about 10:12 am CST on Thursday of the second full week in January 2002 ... the Advanced Prophecy Seminar met at 8:00 am PST on Thursday,

spring semester 1962. And it would have taken Garner Ted about twelve minutes to say that there would be no new revelation, that his dad had prophecy right. I have been in front of enough classes to have a good sense of how long it would have taken Garner Ted to say what he did. So for me, my calling to reread prophecy came exactly forty years after Garner Ted rejected further revelation on behalf of his father. The timing doesn't seem coincidental.

I didn't know about the Advance Prophecy Seminar until Ray Dick, after reading the first draft of *A Philadelphia Apologetic* (completed in March 2002), told me about the seminar ... I had asked Ray Dick to read the draft because he was a family friend of my wife, both of whom were/are interested in anthropology.

So before proceeding, let it be understood that Herbert W. Armstrong knew he had prophecy wrong four years after the Treaty of Rome was signed March 1957: the European Union wasn't coming together as Armstrong had prophesied. Events were happening much more slowly than he expected, and were going in a direction he hadn't anticipated. He realized what he had said throughout the 1950s, and as far back as 1934, was wrong.

Why, then, did he continue to proclaim the same prophetic message throughout the 1960s and to his death in January 1986? And could a multi-million dollar a year ministry based on a particular understanding of biblical prophecy really admit it had prophecy wrong all along and still economically survive? No, it could not.

Armstrong's ministry spiritually died in 1962, when additional revelation was rejected. It would have economically died if additional revelation had not been rejected, what Garner Ted understood. But neither Armstrong understood one of the most important pillars of theological knowledge: "Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt 5:20) ... Pharisees were hypocrites. Both the senior and the junior Armstrong were, following that Advanced Prophecy Seminar, hypocrites. Whether they were before in their personal lives I will leave to others. I have no knowledge about either's personal life that isn't already in the public domain (except for the moose Garner Ted shot in 1975).

With God, no hypocrisy is allowed. For me, this means that if I realized something is true or false, I have to declare what I realize even if declaring the realization makes me an iconoclast, not something I would have willingly set out to be ... now, thirteen years after being called to reread prophecy I find that textual honesty requires me to become like Oedipus.

2.

Herbert Armstrong taught that disciples are not born of spirit until they receive spiritual bodies that do not bleed when pricked by a pin, the infamous pin test. The senior Armstrong didn't understand, never understood spiritual birth or how the Holy Spirit was received. He was, apparently, more concerned about refuting the mainstay Protestant dogma of *once saved, always saved*, than about understanding the consistent messaging in Scripture that the physical, visible things of this world reveal and precede the invisible, spiritual things of God, with circumcision of the flesh [where droplets of blood are shed] forming the dark shadow and copy [the chiral image] of circumcision of the heart where the *heart* is used as an euphemistic expression for the

non-physical inner self of a human person. Armstrong never understood that the glory of God (Ezek 1:26–28) came from the breath of God [*pneuma Theou*] fueling the *bright fire* that sustains life outside of the physical creation whereas human breath, physical breath, fuels the *dark fire* of cellular oxidation that sustains physical life.

In attempting to refute the Protestant dogma of *once saved, always saved*, Armstrong ignored an important principle that has become unpopular among Protestant Reformers since it was greatly abused by John Calvin (1509–1564), that of predestination ... in Abraham believing God and having his belief of God counted to him as righteousness [the physical presentation of belief/faith/*pisteos* being counted as righteousness], Abraham in his life forms the pattern for “whoever hears my word and believes Him who sent me [Jesus]”; for this person “does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life” and “has eternal life” (John 5:24). This person has been drawn from this world by the Father (John 6:44) and delivered to Christ Jesus to be a slave of obedience that leads to righteousness (Rom 6:16); for this person is [as evidenced by being drawn] foreknown by the Father, predestined, called by Christ Jesus, justified by Christ Jesus, and glorified by the indwelling of Christ Jesus in the form of His spirit [*pneuma Christou*] entering into [penetrating as a husband penetrates his wife for purposes of procreation] the spirit of the person [*to pneuma tou 'anthropou*] to give birth to a son of God still dwelling in a house of clay.

The person born of God through receiving the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] in the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] has indwelling eternal life, with this receipt of eternal life beginning not with the person—the error of so-called decision theology—but beginning with God foreknowing the person. It is this person, and only such persons who as slaves of obedience that leads to righteousness come under the rubric of *once saved, always saved*; for no one in this present era is saved by “making a decision for Christ” or by saying the sinner’s prayer or by being baptized into the name of Christ. Yes, lives have been turned around by *coming to Christ*, but the person [perhaps you] will know if the person has really received indwelling eternal life by how the person responds to the Law ... if the person is not a slave of obedience, compelled by the inner self to keep the Commandments, the person has not been born of spirit. The person has not been saved. The person is to God as idolatrous Israel was to the God of Abraham while Israel dwelt in Egypt.

So what Herbert Armstrong never understood is that for the predestined Elect, *once saved, always saved* is true in this present era; for the Elect have indwelling eternal life in the form of the spirit of God [the glory of God] in the spirit of Christ in the spirit of the person, thereby making Christ the Head of the disciple as the husband is the head of his wife, and God the Head of Christ (1 Cor 11:3) as, again, the husband is the head of his wife.

However, Armstrong was correct in his teaching that no one is humanly born with an immortal soul; for as Paul wrote, “The free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 6:23), and as John wrote, “And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” (John 17:3). Neither Trinitarian nor Arian Christendom can deconstruct the Tetragrammaton *YHWH* and arrive at the Father and His Beloved being present together, with their respective glories—and

because they cannot, they do not know *the only true God and Christ Jesus* regardless of what they claim about themselves.

A Christian isn't lost because the Christian isn't yet born of spirit; doesn't keep the Commandments; celebrates *Christian* holidays grown from the roots of paganism. Salvation is a matter of when God sets His hand to have mercy on the person; for all of humanity has been consigned to disobedience so that God can have mercy on all (Rom 11:32). The time will shortly come when God sets His hand to save, first all who profess that Jesus is Lord, then all others.

*

Men are their inner selves dwelling in clay houses, the reality disclosed by a demonic spirit to Eliphaz the Temanite before Eliphaz gave bad counsel to the man Job:

[Eliphaz speaking] Amid thoughts from visions of the night, when deep sleep falls on men, dread came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones shake. A spirit glided past my face; the hair of my flesh stood up. It stood still, but I could not discern its appearance. A form was before my eyes; there was silence, then I heard a voice: "Can mortal man be in the right before God? Can a man be pure before his Maker? *Even in His servants He puts no trust, and His angels He charges with error; how much more those who dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, who are crushed like the moth.* Between morning and evening they are beaten to pieces; they perish forever without anyone regarding it. Is not their tent-cord plucked up within them, do they not die, and that without wisdom?" (Job 4:13–21 emphasis added)

The Lord, known to Job as *Shaddai*, did not reveal to Job or to Eliphaz that men dwelt in clay houses: a spirit did that accuses God of wrongly charging angels with error. So not much credence should be given to what Eliphaz told Job if the Lord had not told Jeremiah to go to the potter's house:

The word that came to Jeremiah from [YHWH]: "Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words." So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel. And the vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to do. Then the word of [YHWH] came to me: "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter has done? Behold, like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. ..." (Jer 18:1–6)

Matthew's Jesus used the same analogy:

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean. (Matt 23:25–26 — also found in Luke)

Men dwell in clay houses, with these clay houses being like clay cups. The fleshly body is made up of Earth's base elements, the clay [red mud] used to construct the first Adam. It is the clay house that bleeds when pricked by a pin, not the inner man that animates this clay house.

Armstrong preached a *two-house-of-Israel* doctrine dubbed British Israelism. For Armstrong, endtime Israel consisted of descendants of the House of Israel, the northern kingdom of Samaria [the so-called lost ten tribes], and descendants of the southern House of Judah, the Jews, the modern nation-state of Israel ... when Armstrong initially borrowed the concepts undergirding British Israelism, the Zionist Movement was still developing in the British protectorate: there was no nation of Israel.

For Armstrong, endtime prophecies about *Israel* were about modern descendants of the ancient House of Israel, not about the Jews. Yet, the prophet Ezekiel records,

In the morning the word of [YHWH] came to me: "Son of man, *has not the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said to you, 'What are you doing?'* Say to them, "Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: *This oracle concerns the prince in Jerusalem and all the house of Israel who are in it.*' Say, 'I am a sign for you: as I have done, so shall it be done to them. They shall go into exile, into captivity.' ... And the word of [YHWH] came to me: "Son of man, *what is this proverb that you have about the land of Israel, saying, 'The days grow long, and every vision comes to nothing?'* Tell them therefore, "Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: *I will put an end to this proverb, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel.*' But say to them, *The days are near, and the fulfillment of every vision. For there shall be no more any false vision or flattering divination within the house of Israel.* For I am [YHWH]; I will speak the word that I will speak, and it will be performed. *It will no longer be delayed, but in your days, O rebellious house, I will speak the word and perform it,* declares the Lord [YHWH]." And the word of [YHWH] came to me: "Son of man, behold, *they of the house of Israel say, 'The vision that he sees is for many days from now, and he prophesies of times far off.'* Therefore say to them, Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: *None of my words will be delayed any longer, but the word that I speak will be performed,* declares the Lord [YHWH]." (Ezek 12:8–11; 21–28 emphasis added)

What Armstrong didn't understand was that physical *Israel* was the topographical representation of the Promised Land; he didn't understand that *Israel* shrank in size from the lands over which David had dominion to the size of the lands over which Solomon had dominion to the size of the two kingdoms, Samaria and Jerusalem. Then when the northern kingdom of Samaria went into captivity, *Israel* shrank in size again, and was only as large as Jerusalem and the cities Jerusalem ruled. When first Pharaoh then Nebuchadnezzar captured the House of Judah and established who would be king over Jerusalem, *Israel* shrank even smaller and became no larger than the temple mount. And when the armies of Nebuchadnezzar razed the city and the temple in 586 BCE, *Israel* was physically dead. But physical *Israel* was resurrected from death when Cyrus, king of Persia, commanded [539 BCE] that a temple be built for the God of heaven at Jerusalem (Ezra 1:2).

Life was "breathed" back into physical *Israel* by Cyrus responding to the command of the Lord. But *Israel* never again was larger than the temple mount ... yes, returning Jews eventually gained their independence from the Seleucid Empire and briefly ruled themselves, but the *Israel* that was the topographical representation of the Promised Land went from geographical coordinates to theological coordinates, with the Sabbath being the representation of the Promised Land and with the assembly Jesus built being the temple of God (1 Cor 3:16–17; 2 Cor 6:16).

What had been physical and able to be measured in hectares became spiritual and measured in knowledge of God; hence, since physical *Israel's* greatest size came at the end of David's reign, spiritual *Israel's* greatest possession of knowledge will come at the end of the Endurance in Jesus, the last 1260 days of the seven endtime years. In analogy, we are today where Samuel was, where physical *Israel* was when the Ark of the Covenant was returned (1 Sam chap 7, and in particular verses 13–14).

The entirety of Armstrong's ministry was built not on Sabbath observance or believing the writings of Moses, but on Armstrong's understanding of biblical prophecy that caused him to write in a 1948 Co-Worker letter the following:

December 8, 1947

Dear Family of Co-Workers' in God's Service:

GREETINGS! in Jesus' name: TIME is running out! This world is moving swiftly to its destruction! Yet there is still time---and just barely enough time---to finish the work of God for this present age. THERE IS NO TIME TO LOSE. But the work of God is progressing on schedule--amid handicaps, thru obstacles and trials that try our souls, our patience, and our faith to the limit---under the divine direction of God, and as a result of MIRACLES performed by him in our behalf.

The "Big Four" diplomats are locked in an uncompromisable duel between East and West---between Russia and the United States---between Communism and Democracy---between Atheism and professed Christianity. At the London conference, the nations merely lock horns and fight, and quarrel, and deadlock, in their efforts to restore the peace of Europe and the world.

The United States announces the invention and production of horrible, terrifying new atomic weapons---without giving the public any hint as to the nature of those weapons. The Russians give out hints that they, too, either HAVE the atomic bomb, or have its secret and are now preparing to actually produce it.

The United Nations recommend the partitioning of Palestine, and actual setting up, at last, of a new Jewish NATION in the holy land. This sets off the Palestine powder-keg. The Moslem nations, 300 million strong and solidly ORGANIZED these past three years, have announced they will never permit it---they spring to action---fighting and violence is intensified in the holy land, and terror reigns.

Europe faces its hardest winter, and the United States, with diminishing food supplies, sets out to try to feed the world to save it from chaos and communism and starvation.

Yes, this world is being hurled rapidly TOWARD UTTER DESTRUCTION---we approach the END OF THE WORLD!---which means the end of this AGE!

The WORLD TOMORROW will soon dawn, bringing peace, prosperity, happiness and joy at last;--and in the short time that remains our calling and sole important mission in life is to SHOUT THIS GOOD NEWS (the true Gospel of Jesus Christ) TO THE WORLD! It must go, not only to America and Canada, as it is now going, it must go to ALL NATIONS, in ALL LANGUAGES! To this end, AMBASSADOR COLLEGE is now operating in sober earnest---instructing consecrated, eager young men and women in the true Message, training them in speaking foreign languages.

THE OUTLOOK, at the moment, is for six or seven more years of PROSPERITY here in America--(even tho it is an artificial, unsound and inflated "prosperity")---while meantime the world moves relentlessly toward WORLD WAR III and final DESTRUCTION!

YOU, dear Co-Worker, are not going to be permitted to enjoy your home, your freedom, your present privileges and pursuits, many more years. Just a few more years---perhaps six or seven---perhaps twelve or fifteen---and a re-united Fascist-Nazi Europe will STRIKE---America's great cities will be blown out of existence in one night without warning---we shall see such tremendous atomic destruction as the world has never even dreamed ---more than 40 MILLION Americans will perish in the horrifying blasts! At the same time drought and famine will strike dead another THIRD of our entire population---men, women, and children ---thru starvation and disease! And our second great commission ---our divine calling from Almighty God---is to WARN our beloved nation, and other Israelitish nations, before it is too late! Every individual who HEEDS this warning, turns to God, is WATCHING and PRAYING ALWAYS, being filled with God's Spirit, living by every Word of God, with a life consecrated to Him, will be given special divine protection---taken beforehand to a place of SAFETY--- preserved thru the final horrifying tribulation, time of plagues and human anguish soon to visit this earth!

But if we to whom God has revealed this terrible future thru His divine prophecies fail to heed it---if we fail to each play his or her full part in WARNING this nation and the world, now, while we may---then God says we shall not escape, but He will require the blood of this entire people at our hands!

All emphasis is that of Armstrong ... the letter goes on, but enough is here presented for the tone and tenor of the message Armstrong proclaimed to be grasped—

Six or seven more years of American prosperity; six or seven more years, twelve to fifteen at most before a re-united Fascist Nazi Europe will destroy America—this is what Herbert Armstrong taught. This is the prophetic message he knew he had wrong in the fall of 1961, when he scheduled that Advanced Prophecy Seminar for spring semester 1962.

What Armstrong didn't know and never knew was that the two houses of Israel consisted of the nation formed by natural descendants of the patriarchs, all outwardly circumcised [circumcised in the flesh], and the spiritual nation of Israel composed of the inner selves of human persons who were circumcised of heart. And in this latter nation of Israel, there is neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female, slave nor free; for as many as are baptized into Christ have put on Christ and are therefore Abraham's offspring, heirs of promises as sons of God (Gal 3:26–29).

Armstrong never got beyond the surface of things, the fleshly houses that bleed.

Again (for emphasis), the Apostle Paul—to whom the senior Armstrong compared himself shortly before marrying Ramona Martin in 1977—wrote in his epistle to the Churches in Galatia: “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:27–28) ... consider for a moment the reality of what Paul wrote: if a person is baptized into Christ and puts on Christ as if Christ were a garment and therefore becomes a son of God that is not male or female when the person is raised from the baptismal pool, the person isn't the fleshly body of the person.

When a baptized person is raised from symbolic death, the fleshly body is unchanged; the fleshly body has experienced no death. If the person were a circumcised male, the person raised from baptism is still a circumcised male. If the person were a woman and by her biological gender unable to be circumcised, the person will be raised from baptism as a woman, the same woman she was before she was baptized. So what Paul addresses isn't the fleshly person that cannot enter heaven or receive immortality (1 Cor 15:50)—the fleshly body that bleeds—but an inner self, a non-physical (without substance) inner person that was dead (without spiritual life). What Paul addresses is the inner self that is raised to life through receipt of a second breath of life, again the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] in the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] entering into the spirit of the person [*to pneuma tou 'anthropou*]. This inner person, when the fleshly body is humanly born, is without indwelling life (*Permit the dead to bury the dead of themselves* — Matt 8:22) until raised in a resurrection like that of Christ Jesus, when the spirit of God descended in the bodily form of a dove and entered into [*eis* — from Mark 1:10] the man Jesus the Nazarene.

An issue that cannot be avoided is the racism, sexism of Herbert Armstrong, who was a product of his age, not a new creature in Christ Jesus ... in ancient Israel (and in modern fundamentalist Islam), women were chattel, property analogous to a circumcised man's house: “You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's” (Ex 20:17).

A woman belonged to a man, either to the woman's father or to her husband ... this concept is abhorrent to modern women in Western nations. More damage has been

done to the concept of deity by the Tenth Commandment in Western culture than can ever be imagined, with very few Christians realizing that the living inner self of a human person [when born of spirit] is analogous to the outwardly circumcised husband. The fleshly body in which the inner self dwells is analogous to the woman, with the fleshly body [because it is perishable] not able to inherit immortality (1 Cor 15:50 second clause). Rather, the glorified inner self will receive from Christ Jesus a new imperishable body that won't necessarily look like the fleshly body/bodies, especially of older persons. And it was for this reason that women, the dark shadow of a spiritual reality, lacked legal "personhood" under Moses (and now under Mohammad).

So there is no ambiguity: in Christ, there is neither male nor female. All disciples, individually and collectively, form the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27), with no human person able to enter heaven except through the indwelling of Christ Jesus as Paul expresses this reality in Galatians 2:20 ("I have been crucified with Christ. *It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.* And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" — emphasis added). The human person who remains apart from Christ is spiritually as a woman was physically in ancient Israel, an individual without *personhood*.

Spiritual birth is about divine procreation and is foreshadowed by human procreation: as a man (the husband, the head of his wife) enters into his wife and leaves his seed, and as the wife conceives a child, nurtures the child in her womb, then gives birth to this child that finally breathes on his or her own as a newly born infant, the spirit of God the Father [*pneuma Theou*] entered into the man Jesus and into His spirit which was then raised from the death that had come upon the spirit of <'o Logos> through human birth when this one, *Theos*, entered His creation as His unique Son ... when the Logos entered His creation to visit with Abraham (Gen 18:1–5), and to wrestle with Jacob (Gen 32:28–30), and to give Moses instructions from atop Mount Sinai, the Logos—the Creator of all things physical—entered as Himself. But as Himself, He could not construct the bridge between the living and the dead, whose God is the *Theos* of dead ones. He had to surrender His divinity and die spiritually. And this is what we see in Paul's epistle to the Philippians:

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in *Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped*, but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil 2:5–11 emphasis added)

About this, Jesus prayed to the Father:

Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given Him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now, Father, *glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.* (John 17:1–5 emphasis added)

But what Jesus prayed; what Paul wrote in his epistle to the Philippians was declared in advance in the preface [prologue] to John's Gospel:

In [*arche* — “primacy,” because of the absence of the definite article] was the Word [*'o Logos*], and the Word was with [*pros* — “with” or “of”] God [*ton Theon* — definite article included but omitted in English translations], and the Word [*'o Logos*] was God [*Theos* — no definite article]. He was in [primacy] with [the] God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. (John 1:1–3)

In Greek, definite nouns have definite articles, with this relationship so *tight* that articles alone are often used as pronouns; thus, for the definite article for <*Theos*> not to be included in the third clause of the opening sentence necessitates that <*Theos*> shares the article of <*'o Logos*>, thereby separating *Theos/Logos* [nominative case] from *ton Theon* [objective case of <*'o Theos*>]. Two deities have definite articles, and by extension, two deities have definiteness, with these two initially forming one deity as a husband and his wife are one flesh. However, with the Logos entering His creation as His unique Son (John 3:16), only one deity remained in heaven: God the Father, the *Theos* of dead ones, the unknown God for the dead know nothing (Eccl 9:5), especially not the God of these dead ones.

For this reason, the resurrected Jesus in John's Gospel told Mary Magdalene, “Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, “I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God”” (John 20:17).

The God of all sons of God is the Father, the God and Father of the glorified Son ...

There will be readers who say that what I write is confusing; that I make no sense. So I shall attempt to clarify what Herbert Armstrong actually understood.

The man Jesus of Nazareth was not fathered by a descendant of the first Adam, but was fathered by the Logos, who created all things physical. Therefore, the man Jesus was not born consigned to disobedience as all other men are (see Rom 11:32), but was born free to believe the writings of Moses and to believe the words of the Father that the Logos spoke to human persons either directly or in vision; for the Logos was to the Father as a wife is to her husband (as Aaron was to Moses). The Logos served as the mouth of the Father, the mouth that spoke into existence all that is physical.

But in leaving heaven to be born as His unique Son, the Logos gave up both equality with God and indwelling heavenly life. He was not both man and God when humanly born to the woman Mary, betrothed wife of Joseph. He was fully man, both inner self and outer self, meaning that He had a spiritually dead inner self that needed to be resurrected to life as a human person has life, loses life, then needs to be resurrected to life if this person is to live again. Therefore, when a human person receives the indwelling of the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] the human person has been resurrected to life in a resurrection like that of Christ Jesus, about which Paul wrote:

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His. We know that our old self was crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now

if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him. For *the death He died He died to sin, once for all, but the life He lives He lives to God*. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. (Rom 6:3–13 emphasis added)

When did *the life He lives He lives to God* begin? Following Calvary? Or following baptism?

In John's Gospel, Jesus says,

Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in Him who sent me. And whoever sees me sees Him who sent me. I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge Him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. For *I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has Himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak*. And I know that His commandment is eternal life. *What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me*. (John 12:44–50 emphasis added)

The life He lives He lives to God began with Jesus' baptism followed by receipt of the indwelling spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] when the spirit of God entered into Him in the bodily form of a dove. The resurrection that disciples will experience that is like Christ's comes upon disciples when their dead inner selves are raised to life through the indwelling of Christ Jesus. Christian orthodoxy at least partially understands this in its linguistic concept of *regeneration of souls*, phrasing I have avoided using because of the implication of the soul have preexistence prior to regeneration. And certainly since the days of Noah, this is simply not the case: since the world was baptized into death in the days of Noah, the inner self of humanly born persons are born dead. When the world will be baptized into life through the spirit of God being poured out on all flesh (Joel 2:28; Matt 3:11), every human person will be humanly born filled with spirit, with no indwelling sin or death. Thus barring accidental death or murder, a human person will live from birth to the end of the Thousand Years [the Millennium] after the world is baptized into life.

Today, if God doesn't intervene in a person's life and withdraw the person from this world by delivering the person to Christ Jesus to be called, justified, and glorified, the person will die physically and not live again until after the Thousand Years when the person is resurrected in the great White Throne Judgment—not a judgment that occurs inside the creation but a judgment that occurs outside the creation:

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who was seated on it. *From His presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them*. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. (Rev 20:11–13 emphasis added)

The dead in the great White Throne Judgment do not get physical bodies in which they will return to living physical lives, a concept Armstrong taught. Rather, the dead are the *dead inner selves* of human persons who have not tasted the goodness of God.

And these *dead* shall be judged by what they did in their physical bodies while their bodies were humanly alive—and we have come to Paul's Gospel:

For God shows no partiality. For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. For *when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts*, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus. (Rom 2:11–16 emphasis added)

Only the Elect escape judgment (John 5:24), but the Elect are not free to continue in the ways of this world: they are, through the indwelling of Christ, made slaves of obedience that leads to righteousness (again Rom 6:16). But this they chose when they listened to the voice of Jesus and heard His words and believed (as Abram did) the words of God. They could have not believed, maybe. They could have rebelled against God, maybe. But the Father through foreknowing the person *knew* that the person would believe and would not rebel and therefore predestined the person to be glorified while the inner self of this person remained a sinner. And it is for this reason that Paul writes,

For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but *God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us*. (Rom 5:8 emphasis added)

The soul of a human person doesn't preexist the conception of the person—that is not how the above passage should be read ... if preexistence were a reality, then Jesus' death at Calvary would have set every soul free from disobedience so that there would not be need for regeneration or for the inner self of the person to be raised from death. Rather, what Paul writes addresses the timelessness of the heavenly realm, where *today* is the same day as when Jesus was crucified.

The entirety of the Christian era is *<today>*, the Preparation Day for the great Sabbath of the Sabbath (from John 19:31). The entirety of the Christian era is the *First Unleavened* (from Matt 26:17 — read the verse in Greek without adding extra words), the day preceding the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And about *today*, the author of Hebrews wrote,

Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, but Christ is faithful over God's house as a son. And we are His house if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope. Therefore, as the Holy Spirit [set forth], "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness, where your fathers put me to the test and saw my works for forty years. Therefore I was provoked with that generation, and said, 'They always go astray in their heart; they have not known my ways.' As I swore in my wrath, 'They shall not enter my rest.'" (Heb 3:5–11)

Armstrong understood that the Logos entered His creation as His unique Son, that the Father was a deity separate from the Logos. Armstrong, however, explained the relationship between the Father and the Son in the context of a family—and this explanation really doesn't work; for God is not a family like a human family that has mad aunts in the attic and crazy uncles in the garden. The analogy that best represents

the relationship of Father to Son to glorified disciples is that of marriage, where the Beloved of God functions as the wife in a human marriage, with the spirit of the Father having entered into the spirit of Christ as a husband enters his wife for purposes of procreation, then the spirit of Christ entering into the spirit of the disciple as a husband enters his wife for purposes of procreation. Whereas the Father and His Beloved functioned as one deity as a husband and his wife are one flesh, the Beloved left heaven and entered His creation and was “adopted” by the Father as His firstborn Son. The spirit of this firstborn Son now enters His disciples, each foreknown by the Father, thereby becoming one with these disciples as a husband and his wife are one flesh. The relationship between disciples and the Father is now that of disciples being sons to Father. Their sonship, however, is analogous to Judah functioning as a kinsman-redeemer for his son Er by entering Tamar to bring forth sons who were his legal grandsons. The glorified Christ functions as the First of the firstborn sons of God, bringing forth firstborn sons for the Father that would, in a human relationship, be legal grandsons of the Father. But all of this pertains to the Elect. For the remainder of greater Christendom, receipt of eternal life comes at the Second Advent and through marriage to the glorified Christ, thereby making glorified saints “one” with Christ as a man and his wife are one flesh. Christ will now function as the Redeemer of the saints as Boaz was the kinsman-redeemer for Mahlon, son of Naomi.

The Elect are “one” with Christ Jesus through the indwelling of Christ in the form of His spirit. They are not made “one” with Christ through marriage following the Second Advent. Hence, the Elect are not the Body of Christ, or of the Body of Christ. Rather the Elect constitute the seven named churches that will be as horns on the head of the slain Lamb of God (Rev 5:6), with the seven spirits that function as seven eyes being the angels to these seven named churches—and with Noah and the seven with him on the Ark being analogous to Christ Jesus and the seven angels to the seven churches, with the churches being as the seven pairs of clean animals that boarded the Ark to cross from one age into the next age.

Also on the Ark was a single pair of every other air-breathing species, representative of a single *unit* from each of the assemblies composing greater Christendom. These single *units* also cross from this present age into the age to come with Christ Jesus. And as with the seven named churches, these single *units* from all Christian assemblies are not and do not represent the presently dead Body of Christ, the Body that the glorified Jesus will “marry” on or about the Second Advent.

The Bride of Christ, analogous to the body of a physically living person [the inner self represents the husband], comes from the Holy Spirit being poured out on all flesh (Joel 2:28) when dominion over the single kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man. The Bride of Christ; the Body of Christ will come from the third part of humankind ...

Awake, O sword, against my shepherd,
against the man who stands next to me,
Strike the shepherd,
and the sheep will be scattered (quoted in Matt 26:31);
I will turn my hand against the little ones.

In the whole land, declares [YHWH], two thirds shall be cut off and perish, and *one third shall be left alive*. And I will put this third into the fire, and refine them as one refines silver, and test them as gold is tested. They will call upon my name, and I will answer

them. I will say, "They are my people"; and they will say, "The Lord is my God." (Zech 13:9 emphasis added)

The concept of God as family is theologically limited to one family unit that is "one" through the indwelling of the spirit of God in first the spirit of Christ and then the spirit of God in the spirit of Christ indwelling in the spirit of the person, the definition of the Elect. But the third part of humankind will be baptized in the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*], not the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*], when dominion is taken from the Adversary. This third part will not be "one" with Christ until the Marriage Supper at or immediately after the Second Advent. All of this third part will then receive indwelling heavenly life coming from receipt of the Father's breath and marriage to the Son. Thus, all will be of the Father as sons of the Father, redeemed by Christ Jesus. There will be no aunts or uncles, no family unit beyond Father and firstborn Son/sons, with Bridegroom and Bride becoming one spirit as the non-physical inner self and the physical body (consisting of many cells) form one person. God is one, but "one" consisting of many personages as humanity itself is one flesh, all coming from the first Adam.

Both Arian Christendom and Trinitarian Christendom are heresies that will not survive into the Endurance in Jesus; for both advertise a closed godhead that does not permit born of spirit disciples to be younger brothers of Christ Jesus (see Rom 8:29).

Today, I am "one" with those who came before me and with those who will come after me, as long as they have believing hearts:

Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. As it is said, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion." For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses? And with whom was He provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief. (Heb 3:12–19)

Does a person have to, today, believe God with belief that leads to obedience?

Again, look to physically circumcised Israel as the chiral image of circumcised of heart Israel to answer this question:

Therefore, while the promise of entering His rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. For we who have believed enter that rest, as He has said, "As I swore in my wrath, "They shall not enter my rest,"" although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. For He has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all his works." And again in this passage He said, "They shall not enter my rest." *Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience,* again He appoints a certain day, "Today," saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts." For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from His. Let us therefore strive to enter that

rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. (Heb 4:1–12 emphasis added)

The Word of God is living and active; is double-lipped, double-voiced discourse—discourse that divides soul from spirit through discernment of thoughts and intentions ...

Herbert Armstrong didn't think that his converts could grasp the nature of double-voiced discourse [if he even knew of the concept] in which a story is told inside another story. He chose to dumb-down what he wrote, what he taught to the intellectual level of grade school children. And in so doing, he prevented himself from grasping what can be learned from the use of dual-referents ... the words of this world best express the things and stories of this world, not the things of God. Thus, to speak of heavenly things human languages have to be used metaphorically, naming things that are not by the names of things that are. And this, Herbert Armstrong never understood.

3.

The 19th-Century poet Robert Browning was self-educated. The radio host Rush Limbaugh is self-educated. Bill Gates is mostly self-educated. There are people who would say that in some respects, I am self-educated: when I had daughters ready to attend college, I was a single parent with no money. I had no way to send them to college other than to go myself and have them live with me: I had an invite, based on the strength of my fictional writings, to enter University of Alaska Fairbanks' graduate writing program even though I had no undergraduate degree nor any English coursework beyond Freshman Comp. My formal admittance into graduate school was predicated on my G.R.E. scores, which were high. So I returned to the university twenty-three years after I had, when eighteen, laid out a semester to marry and make enough money that I could continue in the Small Arms Technology program at Oregon Tech. The year was 1965. I was in a head-on accident in September that killed the other driver and left me unable to work for months. By May 1966, I was earning a thousand dollars a month and I wasn't interested in returning to Oregon Tech. (I had, fall 1963, entered Willamette University as a sixteen year old math major, but had transferred to Oregon Tech after being declared an emancipated minor following my mother's suicide; my father had died when I was eleven.)

A common characteristic of the knowledge base of self-educated people is possession of figurative "knowledge peaks" that are beyond others, and "knowledge black holes" that are abysses, making self-educated people simultaneously the most knowledgeable and least knowledgeable people in a culture ... Herbert W. Armstrong was such a person.

But it is to another apparently self-educated person I want to first turn: Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis, who wrote, *Exposition of the Sayings of the Lord* in five books, now lost except for excerpts, quotes by other authors, notably Eusebius in his third book, suggesting that Papias wrote prior to 109 CE, with modern scholarship dating Papias' books from 95 CE to 120 CE. Papias wrote at or about the time the Body of Christ died spiritually—and the spiritual Body of Christ did indeed die from want of breath [loss of the Holy Spirit] as the physical body of Christ Jesus died at Calvary ... the Body of Christ died seventy years after Calvary, with God the Father having stopped drawing persons from this world and delivering them to Christ Jesus forty years after Calvary, a year after Roman soldiers razed the physical temple in Jerusalem. Thus, when the last of those disciples truly born of spirit died physically—their souls [*psuchia*] presently sleeping under the heavenly altar (Rev 6:9)—the Body of Christ died, only to be resurrected at

the Second Passover liberation of Israel. As the gates of Hades could not prevail against the physical body of Jesus, the gates of Hades will not prevail against the spiritual Body of Christ.

The work of Papias, even in brief excerpts in the writings of others, is important because he confirms the creation and existence of the oral traditions of the Church ... Eusebius said Papias was Bishop of Hierapolis around the time of Ignatius of Antioch, and while Eusebius was troubled by Papias being a chiliast [in modern parlance, a proponent of premillennialism], chiding Papias for his literal interpretation of what were for Eusebius figurative passages, calling him a man of *little intellect* who misled Irenaeus and others, Eusebius nevertheless cited Papias concerning Matthew's and Mark's Gospels and thereby—in the case of Matthew's Gospel—giving to modern Sabbatarian Christendom a base for its greatest heresy, the use of sacred names. For Eusebius records Papias writing, *Therefore Matthew put the logia in an ordered arrangement in the Hebrew language, but each person interpreted them as best he could* [3.39].

How to interpret Eusebius' quotation from Papias has been long debated for the original context is missing and the Greek words used are ambiguous and seem to be technical rhetorical terminology. Nevertheless, the short citation forms the basis for Sacred Names Heretics to argue that the Gospels were originally written in Hebrew [or Aramaic] and then translated into Greek, an argument that is unsupported by the existence of any early Hebrew accounts, and an argument that suffers from Gospel quotations of the Old Testament coming from the Septuagint.

Because Eusebius' quotation from Papias uses the term for “rhetorical terminology,” it is here with Matthew's Gospel where I want to start:

Herbert Armstrong never knew that Matthew's Gospel was not literally true; was not a historical biography of Jesus the Nazarene; but was a literary construct with fictional elements, a literary artifice that functions as prophecy. For in Matthew's Gospel, what the glorified Jesus tell His disciples: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matt 28:18) is not true even today. This will not be true until dominion is taken from the Adversary and his angels and given to the Son of Man in a one-time event halfway through seven endtime years of tribulation. Thus, Matthew's Gospel should not be treated as historical biography even though that is the disguise the gospel wears.

Armstrong accepted the Bible, in its original languages, as the infallible Word of God; whereas the beginning of John's Gospel identifies the Beloved of the Father as the Word [*o Logos*] of God; a living Word, not an inscribed “word.” For all inscription comes via the hands of human agents. All inscribed texts are of men [or women], and are in human languages, with this seen in what the Lord told Moses: “Then [*YHWH*] said to Moses, ‘Write this as a memorial in a book and recite it in the ears of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven’” (Ex 17:14).

Two elements of Scripture are immediately present: Moses is to do the writing, and he is to write about the phenomenon in his words, not words given to him by the Lord. Secondly, because Moses will write in a Semitic script that inscribes only consonant clusters, he is to “read” [give sound to, or breath to] the words he writes so that Joshua will know what vowels to insert between the Semitic consonants. Without Joshua hearing Moses read what he wrote, ambiguity would exist for in Semitic languages [Hebrew, Aramaic, Arabic, for example], the same consonant cluster can represent any word within a family of words. Therefore, the person reading the Semitic text must know beforehand what word the consonant cluster represents before the word singularly and the text as a collection of consonant clusters can be read. If generational transmission of “breath” is interrupted by, say, the Book of the Covenant being lost in the dilapidated temple for some period of time then found during restoration of the temple as happened during the reign of King Josiah (2 Kings 22:8–13), the vowel

sounds to be inserted between consonants will have been lost. The text must now necessarily undergo redaction; for the Semitic text that will emerge from inserting *probable* vowels between inscribed consonants will not be the text originally written and read by Moses to Joshua. It will inevitably be a new construction, what's seen by many examples, with one being sufficient for my purposes: "God spoke to Moses and said to him, 'I am [YHWH]. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as [El Shaddai], but by my name [YHWH] I did not make myself known to them. ...'" (Ex 6:2–3).

If what the Lord apparently told Moses is true, then Abram/Abraham would not know the Tetragrammaton YHWH as a name. Sarai/Sarah would not have known the Tetragrammaton YHWH to be a name. Isaac and Jacob would not have used YHWH as a naming noun. Yet what do we find in Scripture:

And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of [El El-yone].) And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram by [El El-yone], Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be [El El-yone], who has delivered your enemies into your hand!" And Abram gave him a tenth of everything. And the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, but take the goods for yourself." But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have lifted my hand to [YHWH], [El El-yone], Possessor of heaven and earth, that I would not take a thread or a sandal strap or anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich.' I will take nothing but what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me. Let Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre take their share." (Gen 14:18–24 highlighting added)

And,

After these things the word of [YHWH] came to Abram in a vision: "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." But Abram said, "O Lord [YHWH], what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir." And behold, the word of [YHWH] came to him: "This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir." And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." And he believed [YHWH], and He counted it to him as righteousness. *And He said to him, "I am [YHWH] who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to possess."* But he said, "O Lord [YHWH], how am I to know that I shall possess it?" (Gen 15:1–8 emphasis and highlighting added)

And,

Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. But the angel of [YHWH] called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. So Abraham called the name of that place, "[YHWH] will provide"; as it is said to this day, "On the mount of [YHWH] it shall be provided." (Gen 22:10–14 highlighting added)

The examples are many, but the point is that if the Lord did not identify Himself to Abraham by the name YHWH, then why has the Tetragrammaton YHWH been placed in Abraham's mouth as an utterance identifying the Lord as the Tetragrammaton? A redaction of Genesis has occurred. A redaction of all of the Old Testament occurred between when the Book of the Covenant was found during the days of Josiah and the 2nd-Century BCE.

In the above citations, the highlighted occurrences of Tetragrammaton *YHWH* are inscribed as utterance of the linguistic determinative *YHWH* by Abram/Abraham, who never knew *El Shaddai* or *El El-yone* [same deity with similar meanings, *God Most High*] by that name—and if a theologian cannot see that Moses, the Writings, and the Prophets have been redacted to such an extent that the always unpronounced linguistic determinative *YHWH* has been inappropriately transformed into a naming noun, the theologian is without either eyes or ears. The theologian knows nothing of God or the mysteries of God. And this was one of the theological black holes in Herbert Armstrong’s knowledge base.

When writing about Matthew, Bishop Papias used the phrased translated as <ordered arrangement in the Hebrew language> which of itself has several possible meanings, but when coupled with language suggesting technical rhetorical techniques, the astute endtime disciple will consider the structure of Matthew’s Gospel in light of Hebraic poetics that forms poetry not through oral rhyme—Hebrew as a Semitic language is only partially alphabetized and therefore relies upon the reader knowing what word an inscribed consonant cluster should represent before *sound* can be added to the consonantal silence of the clusters—but through the repetition of thought, of ideas, the movement in this repetition being from physical to spiritual ...

Hebrew poetry is constructed in *thought-couplets* that have the first presentation of an idea or concept being physical or of darkness or of community, the outside of things, the surface of things. The second presentation of the same idea or concept moves inward to being spiritual or of light or of the person, the inner self, the spirit [*pneuma*] in the soul [*psuche*]. And an example of this is seen in Isaiah:

But now thus says [$Y^{\alpha}H^{d-n}W^{wi}H$],
 He who created you, O Jacob, [physical, physical]
 He who formed you, O Israel: [spiritual, physical]
 "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; [physical, spiritual]
 I have called you by name, you are mine. [spiritual, spiritual]
 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; [physical, physical]
 and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; [spiritual, physical]
 when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, [physical, spiritual]
 and the flame shall not consume you. [spiritual, spiritual]
 For I am [$Y^{\alpha}H^{d-n}W^{wi}H$] your God, [physical]
 the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. [spiritual]
 I give Egypt as your ransom, [physical—in the days of Moses]
 Cush and Seba in exchange for you. [spiritual—Moses]
 Because you are precious in my eyes, [physical—the present]
 and honored, and I love you, [spiritual—the present]
 I give men in return for you, [physical—the future]
 peoples in exchange for your life. [spiritual—the future] (Isa 43:1–4)

Rivers differ from “waters” in that rivers are “living waters”; likewise *water* differs from *fire* in that water represents death and fire, life. Thus, as there was a first Passover in the days of Moses when the Lord [*Yah*] liberated a physical people from physical bondage in a physical land, there will be a Second Passover at which time the Father will liberate a spiritual people from spiritual bondage [to Sin and Death] in a spiritual mindscape ruled by the spiritual king of Babylon, that old Adversary, Satan the devil.

The structure of words in an *ordered arrangement in the Hebrew language* is what’s seen in the briefest possible explication of Isaiah 43:1–4 ... the ordered arrangement is in thought-couplets, best addressed in the New Testament by Paul when he writes,

For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.
 For His invisible attributes, namely, His eternal power and divine nature, have been

clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. (Rom 1:19–20)

And,

Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven. (1 Cor 15:45–49)

If we were to put what Paul wrote in prose into poetic form, it would look like,

Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; [physical]

the last Adam became a life-giving spirit [*pneuma*]. [spiritual]

The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; [physical]

the second man is from heaven. [spiritual]

As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, [physical]

and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. [spiritual]

Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, [physical]

we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven [spiritual].

An ordered arrangement in the Hebrew language is an arrangement of thought-couplets in whatever language as if the language were Hebrew. The technical rhetorical terms that Papias used and that early Greek philosophers could transcribe but not mentally translate pertained to Hebraic poetics and how knowledge of the future [prophetic knowledge] could be openly concealed from Unbelievers ... if the Unbeliever doesn't understand what Paul makes plainly evident—that the first Adam was chiral image of the last Adam, the polarized light through which modern chemists look at the chirality of molecules such as thalidomide being the light of God—the Unbeliever will inevitably practice *here a little, there a little, line upon line, precept upon precept* (from Isa 28:10, 13) exegesis, which is how the drunk priests of Ephraim taught Israel so that this people would fall backward, be broken, snared, and taken by the Adversary.

How did Herbert Armstrong teach his disciples to study Scripture? *Here a little, there a little, line upon line, precept upon precept*. How did he study Scripture? The same way. Again, what does Paul, a Hebrew, say? Does he not say that the visible physical things of this world reveal and precede the invisible spiritual things of God? And it would seem reasonable that if Matthew's Gospel is written *in an ordered arrangement in the Hebrew language style* [the missing word incorporated in the technical rhetorical terms], then endtime disciples should find in Matthew's Gospel a visible, physical presentation of data and phenomena that precedes and reveals an invisible spiritual presentation of similar data and phenomena. And disciples do.

In 2012, I explicated Matthew's Gospel in the 100,000-plus word long Volume Four of, *Philadelphia Apologetic*. Today, having grown more in grace and knowledge, those 100,000-plus words would be 300,000 words, far too many for inclusion in this paper. So to illustrate Matthew's thought-couplet style of construction, I'll use one motif and the transition from physical to spiritual.

In Matthew chapter twelve we find:

Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered Him, saying, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you." But He answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the

South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here. (Matt 12:38–42)

The above is the physical presentation of the *sign of Jonah*. The focus of what Jesus said, however, is two-fold, equivalent to the *physical-physical* and *spiritual-physical* presentation of *Jacob* [physical] versus *Israel* [spiritual] in Isaiah 43:1 ...

In the physical/physical presentation, Jesus links Jonah being three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish [whale] to the Son of Man being three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Unfortunately, this is usually as far as Sabbatarian Christians go in trying to understand the *sign of Jonah*.

In the spiritual/physical presentation, two examples are used, both physical: the first being the men of Nineveh, with emphasis on “men” and the second is the queen of the South, with emphasis on “woman” ... both non-Israelite men and non-Israelite women will spiritually honor men—Jonah and Solomon—by believing them, but will not honor the Son of Man, who is/was greater than either Jonah or Solomon.

With baptism into Christ Jesus, there is neither male nor female. For there to be males [men of Nineveh] and female [queen of the South], no one has yet been baptized into Christ. The words that the author of Matthew’s Gospel puts into Jesus’ mouth are here only physically.

In Matthew chapter sixteen, we find the same question asked and the same sign given:

And the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and to test Him they asked Him to show them a sign from heaven. He answered them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' And in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah." So He left them and departed. When the disciples reached the other side, they had forgotten to bring any bread. Jesus said to them, "Watch and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." And they began discussing it among themselves, saying, "We brought no bread." But Jesus, aware of this, said, "O you of little faith, why are you discussing among yourselves the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive? Do you not remember the five loaves for the five thousand [in the physical portion of Matthew’s Gospel], and how many baskets you gathered? Or the seven loaves for the four thousand [in the spiritual portion of Matthew], and how many baskets you gathered? How is it that you fail to understand that I did not speak about bread? Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." Then they understood that He did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are [*Petros*], and on this [*petra*] I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Then He strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that He was the Christ. (Matt 16:1–20)

In the physical portion of the doubled sign or thought-couplet construction of the narrative is the *red sky*, one sign used to two contexts with two distinct meanings. When there is a *red sky* going into darkness [physical equivalent], there will be fair weather, smooth sailing. When there

is a *red sky* going into daylight [spiritual equivalent], there will be storms, trials, and tribulations. So the meaning of the sign is dependent upon the context in which the sign occurs—and this messaging needs to be carried over to the *sign of Jonah*.

The spiritual-physical portion of the doubled sign has Jesus warning His disciples to beware of the leavening of Pharisees and Sadducees, with both Pharisees and Sadducees placing importance on “surface purity” rather than on spiritual substance.

The *sign of Jonah* remains the subject of the passage even when it doesn't seem to be; for Jesus asks His disciples who do people say the Son of Man is, the physical-spiritual portion of the sign ... the disciples' answers are all over the place. So Jesus focuses his question, “Who do you say that I am?” Peter answers, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus identifies Peter as *Simon Bar-Jonah*, saying that flesh and blood—physical men—had not revealed that knowledge to Peter, but rather God the Father had.

Peter is not the son of Jonah: Jesus knows that Peter is not the son of Jonah. The author of Matthew's Gospel knows that Peter is not the son of Jonah ... Peter is the son of John (John 1:42; 21:15–17).

But in the context of God the Father having revealed knowledge to Peter, the difference between **John** [which has aspiration or breath preceding the nasal consonant <n> as highlighted] and **Jonah** [which has aspiration behind the nasal consonant <n> that serves as a representation of the nose] is significant, especially when this difference is reinforced by Matthew's Jesus adding, “You are *Petros* [uttered by exhaled or spent breath through pursed lips] and on this *petra* [uttered by opening the mouth and inhaling a new breath from about the middle of the mouth] I will build my assembly.”

In going from *John* to *Jonah*, breath visibly moves from in front of the nose [from breathing through the mouth] to behind the nose—to about where a whale's blowhole is located. In moving from *Petros* to *petra*, breath is audibly moved from being exhaled through the mouth [again, spent or dead breath] to being inhaled [new breath] through an open mouth.

This movement of breath from where a man breathes to where a whale breathes adds another dimension to the *sign of Jonah*; for with this movement, Jonah inside the whale was dead and was resurrected to life while still inside the whale:

Then Jonah prayed to [YHWH] his God from the belly of the fish, saying, "I called out to [YHWH], out of my distress, and He answered me; *out of the belly of Sheol I cried*, and you heard my voice. For you cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the flood surrounded me; all your waves and your billows passed over me. Then I said, 'I am driven away from your sight; yet I shall again look upon your holy temple.' The *waters closed in over me to take my life*; the deep surrounded me; weeds were wrapped about my head at the roots of the mountains. *I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever; yet you brought up my life from the pit*, O [YHWH] my God. (Jonah 2:1–6 emphasis added)

In symbolism, Jonah represents the inner self of a human person and the whale represents the fleshly body ... at human birth, the inner self is dead, but is raised to life through the indwelling of the spirit of Christ in the disciple while this inner self continues to dwell in a fleshly body.

Jesus will build His Church on the movement of breath from the nose to where the spirit/breath of God [*pneuma Theou*] in the bodily form of a dove landed on and entered into the man Jesus—about where the blowhole of a whale is located.

Spiritually, the *sign of Jonah* is about the resurrection of the inner self of a human person while this person continues to dwell in a fleshly body that is to this non-physical inner self as a whale's body is to a human person who should not be able to live inside the whale.

Herbert Armstrong never understood the spiritual portion of the sign of Jonah. He understood the physical portion, that Jesus would be three days and three nights—there is no ambiguity in the Hebrew—in the heart of the earth as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale. But that is all he understood. He didn't understand that a sign is context dependent, that the sign of Jonah going into the darkness represented by the death of the Body of Christ is as a red sky at dusk, but the sign of Jonah going into the light represented by dominion over the single kingdom of this world being taken from the Adversary and given to the Son of Man is as a red sky at dawn ... the Tribulation will afford disciples rough sailing for seven years.

In Matthew's Gospel, the transition from physical to spiritual occurs between scenes:

[End of the physical portion of Matthew occurs with this scene:] Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat." He answered them, "And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? For God commanded, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.' But you say, 'If anyone tells his father or his mother, "What you would have gained from me is given to God," he need not honor his father.' So for the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God. You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: "'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'" And He called the people to Him and said to them, "Hear and understand: it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth; this defiles a person." Then the disciples came and said to Him, "Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?" He answered, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up. Let them alone; they are blind guides. And if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit." But Peter said to him, "Explain the parable to us." And He said, "Are you also still without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and is expelled? But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone." And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon. (Matt 15:1–21)

Leave them be. Leave Jews or Muslims or other Christians alone. They are physically minded, carnally minded, and as such are blind guides, leading blind followers, with both guide and follower sure to fall into theological ditches. They are plants that must be uprooted, pulled from where they grow. And this will be what the Second Passover is about, what the seven endtime years of tribulation are about—uprooting every ideology that is not of God. For with God, there is no tolerance of *other*. Remember what the demonic spirit told Eliphaz: *Even in his servants he puts no trust, and his angels he charges with error* (Job 4:18) ... why would the spirit say this? Because iniquity was found in an anointed guardian cherub, this iniquity being of the sort Korah and his friends committed when they became advocates for representational democracy:

Now Korah the son of Izhar, son of Kohath, son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men. And they rose up before Moses, with a number of the people of Israel, 250 chiefs of the congregation, chosen from the assembly, well-known men. They assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron and said to them, "You have gone too far! For all in the congregation

are holy, every one of them, and [YHWH] is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of [YHWH]?" (Num 16:1–3)

What did Korah say that was wrong? Was not all in the congregation holy?

Now therefore, if you [Israel] will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you [Moses] shall speak to the people of Israel. (Ex 19:5–6)

But who had exalted Moses and Aaron above others? The Lord had. Not Moses, not Aaron. And who will exalt the two witnesses during the 1260 days of the Affliction [while the Adversary remains the prince of this world]? The Lord will ... God works through one "man," what Armstrong taught, but that "man" is Christ Jesus, not any human person. So for any humanly born person in the 20th-Century or 21st-Century to teach that God works only through one man at a time is ludicrous. Will not God work through *two* witnesses, both of whom are foreshadowed by Moses and Aaron?

How tolerant of dissent was Moses or was the Lord? How tolerant of dissent will the Lord be in the future? Consider what is told *Philadelphia*, one of seven differing endtime fellowships:

Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you. (Rev 3:9)

Philadelphia doesn't "convert" unbelieving Christians; doesn't make unbelieving Christians bow down at *Philadelphia's* feet. The Lord does. So *leave them be*. Don't direct missionary efforts at the 10-40 window. Don't even attempt to convert or correct other Sabbatarian Christians. Such correcting is the job of the glorified Christ. Permit Him to do His work—He really doesn't need your or even my help.

Matthew's Gospel turns on Jesus asking Peter if he was still without understanding (Matt 15:16) and Jesus explaining a straight forward metaphor to Peter: *what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person*, for the "person" isn't the fleshly body that can be washed with water. The person is the inner self that has no hands to be washed; the inner self whose life is not sustained by physical breath. And so begins the spiritual portion of Matthew's Hebraically structured Gospel:

[The spiritual portion of Matthew begins with this scene:] And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and was crying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely oppressed by a demon." But He did not answer her a word. And His disciples came and begged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying out after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before Him, saying, "Lord, help me." And He answered, "It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly. (Matt 15:22–28)

The good news that was to first go to Israel indeed went to Israel—and what became of this good news going to Israel? The Pharisees were offended.

Today, January 2015, the good news that was to go to spiritual Israel has indeed gone to the remnants and splinters of Sabbatarian Christendom—and what has become of this good news? Sabbatarian Christians are offended, with very few exceptions.

Oedipus the king did not set out to slay his father or to marry his mother. He sought to negate the oracles by figuratively getting out of town, but what was to be occurred anyhow. And so it is when it comes to my relationship with Herbert Armstrong: I was willing for others to ravage the theological carcass of his ministry. I didn't consider the work to which I was called to be a continuation of his ministry, but rather a stepping behind his ministry and a new beginning of resurgent Sabbatarian Anabaptism, the ministry of Andreas Fischer of the 16th-Century. In actuality, Armstrong's ministry grew from the seed Fischer planted. The work I do is of this same seed, and in the case of Fischer, he started stronger than he finished: he regressed spiritually in the short while before he was beheaded by beginning to place importance on physical circumcision ...

Herbert Armstrong never ceased being physically minded. He taught that no one, himself included, was born of spirit. And for nearly all of those persons he *discipled*, this was the case ... he knew he wasn't born of spirit.

In most aspects, the work I do is not a continuation of Armstrong's work. But as Matthew's Gospel is about the indwelling Christ Jesus and not about the man that physically lived, and as Matthew's Gospel is written in Hebraic structure, this same structure dictates [again, because of what Matthew's Gospel is about] that there be a physical portion or component to *Philadelphia* and that there be a spiritual portion or component. The half-century long ministry of Herbert Armstrong completed the physical portion: he had only physical understanding of the mysteries of God. And for this, he cannot be faulted. It was God's prerogative to raise him from spiritual death or not.

However, within the splinters of the former Worldwide Church of God, Armstrong continues to be idolized as *God's essential endtime man*, when he wasn't/isn't ... he isn't the last Elijah, Christ Jesus is. And it is this *Armstrong the idol*, not "Armstrong the man" that I need to slay: the man is already dead. His legacy will be finalized a century in the future. His legacy will be established by those who only know of him through his writings in comparison to the writings and teachings of those who came before and those who will come behind him as I do.

Because Armstrong taught, believed, that the Bible was the infallible Word of God in its original languages, within the scope of this paper I simply need to establish that the Bible is not and never was the infallible Word [*logos*] of God, that the Beloved of God was and is the Word of God—

Do I need, though, to make a comprehensive argument for the fallibility of the Bible through showing how the text has been redacted by many redactors? Or will a cursory argument suffice, such as using the example of what God the Father said to His Beloved when Jesus was raised from the watery grave:

[A] voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."
(Matt 3:17)

And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." (Mark 1:11)

Until the 4th-Century CE, Luke's Gospel had the voice from heaven saying, "You are my Son, today I have [fathered] you." After the 4th-Century, what the voice said conformed to what is recorded in Mark's Gospel; so when secondary redaction of Luke's Gospel occurred can be known.

The Father said either, *You are my son*, or *This is my son*. He didn't say both things ... if the Bible is infallible, there would be harmony in what was said, especially so since neither Mark's Gospel nor Matthew's Gospel were written until after Paul's ministry was completed. Neither were written when what was said was truly remembered by witnesses. Both were written after most if not all witnesses had died.

Following Calvary, the first disciples expected Christ Jesus to shortly, immediately return. They didn't expect decades to pass before He returned, let alone centuries and now almost two millennia. And most of Jesus' first disciples were illiterate: they would not have written books or even epistles detailing what they witnessed. At the time and in the first decades afterwards, secular writers didn't compose accounts detailing the ministry, crucifixion, and resurrection of Christ Jesus. Rather, an oral Christian tradition developed, a tradition about which little information remains. And this oral tradition was inherently flawed in that it brought to life more than one *Jesus*—

In Paul's second epistle to the holy ones at Corinth, Paul writes,

I feel a divine jealousy for you, since I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. For *if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed*, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or if you accept a different gospel from the one you accepted, *you put up with it readily enough*. (2 Cor 11:2–4 emphasis added)

How many “other Jesuses” were being proclaimed and accepted by 1st-Century saints? Apparently many, with each super-apostle having his own. In the New Testament there are at least three, with one of these three being the physical man [Mark's Gospel] and with one being the indwelling Christ in each born-of-spirit disciple [Matthew's Gospel] and with one being a talkative look-alike to Mark's Jesus [Luke's Gospel].

John's Gospel is interesting in that its *Jesus* was God and was with *the God* before entering His Creation as His unique Son, the man Jesus the Nazarene, then dying on the cross, being resurrected and returning to being God, the Beloved of the Father. Because of this Gospel's prologue (John 1:1–18), no account is told of Jesus being baptized and the spirit of the Father in the bodily form of a dove descending upon and entering into the man Jesus, whose relationship with God the Father was that of being the Father's Beloved, not His Son ... as a literary artifice, John's Gospel foregrounds the divinity of Christ before human birth, during His human life, and following human death.

Because of how many *Jesuses* were being preached by good orators, each with his hand in the pocket of those to whom he preached (2 Cor 11:7–15), a Christian oral tradition developed that incorporated half-truths that could be likened to Abram telling Pharaoh's men that Sarai was his sister ... about this oral Christian tradition of which most endtime Sabbatarian Christians are not aware we must return to Bishop Papias of Hierapolis: Eusebius quoted Papias from Papias' preface,

I shall not hesitate also to put into ordered form for you, along with the interpretations, everything I learned carefully in the past from the elders and noted down carefully, for the truth of which I vouch. For *unlike most people I took no pleasure in those who told many different stories, but only in those who taught the truth*. Nor did I take pleasure in those who reported their memory of someone else's commandments, but only in those

who reported their memory of the commandments given by the Lord to the faith and proceeding from the Truth itself. And if by chance anyone who had been in attendance on the elders arrived, I made enquiries about the words of the elders—what Andrew or Peter had said, or Philip or Thomas or James or John or Matthew or any other of the Lord’s disciples, and whatever Aristion and John the Elder, the Lord’s disciples, were saying. For *I did not think that information from the books would profit me as much as information from a living and surviving voice.* (Eusebius. *Hist Eccl.* 3.39.3–4. Trans by Richard Bauckham — emphasis added)

I did not think that information from the books would profit me as much as information from a living and surviving voice—again, Papias is believed to have written his five volume work before 109 CE; for that is when Eusebius’ fourth book begins. Eusebius quotes from Papias only in his third book. So while Papias lived, books about Christ Jesus were already in circulation, two of which Eusebius in his citation of Papias confirms: Mark and Matthew. But from Papias’ perspective, the books written about Jesus were apparently less reliable than testimony from living, surviving voices ...

Note, Papias separates “John, the Lord’s disciple” from John the Elder, a separation scholars have explored but that the Christian laity has ignored, and a separation that is of significance when it comes to the anonymous author of the Gospel of John.

Herbert Armstrong taught that Matthew’s Gospel was the first to be written and was written about 35 CE, four years after Calvary, but if this were the case, which Matthew wrote? Not the author of the Gospel of Matthew. For Matthew’s Gospel didn’t appear until about the destruction of the temple; didn’t appear until the author of Matthew’s Gospel knew for certain that Jesus wouldn’t soon return.

Again, Jesus’ disciples initially expected Jesus to return in their lifetimes. Consider what Paul wrote in perhaps his first epistle:

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep. *For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.* For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. *Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.* Therefore encourage one another with these words. (1 Thess 4:13–18 emphasis added)

Encourage one another with these words—how encouraging is it to know that Paul too has fallen asleep, and so far none have met Christ in the air? No bodily resurrection of the dead has yet occurred. Yet the hope of such a resurrection remains alive within Sabbatarian Christendom. Disbelief continues to be suspended, but at a very high price: abandonment of reason and logic.

Paul expected to still be alive when Christ Jesus returned as the Messiah—and as long as the return of Jesus was expected any day, there would have been no need to write down those things that Jesus said and did. Only when there was a general realization that Jesus would not return anytime soon would there have been the need and urgency to write books that recorded what Jesus said and did. Only when the strongest memories remained vivid [secondary memories having faded and no longer

able to be recalled] were books written, with Mark's Gospel being a notable exception and most likely the first of four exceptions.

About Mark's Gospel, Bishop Papias of Hierapolis cited John the Elder, who said that *in his capacity as Peter's interpreter, John Mark accurately wrote down as many things as he could recall from memory (though not in a ordered form) of things said or done by the Lord; for John Mark neither heard the Lord nor accompanied Him. Peter taught using a form of chreiai [meaning "useful"]. But Peter had no intention of providing an ordered arrangement of the logia of the Lord. This John Mark attempted to do, and consequently, Mark did nothing wrong when he wrote down individual items from memory. He made it his concern not to omit anything he heard or to falsify anything.* (Eusebius. *Hist Eccl.* 3.39.15–16. Trans Bauckham)

If Peter taught using a form of *chreiai* (a brief anecdote about a particular character, with Jesus being the character, the anecdote commonly being in the form of, *On seeing ...; On being asked ...; He said ...*) then Peter introduced what he would teach through a structure similar to how the Gospel of Thomas is written, suggesting that the Gospel of Thomas could well be genuine.

Mark's Gospel is in fairly rough Greek. In all probability, Mark's Gospel was the first of the Gospels written; for both the author of Matthew's Gospel and the author of Luke's Gospel in places uses word-for-word phrasing that seems to have been copied from Mark's Gospel, only both Matthew's Gospel and Luke's Gospel are in better (more grammatically correct) Greek than the Greek used in Mark's Gospel.

If a person intends to copy passages from a text, it is unlikely that the person who copies the passages changes good Greek into poor Greek. It is much more likely that the person who copies changes poor Greek into good Greek. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that Mark's Gospel was written before either Matthew's Gospel or Luke's Gospel, and was a faithful account of what Peter taught, set in chronological event order as best that Mark could untangle Peter's use of *chreiai* ... to the best of Mark's ability, he created the event chronology that the author of Matthew's Gospel and that the author of Luke's Gospel used.

Would Mark's Gospel have been inspired by God in its original language? Not likely. Could Mark's Gospel have been inspired? Possibly. But if Mark's Gospel is inspired when it reports that the voice from heaven said, *You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased*, then can Matthew's Gospel also be inspired when it reports that this voice from heaven didn't say, *You are my Son*, but said, *This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased?*

The author of Luke's Gospel makes no claim of inspiration, but tells readers that his Gospel is a redaction of previously written accounts, witness testimonies, and the preaching of elders:

Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught. (Luke 1:1–4)

Mark's Gospel would have been a from-memory redaction of what Peter taught. Luke's Gospel is a redaction of the oral Christian tradition and the books that had been

written (notably Mark's Gospel and Matthew's Gospel) plus others that have since been lost, with scholars identifying one lost source as "Q," apparently the text from which the *Mary material* comes.

Study of orality (as in the oral Christian tradition) discloses that every time a story is told, the basic structure of the story remains but the specific words used to tell the story vary, usually according to audience. If telling and retelling accounts of the same incident occur over, say, several decades, memory of the incident fades and what remains is memory of telling about the incident. When this happens, the "story" stabilizes and each retelling of the story varies little from previous retellings, but does vary enough that word-for-word transmission of the story can come from inscription only.

When Brits took over civil governance of East African peoples, European-style courts were established and testimonies inscribed by court stenographers. An African person, according to his or her tradition, would give the person's genealogy before testifying about a matter. These genealogies became part of the court record—and what was found was that oral genealogies tend to shrink in number of generations as least important ancestors are forgotten and more important ancestors remembered. Over a period of fifty or so years, one or more generations would be omitted from a genealogy: when an African person testified about a matter a decade or more after this same person had testified about a previous matter, the person's genealogy was shorter than before. It is only through inscription that narratives or genealogies are frozen into fixed words that can be repeated verbatim ... consider politicians for whom videotape exists of the person saying this or that, then denying that the person said what the person did, with supporters confirming that the politician didn't say what was said and with detractors magnifying the heinousness of the video recording. Oral words are spun as if they orbit "truth," rather than tell the truth.

And all of this brings us to Matthew's Gospel, sophisticated and fictionalized, but the Gospel that is of most importance to the endtime disciple first coming to Christ Jesus; for the "Jesus" of Matthew's Gospel is the indwelling Christ Jesus that gives spiritual [eternal] life to sons of God ...

If the Bible were infallible, we would know the color of the garment Roman soldiers placed on Jesus to mock Him:

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before Him. *And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him*, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on His head and put a reed in His right hand. And kneeling before Him, they mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they spit on Him and took the reed and struck Him on the head. And when they had mocked Him, they stripped Him of the robe and put His own clothes on Him and led Him away to crucify Him. (Matt 27:27–31 emphasis added)

*

And the soldiers led Him away inside the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters), and they called together the whole battalion. *And they clothed Him in a purple cloak*, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on Him. And they began to salute Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they were striking His head with a reed and spitting on Him and kneeling down in homage to Him. And when they had mocked Him, *they stripped Him of the purple cloak* and put His own clothes on Him. And they led Him out to crucify Him. (Mark 15:16–20 emphasis added)

Purple was the color of royalty, and purple would have been the proper color for the garment placed on Jesus when mocking Him for being a royal pretender. So for the author of Matthew's Gospel, presumably written after Mark's Gospel, to have changed the color of the garment from purple to red/scarlet establishes textual *difference* through which Matthew's Gospel can be deconstructed.

If the author of Matthew's Gospel had a copy of Mark's Gospel available to him as it apparently seems and deliberately changed a purple cloak into a scarlet robe [cloak], the author of Matthew's Gospel moved the focus of the mocking away from Jesus being a royal pretender to being the shed blood of Christ Jesus, with oxygenated blood being bright red or scarlet in color (oxygenated blood being *living blood* as opposed to *dead blood*). The author of Matthew's Gospel had no reason to address the issue of Jesus being a royal pretender for he had in his genealogy of Jesus established that Jesus was true royalty, descending from King David through King Solomon and down through the kings until the deportation of the House of Judah to Babylon:

Jesse the father of David the king, and David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel (Matt 1:6–12)

Right away, a problem exists: the people of the land made Jehoahaz, son of Josiah, king in the place of his father (2 Kings 23:30), but Pharaoh Neco II took Jehoahaz from the throne and made Eliakim, son of Josiah, king in his place and changed Eliakim's name to Jehoiakim, who then died in Jerusalem (2 Kings 24:6) and his son Jehoiachin reigned in his place in Jerusalem. It was Jehoiachin whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away to Babylon (*v.* 15), making him the grandson of Josiah, not the son. So in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus, the author misses the generation of Jehoiakim.

Again, it was the son of Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin whom the king Nebuchadnezzar carried to Babylon and who was liberated from prison following Nebuchadnezzar's death:

And in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, graciously freed Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison. And he spoke kindly to him and gave him a seat above the seats of the kings who were with him in Babylon. So Jehoiachin put off his prison garments. And every day of his life he dined regularly at the king's table, and for his allowance, a regular allowance was given him by the king, according to his daily needs, as long as he lived. (2 Kings 25:27–30)

In 1 Chronicles 3, we find a list of the sons of Josiah and their descendants:

The sons of Josiah: Johanan the firstborn, the second Jehoiakim [named changed by Pharaoh Neco II], the third Zedekiah [named changed by Nebuchadnezzar], the fourth Shallum.

The descendants of Jehoiakim: Jeconiah [Jehoiachin] his son, Zedekiah his son. (1 Chron 3:15–16)

The sons of Zedekiah, son of Josiah, were killed by the Chaldeans:

The army of the Chaldeans pursued the king and overtook him in the plains of Jericho, and all his army was scattered from him. Then they captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, and they passed sentence on him. They slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah and bound him in chains and took him to Babylon. (2 Kings 25:5-7)

The son of Jehoiakim the king in 2 Kings is <Jehoiachin, the king>, but in 1 Chronicles is <Jeconiah, the captive>.

The Chaldeans and Nebuchadnezzar in particular made the sons of kings into spoils of war by castrating them, turning them into eunuchs. But since no eunuch could enter the temple [when it stood], Israelite chroniclers were reluctant to write about the fate of either the son of the king or the sons of prominent people in the Chaldean court. Chaldeans were not as reluctant to write about making eunuchs of the sons of captured kings, and having these eunuchs serve Chaldeans ... Shealtiel was born to Jehoiachin before Jehoiachin surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar and was taken to Babylon as captured king:

Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to the city while his servants were besieging it, and Jehoiachin the king of Judah gave himself up to the king of Babylon, himself and his mother and his servants and his officials and his palace officials. The king of Babylon took him prisoner in the eighth year of his reign (2 King 24:11-12)

Unlike his uncle King Zedekiah, Jehoiachin surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar and had his life spared as a result; had the life of his son Shealtiel also spared. But surrendering didn't keep Jehoiachin from being imprisoned, nor did surrendering keep Shealtiel from being made into a eunuch.

However, after 37 years of captivity, Jehoiachin was released and invited to regularly dine at the king of Babylon's table. He could at this time resume his life and he would have had the company of his wives, or new wives:

And the sons of Jeconiah, the captive: Shealtiel his son [the second *Exilarch*, king-in-exile], Malchiram, Pedaiiah, Shenazzar, Jekamiah, Hoshama and Nedabiah; and the sons of Pedaiiah: Zerubbabel and Shimei; and the sons of Zerubbabel: Meshullam and Hananiah, and Shelomith was their sister; and Hashubah, Ohel, Berechiah, Hasadiah, and Jushab-hesed, five. (1 Chron 3:17-20)

By order of Nebuchadnezzar II, following the siege of 597 BCE, the royal house and the elite of Judah were exiled to Babylon. This exile included Jehoiachin and his young son Shealtiel, but Jehoiachin was himself still too young himself to have fathered seven children. He didn't begin to reign until he was 18 years old, and three months after beginning to reign, he provoked the Lord and the king of Babylon, who sent his army against Jerusalem, laying siege to Jerusalem for some period of time before Nebuchadnezzar himself came to Jerusalem. It was in these months that Shealtiel was born to Jehoiachin, thus becoming the second *Exilarch* when taken to Babylon with the rest of the captives.

Pedaiiah would have been the much younger brother of Shealtiel. He was not an *Exilarch*, and he was apparently enough younger than Shealtiel that there was no interest in castrating him.

Because Shealtiel would have been involuntarily made into a eunuch he would have been as good as dead as far as leaving his seed in this world. He would have been to the royal house of Judah as Mahlon was to his Moabite wife, Ruth. And in order for seed to

be raised up to Mahlon, the Ephrathite son of Naomi from Bethlehem in Judah, a kinsman-redeemer was needed, this kinsman-redeemer being Boaz who took Ruth as his wife “to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his native place” (Ruth 4:10), and to Ruth was born Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of David (v. 17).

Mahlon, whose name was not lost to Israel was of Ephrath, the former name for Bethlehem; for in Obed, Mahlon’s name was continued.

Jesse grew as a tree from Obed, his root. And of this root derived from the kinsman-redeemer Boaz, the prophet Isaiah declares the words of the Lord:

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the spirit of [YHWH] shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of [YHWH]. And His delight shall be in the fear of [YHWH]. He shall not judge by what His eyes see, or decide disputes by what His ears hear, but with righteousness He shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of His waist, and faithfulness the belt of His loins. ... In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of Him shall the nations inquire, and His resting place shall be glorious. In that day the Lord will extend His hand yet a second time to recover the remnant that remains of His people, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Cush, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea. He will raise a signal for the nations and will assemble the banished of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. (Isa 11:1–5, 10–12)

The Messiah is the one that *shall come forth as a shoot from the stump of Jesse, a branch from his roots that shall bear fruit* ... the Messiah comes from the a shoot growing from the stump of Jesse, then Jesse and the tree that has grown from Jesse has been cut off, cut down. David is of the tree of Jesse. The Messiah grows from the same roots as Jesse, but grows as His own tree. Thus, the Messiah will be one generation removed from the kinsman-redeemer that gives life to—in this case—the Root of Righteousness which has had its natural branches broken off and wild olive scions grafted on.

Zerubbabel can be likened to Obed: both are the son of a kinsman-redeemer...

The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also complete it. Then you will know that [YHWH] of hosts has sent me to you. For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. (Zech 4:9–10)

Gerald Waterhouse, an evangelist rank minister in the former Worldwide Church of God (WCG), delivered spellbinding sermons across the nation and around the world about Herbert Armstrong being *Zerubbabel*, his hand beginning a work that he would also finish, the work of preparing the way for Christ’s return and the *wonderful World Tomorrow* ... didn’t happen. Neither Waterhouse nor Armstrong could read the then-still-sealed prophecy that the author of Matthew’s Gospel sought to unseal—and actually did unseal when he wrote,

So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations. (Matt 1:17)

Examine Scripture and count the generations that have been left out: generations have been left out, more than just that of Jehoiakim. But generations were left out so as to draw attention to *<three sets of fourteen>*. If generations were not left out, there would be no challenge to there being three sets of fourteen [seven plus seven], with three kinsman-redeemers, two in the first set (Judah serving as the redeemer for his eldest son Er, and Boaz serving as the redeemer for Mahlon) and one in the third set (Pedaiah for his brother Shealtiel).

Christians have one kinsmen-redeemer, Christ Jesus, who raises up sons for God the Father.

In the case of Judah, the father brought forth seed that would be counted as his eldest son's child, the mirror image of Christ Jesus bringing forth seed that would be counted as His Father's.

In the case of Boaz, an older man, a relative that wasn't the closest but was the most honorable, raised up seed for his relative's son, most likely a nephew.

In the case of Pedaiah, a younger brother raised up seed for his elder brother who, though still living, was as good as dead thanks to the king of Babylon.

And in order for the pattern the author of Matthew's Gospel is establishing to hold, there has to be a kinsman-redeemer in the "second seven" of the third set of fourteen generations, with Christ Jesus being this spiritually positioned kinsman redeemer, but also with Joseph functioning as a kinsman-redeemer as Judah functioned in this position, the theological justification for the vision of Joseph (Matt 1:20–23).

Without using the phrase for "kinsman-redeemer," the author of Matthew's Gospel introduces the concept as well as discloses the structure of the Gospel in the traditionally appropriate narrative position through using three sets of fourteen generations, with the middle set confined to the kings of Israel, all of whom represented the people of the land in a manner akin to being the redeemer of the people if the king were righteous. This does not mean that what the author of Matthew's Gospel assigned to Christ Jesus as his genealogy is true; for the Christ/Messiah was not to be of David, but of a root sucker growing from the stump of Jesse, meaning that the Christ was to be of Obed, whose parents were honorable people, one of Israel and one of Moab about whom Moses said that no Moabite shall enter the congregation of the Lord (Deut 23:3; Neh 13:1).

The balance that the author of Matthew realized and exploited in there being chiral kinsman-redeemers in the first fourteen generation set and in the last fourteen generation set can (because of the nature of Hebraic structured narratives) also be used as prophecy about spiritual Israel, the nation to be circumcised of heart rather than in the flesh, with the Body of Christ being redeemed by the Father (analogous to Judah with Tamar, Judah raising up sons for his eldest son Er) early in the 1st-Century and with the glorified Christ raising up sons for the Father according to Moses after the Law was given:

If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead man shall not be married outside the family to a stranger. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her as his wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. And the first son whom she bears shall succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel. And if the man does not wish to take his brother's wife, then his brother's wife shall go up to the gate to the elders and say, "My husband's

brother refuses to perpetuate his brother's name in Israel; he will not perform the duty of a husband's brother to me." Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him, and if he persists, saying, "I do not wish to take her," then his brother's wife shall go up to him in the presence of the elders and pull his sandal off his foot and spit in his face. And she shall answer and say, "So shall it be done to the man who does not build up his brother's house." And the name of his house shall be called in Israel, "The house of him who had his sandal pulled off." (Deut 25:3-10)

Again, in Hebraic structured narratives there is a physical presentation then a spiritual presentation of the same narrative, same phenomenon, same thought; thus in the fourteen generations (there are actually more generations) between Abraham and David, there is one kinsman-redeemer [*goel*] in the first seven generations and one kinsman-redeemer [*goel*] in the second seven, with the first seven forming a physical type of the second seven in which the *goel* [Boaz] follows the pattern established by Moses for brother raising up seed for brother even though Boaz isn't Mahlon's brother.

The Gospel of Matthew has a physical face and a spiritual face in a manner analogous to two sets of <seven> together making one fourteen generation genealogical set that is bilaterally symmetrical, akin to a human person.

And in the author of Matthew's Gospel omitting generations to arrive at fourteen when more exists, especially in the unit between Abraham and David which will have the genealogy presented in the Book of Ruth and used by the author of Matthew's Gospel omitting approximately 200 years of Israel's history, this author causes end-of-the-era scholars to date the Exodus to about 1250 BCE rather than the more appropriate date of 1450 BCE.

Whether Herbert Armstrong was capable of understanding how a Hebrew structured narrative can be used to both conceal information and to reveal what is not recorded won't be known until judgments are revealed. What can be known is that he gave no indication he could "read" what the author of Matthew's Gospel wrote in a Hebraic-styled biography. He simply assigned Matthew's genealogy of Jesus to being the genealogy of Joseph, husband of Mary, and assigned Luke's differing genealogy of Joseph to being the genealogy of Mary, a simple though dishonest solution to New Testament contradictions.

The sum of the problem of textual reconciliation remains on the shoulders of Zerubbabel, who either did or didn't lay the foundation for the second temple:

[From Tattenai the governor's letter to Darius] However, in the first year of Cyrus king of Babylon, Cyrus the king made a decree that this house of God should be rebuilt. And the gold and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple that was in Jerusalem and brought into the temple of Babylon, these Cyrus the king took out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered to one whose name was Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor; and he said to him, "Take these vessels, go and put them in the temple that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be rebuilt on its site." *Then this Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundations of the house of God that is in Jerusalem, and from that time until now it has been in building, and it is not yet finished.*' (Ezra 5:13-16 emphasis added)

But the prophet Zechariah wrote,

Then the word of [YHWH] came to me, saying, "*The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also complete it. Then you will know that [YHWH] of hosts has sent me to you. For whoever has despised the day of small things*

shall rejoice, and shall see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. "These seven are the eyes of the Lord, which range through the whole earth." (Zech 4:8–10 emphasis added)

The foundation for the house of the Lord that Sheshbazzar laid was the foundation for the second temple, not the foundation for the spiritual or heavenly temple seen in Revelation 11:1 ... a *Zerubbabel*, different from the man that carried on the name of Shealtiel, laid the foundation upon which *Philadelphians* stand as pillars, with Paul identifying this foundation as "Jesus" (1 Cor 3:10–11). This *Zerubbabel* will be the Apostle Paul, in whom Christ Jesus dwelt in the form of His spirit [*pneuma Christou*]. And the temple will be completed by Paul, not by the hands of Paul, but by the ideas Paul expressed; by his understanding of Christ Jesus. The temple will be completed by the glorified Christ working in and through other human persons. And this Armstrong seemed not to understand (he wouldn't have permitted Gerald Waterhouse to preach what he did if he had understanding). By his denial of being born of spirit, Armstrong couldn't be this spiritual *Zerubbabel* whose parent was the kinsman-redeemer Christ Jesus. And this those who idolize Herbert Armstrong do not understand even to this day.

Regardless of how many times Ezra identifies Zerubbabel as the son of Shealtiel or what the prophet Haggai claims about Zerubbabel being the son of Shealtiel; regardless of what Matthew's Gospel claims about Zerubbabel being the son of Shealtiel, Zerubbabel was the son of Pedaiiah, the much younger brother of Shealtiel who would have been made a eunuch by Nebuchadnezzar when his father, King Jeconiah [Jeroiachin] was taken captive by the king of Babylon. Shealtiel fathered no son. Zerubbabel was only the son of Shealtiel through his brother Pedaiiah serving as a kinsman-redeemer for Shealtiel, raising up a son for Shealtiel so that his name continues in Israel.

In Luke's genealogy of Jesus through Joseph, the name Zerubbabel appears, but in Luke, Zerubbabel is the grandson of Neri, not King Jeconiah [Jeroiachin], and his son is Rhesa, not Abiud (Luke 3:27) ... a different *Zerubbabel*.

All of the above seems far from making a simple argument against the infallibility of Scripture, the premise behind Herbert Armstrong's ministry, as well as every other Protestant ministry. The Latin Church, however, subjugates Scripture to the decrees of the Pontiff ...

Islam contends that both Judaism and Christianity have been unfaithful and simply got Scripture wrong, that the visions of Mohammad are correct even when they carry within them the flotsam of Christian myth ... yes, Judaism and greater Christendom have been unfaithful, but the visions of Mohammad are at least equally unfaithful to God.

The problem with the people of the Book is the *Book* itself; for the Word of God lives in the personage of the glorified Christ Jesus, not as ink stains on vellum or paper. And without the indwelling of the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*], the person—regardless of intellect—cannot grasp the things of God. This includes imams, rabbis, pontiffs, pastors and pastor-generals.

*

How many women came to the tomb on the morning of the Wave Sheaf Offering (as Sadducees reckoned when this offering was to be made)? Disciples find that in

Matthew's Gospel, two women, both named "Mary," came to the tomb where Jesus had been placed (Matt 28:1), but in Mark's Gospel, three women came: Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome (Mark 16:1). In John's Gospel, one woman came, Mary Magdalene (John 20:1). Yet in Luke's Gospel, a chorus of woman came:

"Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. ..." And all His acquaintances *and the women who had followed Him from Galilee* stood at a distance watching these things. ... The women who had come with Him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how His body was laid. Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment. But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. (Luke 23:28, 49, 55–56; 24:1 emphasis added)

One woman, Mary Magdalene, doesn't represent *the women who had come with Jesus from Galilee* in either number or address; so the authors of three of the Gospel accounts present wrong information. Three accounts do not agree with one account, nor does any account agree with another. These four Gospel accounts are as four witnesses offering contradictory testimony about the same phenomenon—when this occurs in a trial, the defendant is set free for reasonable doubt is reinforced by witness testimony. The only testimony that remains consistent through being imbedded in the other three accounts is that one female person came to the tomb on the day after the Sabbath.

Is more than one woman needed to establish the reality that with God, women are the equal (or more than the equal) of men? No, one is sufficient. But this also implies that what is presented as factual—as fact-based history—in each of the four Gospels is fabricated for theological purposes: each Gospel is a literary artifice rather than a historical account. And if a literary artifice, then the Gospel should not in any way be idolized or worshiped, a practice of the Latin Church. The Bible is a book[s] as its name implies. It is not the living Word of God; the glorified Christ Jesus is. And what are the terms of the New Covenant:

Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. For they did not continue in my covenant, and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord. For *this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.* (Heb 8:8–12 emphasis added)

The Great Commission of Matthew's Gospel—"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matt 28:19–20)—stands, in this present era, opposed to the New Covenant that has the Lord putting the Torah (from Jer 31:33) in Israel and writing His laws on the hearts of Israel so that Israel will be His people, knowing the Lord. Israel shall not teach neighbor and brother to know the Lord; Israel shall not make disciples for the Lord; Israel shall not make disciples of all nations. This is a task that the Lord has reserved for Himself.

Returning to the end of Section Three and the citation of Matthew 15:13–14 that has Jesus saying,

Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up. **Let them alone;** they are blind guides. And if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit. (Boldface added)

There is no need for Christian evangelism beyond permitting the disciple's manifested love for God, neighbor, and brother speak for the disciple until the disciple is asked the reason for the hope that lies within this son of God. Then—not before then—the disciple should speak Jesus' words as best that the disciple understands them. The disciple will speak imperfectly as a human child speaks human words imperfectly, but if the person who asks is being drawn from this world by God the Father (see John 6:44, 65), the person who asks will hear Christ Jesus' voice in the disciple's words.

Herbert Armstrong never understood that the entirety of his ministry was based on vanity; on being a *little person* in a world of *big people* that at one time he desperately wanted to join. His physical stature determined his mindset; for he was not born of spirit—he would have told you so himself. And even during the half-century of his ministry, he wanted to be received by heads-of-state, by people who were somebody. He acquired the hand-me-down mansions of the rich. He ate on gold-rimmed china and with gold-plated flatware. He had a trove of antiques. And late in his life, he had a virtual fleet of Bentleys, none of which he could drive because of his failing eyesight ... in the end, he was blind.

There is so much that Armstrong didn't know, didn't understand, that where to begin remains the problem at hand.

Consider the account of the temptation of Jesus: from what very high mountain can all of the kingdoms of this world and their glory be seen (see Matt 4:8)? From what height can the opposite side of the earth be seen? What height is needed for a person to see what is concealed by the curvature of the earth at the earth's widest diameter?

Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve." (Matt 4:8–10)

Why would an intelligent person believe that the Adversary took Jesus to the top of a tall mountain from which he showed Jesus all of the kingdoms of this world and their glory? Any attempt to visualize the scene negates the reality of the scene. And if the reality of this temptation scene is negated, so too is suspension of disbelief ... the reader should not continue to believe in the literalness of the words on the page. Yet Christians blindly continue to believe that Scripture is infallible.

Consider, also, Mark's account of the temptation of Jesus:

The spirit immediately drove Him out into the wilderness. And He was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And He was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to Him. (Mark 1:12–13)

In Mark's account, Jesus was tempted by Satan throughout the forty days, but the nature of these temptations isn't recorded nor should they be recorded; for who would have witnessed what was said to Jesus or what Jesus said back? Who would have taken notes that, forty plus years later, would be inscribed? And would Jesus have told His disciples exactly what happened? Not likely. It was enough for His disciples to know that temptation had occurred.

In Mark's account of the temptation, angels were ministering to Jesus throughout the forty days. But this isn't what either Matthew's Gospel or Luke's Gospel records:

Then Jesus was led up by the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, He was hungry. And the tempter came and said to Him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." ... Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to Him. (Matt 4:1-3, 11)

In Matthew's Gospel, how Jesus answered the Adversary is the proper answer for each disciple in similar circumstances. But the author of Matthew's Gospel wasn't with Jesus when He was being tempted; plus, this author ascribes to the Adversary temptations and responses that could not have possibly happened. The Tempting of Jesus as recorded in Matthew's Gospel is fictional, but apparently became part of the oral Christian tradition that the author of Luke's Gospel redacted. Thus, the ordered creation of Gospels will have Mark's Gospel appearing first, followed by Matthew's, then Luke's, and finally John's, with the author of John's Gospel writing to set everything straight for the "Jesus" of Matthew's Gospel is not the Jesus of Mark's Gospel. And the *Jesus* of Luke's Gospel is neither the "Jesus" of Matthew's Gospel nor the Jesus of Mark's Gospel. And all of this would have made no sense to Herbert Armstrong, who would have insisted that the <Jesus> of each of the synoptic Gospels was the same Jesus ... he simply was not a close reader of the texts. He assumed all of the Gospels were about the same human man. He couldn't have imagined that anything in the Gospels had been fictionalized.

When the four Gospels are sequentially placed in their most probable order of composition, Mark's Gospel is in the physical position of a Hebraic thought-couplet; Matthew's Gospel is in the spiritual position. Luke's position is in the physical position of a secondary thought couplet; John's Gospel is in the spiritual position of this secondary couplet. And what would such an analysis of the Gospels mean for endtime Christians? It would mean that the author of Matthew's Gospel and the author of John's Gospel had a degree of spiritual maturity endtime disciples are only beginning to approach; that into and through the 20th-Century, Christians—including Herbert Armstrong—were as children using their parents' Bible as their coloring book.

Mention needs to be made of the order of temptations in Luke's and in Matthew's accounts: in Matthew, we find,

And the tempter came and said to Him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But He answered, "It is written, "'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God [cit. from Deut 8:3].'" Then the devil took Him to the holy city and set Him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to Him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, "'He will command His angels concerning you,' and "'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone [cit. from Ps 91:11-12].'" Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test [cit. from Deut 6:16].'" Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "'You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve [cit. from Deut 6:13].'" Then the devil left Him (Matt 4:3-11)

Bread, temple, mountain—the order ascends in height ... the quotations attributed to Jesus are from Deuteronomy, the codification of the Moab covenant, the covenant made with the children of Israel that is in addition to the Sinai covenant—the covenant made on the flat lands east of the Jordan with those present at the time and those not present (Deut 29:15).

In Luke, we find,

The devil said to Him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'" And the devil took Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to Him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." And Jesus answered Him, "It is written, "'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.'" And he took Him to Jerusalem and set Him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to Him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, "'He will command His angels concerning you, to guard you,' and "'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'" And Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time. (Luke 4:3–13)

Bread, authority, temple—the order forms an inverted <v>, which in Greek is the inversion of the nasal consonant ... because Luke's Gospel was probably written a decade after Matthew's Gospel, the change in order represents a conscious decision by the author of Luke, for the similarity in phrasing suggests that the author of Luke copied phrasing from Matthew's Gospel. Of course, the possibility exists that both copied from a common source text, but considering the limited changes made and that the oral Christian tradition would not produce identical phrasing and that Matthew's changes of Mark's temptation account have a recognizable purpose, it is most likely that the oral tradition is the source for both Matthew's and Luke's temptation accounts, with the author of Matthew changing the order of temptation of his for literary purposes and with the author of Luke's Gospel *borrowing* the phrasing of Matthew but retaining the temptation order of the oral tradition.

Concerning the claim, *the oral Christian tradition would not produce identical phrasing*, to repeat myself, study of orality discloses that every time a story is told, the basic structure of the story remains but the specific words used to tell the story vary.

The oral Christian tradition would have wobbled here and there until memories of what Christ did and said dimmed and all that remained were memories of telling about Christ's deeds. At this point, for good or bad, the oral Christian tradition would become stable enough to *walk* into the following century. But this tradition, long ago lost, would have included what the Apostle Paul identified as the mystery of lawlessness (2 Thess 2:7) and what Peter described when he wrote,

But according to His promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by Him without spot or blemish, and at peace. And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. *There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures. You therefore,*

beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 3:13–18 emphasis added)

It can be assumed that the oral Christian tradition included many stories that were not fully true; it can also be assumed that the temptation of Christ story as presented in Matthew's Gospel and in Luke's Gospel is in the category of stories told by itinerant preachers about whom Bishop Papias wrote, "[U]nlike most people I took no pleasure in those who told many different stories, but only in those who taught the truth" (cit. from Eusebius. 3:39).

The mistake greater Christendom has repeatedly made is the mistake Herbert Armstrong made—

God, Father and Son, does not need the help of human agents to teach those on whose hearts the Lord has written the Law to *know the Lord*. God is perfectly capable of teaching all that He draws from this world to *know the Lord*. And from a historical perspective, in nineteen centuries greater Christendom has accomplished nothing more than to teach a great many people to transgress the Law, ignore Moses, and to justify their carnal desires through twisted readings of Scripture, then take great offense when told they are spiritual bastards.

Christian orthodoxy in the 2nd-Century CE would have taken great offense if told that the Body of Christ was spiritually dead: they weren't dead, so how could the Body of Christ be dead? Weren't they part of the Body of Christ ... indeed they were—and they were spiritually dead. For how did the man Jesus walk in this world? Did He not walk as a believing Judean? And if He dwells in the person as Paul wrote to the Galatians (2:20), then the Christian can only walk in this world as a Gentile through having killed the indwelling *Christ*.

Because each of the Gospels is a literary artifice, it would be reasonable for the anonymous author of Matthew and the anonymous author of Luke to have expanded John Mark's inscribed recollections of what Peter taught about the temptation of Jesus into an incident showing Christ Jesus besting the Adversary, not through "might"—in both Matthew's and Luke's temptation accounts, the Adversary physically takes Jesus from the wilderness to Jerusalem and sets Him on the pinnacle of the temple (Matt 4:5; Luke 4:9), which should have been against the will of Christ—but through use of Holy Writ, meaning that there remains reasons for reading Scripture apart from reading to *feel good*.

5.

Discussion of scriptural fallibility could continue and develop into a book of itself, but that is not the purpose of this extended article [book]: the purpose is to address Herbert Armstrong being perceived as *God's essential endtime man*, the last Elijah, when no human person is "essential" other than the man Jesus the Nazarene. If anything, Armstrong "killed" the work begun by Sabbatarian Pietists ... Pietism began as a "movement toward piety" that developed within Lutheranism in the late 17th-Century, with a few within this movement accepting the seventh day Sabbath as the day upon which God and Christ should be worshiped. Sabbatarian Pietists came to America as seventh-day Brethren early in the 18th-Century, with the Ephrata Community (1722) developing from the preaching of Conrad Beissel. From Sabbatarian Brethren came

seventh day German Baptists [Dunkards], then after 1844 and William Miller's Great Disappointment, the Church of God Seventh Day and the Seventh Day Adventists. Armstrong began to attend with the Oregon Conference of the Church of God Seventh Day in the late 1920s. Although he was always uncomfortable acknowledging that he was ordained by the Church of God Seventh Day and counted as one of their pastors, he wasn't uncomfortable acknowledging that he was ordained as "one sent forth" by the Oregon Conference. But in the size and scope of his ministry; in his lifestyle; in the message he taught; in his exclusion of the laity from ministry, he effectively denied the tenets of Pietism, consciously moving farther and farther from Pietism as his ministry grew in income and reach. Whereas he came to the Sabbath through attempting to prove his wife wrong about Sabbath observance, his wife Loma came to the Sabbath through study with members of the Oregon Conference (through the ministry of the laity): Armstrong came to the Sabbath as one who would, if he could, root Sabbath observance out of his wife, but died as one who had effectively rooted Pietism out from the Sabbatarian Church. But the six principles set forth by Philipp Jakob Spener in 1685 for restoring life to the Lutheran Church remain the principles for restoring life to the Sabbatarian Church. And through the splintering of Armstrong's ministry since his death, some Sabbatarians have returned to Pietist practices such as home churches, Bible studies, and living a vigorous Christian life. Unfortunately, the majority of Armstrong's disciples no longer keep the Sabbath: Armstrong, not the Adversary, killed them by how he lived like a king and the laity lived like paupers.

Now to his credit, Herbert Armstrong, without being born of spirit, knew enough to walk in this world as a believing Judean, and he knew enough to teach others to also walk as believing Judeans—and that might be enough. The decision will be Christ Jesus', not any man's. So for those disciples that genuinely "hate" Armstrong and there are many, their hate will be their undoing. If Jesus could wash Judas Iscariot's feet knowing that Judas was about to betray Him, disciples ought to be able to figuratively wash Armstrong's feet.

Armstrong taught as one who had no spiritual understanding: *British Israelism* was at the core of all he taught. And with Armstrong placing emphasis on descendants of the so-called Lost Ten Tribes, Armstrong disclosed that he didn't understand Matthew's Gospel, the Gospel that best supports Christian disciples living as Judeans.

The author of Matthew cites Hosea:

When Israel was a child, I loved him,
and out of Egypt I called my son.
The more they were called,
the more they went away;
they kept sacrificing to the Baals
and burning offerings to idols.
Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk;
I took them up by their arms,
but they did not know that I healed them.
I led them with cords of kindness,
with the bands of love,
and I became to them as one who eases the yoke on their jaws,
and I bent down to them and fed them.

They shall not return to the land of Egypt,
but Assyria shall be their king,
because they have refused to return to me. (Hos 11:1–5 indented lines are the
spiritual portions of thought-couplets)

But the author of Matthew only cited the spiritual portion of verse 1: “‘Out of Egypt I called My Son.’”

The author of Matthew needed to establish that Jesus represented <Israel>, thereby giving Jesus priority over the children of Israel that crossed the Jordan on the 10th day of the first month (Josh 4:19), thus entering the Promised Land [“penned” in the Sabbath] as the selected and chosen Passover Lamb of God.

The problem had to be solved if the remainder of his message was to work for endtime disciples—and the solution chosen capitalized on the known ruthlessness of Herod the Great. Through the coming of the magi to worship the infant Jesus [whether this story is true is immaterial: there should be no record of Jesus prior to the beginning of His ministry, where Mark’s Gospel begins], the author of Matthew had reason for Herod to order the death of all infant males (of two years of age or less) in Bethlehem and the surrounding region. One of these infants was a potential threat to him. Thus, cause existed for Jesus’ parents to take Jesus beyond Herod’s jurisdiction; to take Jesus to Egypt. But in taking Jesus to Egypt, the author of Matthew also had to get Jesus out of Egypt, the topographical representation of Sin, without Jesus being tainted by Sin. And for this reason, Joseph and Mary had to return to Judea while Jesus was still protected by the innocence of infancy.

In the author of Matthew slipping the infant Jesus into and out of Egypt, then citing only the spiritual portion of Hosea’s prophecy that is about the children of Israel under Joshua [in Greek, *Yesou* — *Jesus*] being called out from the land representing Sin, this author effectively slips Jesus into being the selected and chosen Passover Lamb of God, with Jesus replacing the children of Israel as the sacrificial lamb, chosen on the 10th day of the first month, the day when Jesus entered Jerusalem (see John 12:1, 12 — five days before the Passover as Pharisees reckoned the Passover would have been the 10th day of the first month).

For Armstrong not to recognize what the author of Matthew does in replacing natural Israel [the outwardly circumcised descendants of the patriarchs] with Christ Jesus and those who are circumcised of heart through the indwelling of Christ, Armstrong disclosed his spiritual blindness for all to see, thereby making his advocacy of British Israelism a pennant of ignorance waved before the world.

Again British Israelism as a concept represents the epitome of carnal-mindedness: Armstrong’s two-houses of Israel message could be reduced to the natural descendants of the patriarchs that have the right to bear the name <Israel> were not the descendants of the House of Judah that went into captivity in Babylon, but the descendants of the northern House of Israel that were taken captive by the Assyrians more than a century earlier. But again, Assyria serves as the topographical representation of Death; so when Hosea in the spiritual portion of a thought-couplet declares, “Assyria shall be their king,” the prophet discloses consignment to disobedience and death.

It is less difficult to reconcile the historic movement of peoples with descendants of the patriarchs journeying eastward and westward from Samaria than it is to reconcile

natural descendants of the patriarchs being endtime *Israel* with Scripture, especially the epistles of the Apostle Paul, who wrote,

You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law. For, as it is written, "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you." For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God. (Rom 2:23–29)

Elsewhere Paul writes,

For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments. For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ. Therefore, *as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him*, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. For *in Him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in Him, who is the head of all rule and authority. In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, **having been buried with Him in baptism***, in which you were also raised with Him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised Him from the dead. (Col 2:1–12 emphasis and double emphasis added)

Unfortunately, the first to gather together Paul's epistles was the heretic Marcion late in the 2nd-Century CE. Apparently, he was also the first to establish a New Testament canon, his canon consisting of ten sections from Luke's Gospel plus ten of Paul's epistles, all redacted to support his dualist, neo-Platonic theology.

Proto orthodox (as Bart D. Ehrman identifies the forefathers of modern Christendom) bishops and theologians fought against Marcion and his teachings by gathering together fourteen of Paul's epistles and their version of Luke's Gospel, plus the other three Gospels, each redacted to support what would become orthodox [*the right belief*] Christianity. And while all of this was occurring, remnants of the Great Assembly were redacting Moses, the Writings, and the Prophets to purge from them the readings that early Christians used to support their belief that Jesus the Nazarene was the Messiah ...

There was a whole lot of tinkering with Holy Writ occurring that served no useful purpose other than to do what the author of Luke's Gospel told Theophilus, confirm that what these Christians or Jews had been taught was correct (Luke 1:4).

Both Mohammad [Islam] and Joseph Smith [Mormonism] recognized the textual inconsistencies taught within Judaism and Christianity. Both of the theologies they

founded grew from recognition that the Bible as received by 4th-Century Christians justified errant dogmas; however, neither Islam nor Mormonism (both producing their own sacred text[s]) were any closer to theological *truth* than Christian orthodoxy.

Herbert Armstrong skirted issues of redaction by borrowing from Protestantism its figurative 4th-down punt: *Scripture in its original languages is the infallible Word of God*. Therefore, for Armstrong, British Israelism was true if the original wording of Scripture in its original languages could be recovered. But Armstrong simply couldn't read Matthew's Gospel as it was written.

Although Armstrong consistently maintained that he was not a scholar, he nevertheless identified himself as an apostle—and as an apostle he entered uncharted territory with only the naming phrase <Israel> as his guide, not at all realizing that it is the French who cannot pronounce <Shibboleth> (Judges 12:4–6). The French, to this day, do not use the /sh/ sound at the beginning of words. Brits have no problem pronouncing *Shibboleth*; therefore, Brits cannot be reasonably identified as descendants of ancient Ephraim, even via DNA marking.

But the question must be asked, what has correct identification of the endtime descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes to do with endtime *Israel*, the nation to be circumcised of heart? What does correct identification of the Ten Lost Tribes have to do with Christ Jesus being the *Israel* called out of Egypt? What does the tongue (and how *Shibboleth*, or how 'Iesou is pronounced) have to do with being circumcised of heart? Does the circumcised inner self of a person utter words aloud? Are silently said prayers heard by God?

In order for the British to be endtime descendants of Ephraim—what British Israelism teaches—and for Americans to be endtime descendants of Manasseh, the Apostle Paul must be either badly misread or ignored ... while scholars don't know everything that Marcion taught, they know that Marcion redacted Paul's epistles, removing from them any reference to Jesus being a human man, with redaction being a form of forcing a misreading of the text onto the text through rewriting the text. Marcion misread Paul's epistles. Herbert Armstrong didn't misread them, he ignored them.

From where does Protestantism get its *antinomianism* if not from Marcion's misreading of Paul's epistles having crept into orthodox Christendom? And from where do Sabbatarian Churches of God get their legalism is not from Armstrong ignoring Paul's epistle to the Galatians?

But Paul's epistle to the saints in Galatia doesn't say what Protestant Christendom has made it say by *line-upon-line* exegesis, which Armstrong also practiced, only using a differing set of *lines*.

About *line-upon-line* exegesis, the prophet Isaiah writes,

These also reel with wine and stagger with strong drink; the priest and the prophet reel with strong drink, they are swallowed by wine, they stagger with strong drink, they reel in vision, they stumble in giving judgment. For all tables are full of filthy vomit, with no space left. "To whom will he teach knowledge, and to whom will he explain the message? Those who are weaned from the milk, those taken from the breast? For it is precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little." For by people of strange lips and with a foreign tongue the Lord will speak to this people, to whom He has said, "This is rest; give rest to the weary; and this is repose"; yet they would not hear. And *the word of the Lord will be to them precept upon precept, precept*

upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little, that they may go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken. (Isa 28:9–13 emphasis added)

This is rest; give rest to the weary—what message gives “rest” to the weary? Is not rest given to the weary when Paul wrote,

But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! For if I rebuild what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor. For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ. *It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.* And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose. (Gal 2:17–21 emphasis added)

Yet Paul also wrote [dictated],

For God shows no partiality. For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. (Rom 2:11–13)

Also,

What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; but that *Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law.* Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone, as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." (Rom 9:30–33 emphasis added)

In Christ, *rest* is given to those who have committed unintentional transgressions of the Law, regardless of whether they are or are not culturally under the Law. This has been difficult for the splintered Sabbatarian Churches of God to accept: *Christ who lived in Paul* raised Paul's inner self from death, thereby setting up a war within Paul's fleshly body, a war of the now living spiritual inner self against the physical flesh, a war in which the inner self can lose skirmishes but not the war. Hence, Paul wrote,

For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. (Rom 7:14–23)

Marcion would not have agreed that the *Law is good*; that the *Law is spiritual*. And Armstrong would not have agreed that Christ lived in him, that his inner self had been made alive through the indwelling of Christ Jesus in the form of His spirit [*pneuma Christou*].

When Christ lives inside the person, Christ continues to keep the Law as He did when alive physically. Thus, in Paul's inner self where Christ lives, Paul delighted in the

Law. The problem came in that Paul's inner self was not yet able [mature enough] to rule over his outer or physical self, his fleshly body that remained consigned to disobedience and death.

A strong man crucified could live on the cross for a day or longer. Legs were broken so that the strong man could not continue to push himself up and thus breathe. Jesus was scourged [beaten] to weaken Him, thereby forcing upon Him early death, the kindest thing Pilate could do for Him without causing a riot.

The old inner self of a person—the *old man*—is figuratively crucified with Christ through the spirit of Christ [again, *pneuma Christou*] entering into the spirit of the person [*to pneuma tou 'anthropou*], but if this old inner self is that of an inwardly strong person, the old inner self will continue to live even though figuratively impaled on the cross. And this crucified old inner self will cause the fleshly body to do those things that the new inner self hates, the dilemma Paul experienced when he wrote, *I do the very thing I hate*.

Paul didn't understand why his new inner self—which he knew he had—could not overcome the sin that dwelt in his fleshly members. Paul didn't know that there would be a Second Passover liberation of Israel, a liberation from indwelling sin and death, at a specific moment in time [space-time], with this Second Passover liberation of Israel being of the "Israel" Paul himself identified in Romans 2:28–29.

There have been many persons who have explicated redacted and doubly redacted Scripture since the 1st-Century CE, without realizing that the text the person was explicating was itself an explication of what was originally written. But of these many explicators, none were born of spirit as Paul was; as the author of Matthew's Gospel was; as the author of John's Gospel was; as Peter or James were. For at the end of the 1st-Century, the spiritual Body of Christ died from loss of breath [the spirit of God, *pneuma Theou*] as Jesus' physical body died at Calvary. And both the death of the spiritual Body and the resurrection of this spiritual Body is possible. Again, death comes via loss of the spirit of God. Resurrection will come by return of the spirit of God. For no person can come to Jesus unless drawn from this world by God the Father (John 6:44), and if the Father chooses not to draw more disciples from this world, death of the Body is assured—and this latter concept Armstrong understood in principle but not in its practicality; for he believed that the Body could not die.

Death of the Body of Christ would occur when God the Father ceased drawing individuals from this world then delivering these individuals to Christ Jesus ... death occurred when the last living person born of spirit died physically [ca. 100–102 CE], with God the Father having ceased to draw new persons from this world forty years after Calvary [ca 71 CE]: the razing of the physical temple had to occur prior to the razing of the spiritual temple. Thus, the Father continued to draw persons from this world and deliver them to the glorified Christ Jesus for as long as the earthly temple stood, with the earthly temple [Herod's temple] forming the chiral image [the left hand type] of the temple of God, the Church (1 Cor 3:16–17), the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27).

Resurrection of the Body of Christ will occur in a moment, in two moments, with completion of the resurrection to follow seven years of tribulation, these years of tribulation to begin with all of greater Christendom being suddenly filled with spirit and thereby liberated from indwelling sin and death at the Second Passover liberation of

Israel. Spiritual birth comes, except for the Elect, in the moment when Christ Jesus returns as the Messiah ... the Elect are those disciples born of spirit when it isn't the season for fruit of the spirit.

Paul wrote,

I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. *God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew.* Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel? "Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life." But what is God's reply to him? "I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." *So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace.* But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace. What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. *The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened,* as it is written, "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day." (Rom 11:1–8 emphasis added)

The Elect about whom Paul here wrote was a remnant of Israel, this remnant forming the physical shadow and copy [left hand chiral image] of the spiritual Elect of God, chosen not on the basis of works but by being foreknown by God the Father, predestined, called, justified, and glorified (Rom 8:29–30). Actually, the spiritual Elect are those disciples who have the faith of Abraham in that they hear the voice, the words of Jesus, believe the One who sent Him into this world, and have their belief of God counted to them as righteousness so that they pass from death to life without coming under judgment (John 5:24). They are chosen by grace, with *<grace>* used as a euphemistic expression for being under the garment of Christ Jesus' righteousness.

The person truly born of spirit knows that he or she has been born of spirit; for the old man—the inner self with which the person was humanly born and with which the person reached physical maturity—dies either a slow death or a rapid one, but either way dies and a new inner self replaces the former inner self. This new inner self has been brought to life through the indwelling of the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] in the spirit of the person [*to pneuma tou 'anthropou*] in a manner analogous to that of a husband penetrating his wife for purposes of procreation.

Because Armstrong was not—by his own declaration—born of spirit, he didn't and couldn't understand spiritual birth. He simply had not experienced spiritual birth, and in the honesty he had, he could not claim what he knew had not happened to him. And again, for this he deserves credit ... however, among those who became his disciples, a few were genuinely born of spirit, with these few generally ostracized within fellowships. These few thought for themselves for they had within them the mind of Christ. And because these few thought for themselves, they had their spiritual growth stunted by Armstrong, but they could not be spiritually killed by Armstrong or by anyone else.

Armstrong thought he was making disciples for Christ Jesus, but the vast majority of those who came into his fellowships were his disciples, not Christ's — and it is these Sabbatarian Christians who were spiritually harmed by Armstrong or by his ministers. These disciples would not have been genuinely born of spirit: the few genuinely born of spirit formed a remnant foreshadowed by the remnant of natural Israel that Paul addressed. The disciples who fell away, who did not continue to grow in grace and knowledge are representative of "*the rest [who] were hardened.*"

Endtime disciples have not seen Paul face to face, have not benefited from dialogue with Paul, but are today as the holy ones at Colossae were.

In the glorified Christ Jesus (as opposed to the fleshly man Jesus), the *fullness of deity dwells bodily* (Col 2:9) ... if the glorified Jesus is the second Adam, a life-giving spirit [*pneuma*] (1 Cor 15:45), the *fullness of deity* would be this life-giving spirit that would be without an earthly body, except as this life-giving spirit dwells in a disciple, thereby transforming the inner self of the person into a son of God possessing deity, not what either Trinitarian or Arian Christendom teaches—

Pause for a moment: if the glorified Jesus is the life-giving spirit that represents the *fullness of deity*, this fullness of deity is represented by the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] in the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] that now enters into the spirit of the person [*to pneuma tou 'anthropou*], thereby causing the person to become the personification of both Christ Jesus and God the Father and thus the *face* of God in this world. The person born of spirit as a son of God is, to this world, as the Lord was to Moses and as Moses was to Aaron and by extension, to all of Israel. The Apostle Paul was to the Church as Moses was to Israel. It is for this reason that Paul can write,

According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. (1 Cor 3:10–11)

Philadelphians stand on the shoulders of Paul to lift upright the pillars of the temple that rest on Christ Jesus. And it is to Paul where the mystery of lawlessness looks for theological underpinning, not at all realizing that Paul isn't the foundation of the temple; Christ Jesus is.

The author of Hebrews wrote,

For Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses—as much more glory as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself. (For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.) Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, Christ is faithful over God's house as a son. And we are His house if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope. (Heb 3:3–6)

Herbert Armstrong understood this concept of the glorified Jesus being the fullness of deity through the flawed lens of spirit-filled disciples being “begotten” of God, but not yet born of God.

The concept of being begotten [fathered by] but not yet born of spirit would have disciples still in the womb of the mother, with Armstrong teaching that the Church was the mother. Thus, logic would hold that if disciples are fetuses in the womb of their mother, disciples are nourished through an umbilical cord as they are confined within a wet, dark grotto. But this imagery is contrary to what Paul wrote to the holy ones at Corinth:

But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way? (1 Cor 3:1–3)

And,

About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil. (Heb 5:11–14)

A begotten fetus is not a milk drinker. An infant outside of its mother's womb is a milk drinker.

Could Herbert Armstrong distinguish good from evil? In his personal life, apparently not. But his personal life is between him and Christ Jesus, not between him and the disciples he made for himself. It is, however, fair to criticize him for his personal relationship with Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos (dod 28.09.1989) ... Marcos, having been convicted of murdering a political rival of his father in 1938, had his death sentence overturned by the Philippine Supreme Court in 1940. He then went from being a felon to being a freedom fighter against the Japanese, *according to him*, claiming deeds and decorations that history has shown simply were not so. His father was executed in 1945 for being a Japanese collaborator. There is the stench of collaboration also attached to Marcos. Nevertheless, campaigning as the most decorated guerilla fighter against the Japanese, Marcos won the presidency in 1965, won a second term, and shortly before being term-limited out of office, Marcos declared martial law on 22.09.1972 through his infamous *Proclamation 1081*, which made him a lifetime dictator, the powers of which he used to silence a free press and suspend civil liberties. He closed down Congress, the media, and arrested opposition leaders under the pretext of creating a *New Society* based on new social and political values—and he repeatedly entertained Herbert Armstrong, who came bearing gifts and a message about the *Wonderful World Tomorrow*, a message that Marcos could use to his advantage.

No, Armstrong could not distinguish between good and evil. He had no practice in making such distinctions. Nor did the ministry he ordained. For every minister upon returning to a pastorate for reunions after having been transferred out of the area universally expressed surprise about who was still attending Sabbath services and who was not. The disciples that they had perceived as the strongest in the faith were gone. The ones whom they had expected to fall away were still attending services. ... These ministers, themselves, in great number fell away once Joe Junior abandoned Moses and bragged about slaying Herbert Armstrong's dead ministry: as one Klamath Falls attorney said in the pretrial settlement hearing for a malpractice law in which the hospital had admitted liability, *There's only so many bullets you can pump into a dead horse*. "Little Joe" kept pulling the trigger long after he ran out of ammo.

Contrary to what Armstrong apparently believed about himself, he will not be in charge of education in the World Tomorrow. He might well not be in charge of anything for he practiced conspicuous consumption of the tithes and offerings of followers who struggled financially. He taught that in the World Tomorrow, glorified Christians would live as kings, enjoying the finer things of life. And he had his disciples believing that at least at the Feast of Tabernacles, disciples should also live as kings, spending a tenth of the person's annual income in an eight day period ... Armstrong seemed not to realize that the one who will be great in the kingdom is the one who serves most, not the one who is served by others as kings are.

There is a little recognized clause in a passage from Paul that has been previously cited, but that is here also appropriate:

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, *by taking the form of a servant*, being born in the likeness of men. (Phil 2:5–7 emphasis added)

The Creator of all that has been made physically was in the form of God, a form higher than any human king; yet this deity didn't cling to divinity, but entered His creation in the form of a servant ... human persons are created in the form of servants; humans, like angels, are created to serve and not to be served. But apparently Armstrong never realized that a person's fleshly body exists to serve others, from livestock that daily need to be fed and watered to neighbor and brother—to the sister too proud to ask for help even when help is desperately needed; to the brother who no longer remembers he benefited from poached venison forty-five years ago when the brother was in need; to the grandson who idolizes Armstrong through consciously blocking from his memory knowledge of the extravagant lifestyle of the Pastor-General. It is serving the person who doesn't want to be served where displaying Philadelphian love becomes most difficult. And when the physically living person has nothing else to give, the person still has his or her time, the person's allotted days of human consciousness. And what greater gift can one person give another than a portion of the person's allotted days?

When history blows the dust away, this present endtime Christian era will not be remembered by how Christians pronounced a bastardized Hebrew name, but by whether these same Christians were willing to lay down their lives for their brothers—lay down their lives in small units, a day here and a day there, an hour helping neighbor, another hour answering questions, another attempting to get a Christian to take the Passover sacraments on the dark portion of the 14th day of the first month, this first month beginning with the first sighted new moon crescent following the spring equinox wherever the person lives.

If Herbert Armstrong genuinely believed he was serving his disciples, he had an odd way of showing his service—

Before continuing this subject, I want to address Armstrong's core message about the *Wonderful World Tomorrow*: in the Millennium, the 1000 years when the glorified Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords, there will be no buying and selling, no transactional economy. Once dominion over the single kingdom of this world is taken from the Adversary and his angels (*cf.* Dan 7:9–14; Rev 11:15–18; 12:7–12) on Doubled Day 1260, and the Adversary is cast into space-time and down to this earth, the whole world is baptized in spirit and into life. No longer will sin and death dwell in anyone unless the person takes death back inside the person by returning to sin, defined as unbelief; the absence of faith [*pisteos*] as in not believing God (Rom 14:23). Therefore, the third angel's message—

If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of His anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and

ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name. (Rev 14:9–11)—
pertains not just to the 1260 days of the Endurance in Jesus (from Rev 1:9), but throughout the Millennium. And the mark of the beast, the mark of Death [*chi xi stigma* — the tattoo/*stigma* of Christ's/*chi* cross/*xi*] needed to buy and sell in the Endurance isn't Sunday worship, isn't a computer chip, isn't a Social Security number, but is simply marking oneself with the means used to kill Christ Jesus thereby identifying oneself as a person to be killed because of the person's unbelief of God about Israel not marking itself through tattoos or cuttings: "You shall not make any cuts on your body for the dead or tattoo yourselves" (Lev 19:28).

Simple enough? Yes, simple enough that the third part of humanity (from Zech 13:9) that wouldn't, today, sport a tattoo of the Christian Cross will not, when their spiritual lives are at stake, permit themselves to be tattooed with a cross. However, this will not be the case for the vast majority of Christians, even when filled with spirit.

In John's Gospel, Jesus said,

You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. I do not receive glory from people. But I know that you do not have the love of God within you. I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me. If another comes in his own name, you will receive him. How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God? Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you: Moses, on whom you have set your hope. For *if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?* (John 5:39–47 emphasis added)

Again simple, a simple question: if Pharisees would not believe Moses' writings, how could they believe Jesus' words? By extension for God is not a respecter of persons, if Christians will not believe Moses' writings—inscribed words, sans aspiration/voice, of the God of Abraham—how will they hear Jesus' voice and believe His words? They won't.

It is Jesus who places aspiration or voice or life into Moses' words. It is Jesus' voice that makes Moses' words complete. And it is this concept of adding aspiration, breath, voice to what is without life that is expressed through *the visible physical things of this world reveal and precede the invisible spiritual things of God.*

In the Millennium, there will be no transactional economy, no buying or selling, no working for wages, no economic oppression, and not much of what is today recognized as prosperity. The person who works six days a week at providing for family will have enough, as it was for Israel and the children of Israel in the wilderness when it came to gathering manna. The person who works little will get by; the person who works much will also get by, maybe better than the one who works little, maybe not. But both will work and will have enough, day by day, week by week, year by year, century by century, with mortal life continuing because there is no longer any indwelling sin and death. The Millennium will not be an age of space travel, or super computers, or even primitive electronic communication. It will be an age when people talk to one another, face to face, and have enough time to do so. It will not be an age when humans figuratively [as Armstrong taught] put the frosting on the cake; rather it will be an age when everyone

has work to do and plenty to think about ... if a person wants a knife, the person will forge the knife blade, even if that means smelting the iron for the blade: the abundance of this present world will provide the raw materials needed in the quiet age to come.

A person born of spirit today already experiences a shadow of what the Millennium will be like.

Back to where I left off, Armstrong's odd way of showing how he served his disciples ... those co-worker letters were his declarations of how he served his disciples, and feeling Armstrong's hand in my mailbox caused me to quickly respond to his co-worker requests for money.

In 1973, I had no money for the holy day offering on Rosh Hashanah. But Oregon had a bottle bill. I turned in all of the pop bottles I had on hand and all I found in nearby ditches. Three dollars and seventy-three cents went into the offering plate at Eugene, this offering not put into an envelope because of its small size (I didn't want anyone there to know how little I gave; I was embarrassed by how little I had).

The holy day fell mid workweek, fell on Thursday. When I returned home from services, there was an unexpected check in the mailbox for three hundred seventy-three dollars. The check was from the State of Oregon, part of an unemployment insurance settlement.

Was the dollar amount of the check coincidental? Had I not found more pop bottles because the check had already been mailed? Possibly. A person can easily become overly superstitious, attributing to God what might be mere happenstance. Many Christians are overly superstitious. Most are. Unbelievers would say all are. But what about me? What did I think then, and what do I think now, four decades later ... if the dollar amount was coincidental, then in my life a lot of coincidences have occurred that defy logical explanations. So, no, I didn't then think the amount was coincidental. I don't today think the amount was coincidental, not considering that the following spring, still cash strapped, still unemployed, circumstances conspired through which I relocated to Alaska's Kenai Peninsula, with a job at which I was earning a hundred dollars a day [I was falling "timber" in North Kenai for the LNG plant that was never built].

A local elder in Anchorage, Al Tunseth, went for pre-approval for financing so he could buy a new house in, I believe, 1976. The bankers laughed at his budget, and couldn't believe that his bills were getting paid on time. Yet his bills were being paid on what was for him a third-tithe year. When the bankers quit laughing, they approved him for the loan he requested ... things just had a way of working out for those who felt Armstrong's hand in mailboxes or in wallets and responded by sending offerings.

But Armstrong never understood tithing, how it should be applied and what it represents.

There is only one tithe [10%], not two tithes [20%] or three tithes [30%] of one's increase, not income.

An Israelite brought his tithe to the temple on the 1st and 2nd, 4th and 5th years of a seven year cycle. On the 3rd and 6th years of this cycle, the Israelite's tithe remained local, given to the Levite who had no inheritance in Israel; given to the widow and to the fatherless who had no inheritance in Israel. On the seventh year, the Israelite didn't plant or harvest his fields and therefore had no tithe.

On the years when the Israelite brought his tithe to the temple, the priests [who also had an obligation to tithe on their increase] would return a tenth of the Israelite's tithe to the Israelite so that he and his family could eat during the three seasons when all Israelite males were to appear before the Lord. Thus in numbers that most likely pertained to many Israelite farmers, the Israelite harvested 6,000 pounds of grain, of which a tenth [600 pounds] was the tithe brought to the temple. Of this tithe that the priests received from the farmer, the priests would return a tenth [60 pounds] back to the farmer, the second tithe. And the farmer and his family would eat on these 60 pounds of grain for the period when the farmer was in Jerusalem [when the temple stood].

Herbert Armstrong never understood that tithing represented the portion of the harvest of the Promised Land that will be gathered to God—the harvest of humanity.

There is an adage about God watching out for fools ... when it came to tithing, Armstrong's disciples were fools for whom God watched-out. For even after that white paper on tithing came out in, I believe, 1978, most of us (I know I did) continued to pay a second and a third tithe. All that changed for us in Alaska was that we paid off our increase, not our income.

That white paper on tithing, like all of Armstrong's dogmas, was not written in the language of a literate adult, but in the language of an immature student, thereby producing a form of *heteroglossia* that was novelistic in nature.

The conflict employed by Armstrong between differing modes of speech (in particular, between that of King James English and that of American sixth-grade students) served to refract Armstrong's authorial intentions, bending what should have been straight forward discourse into a spectrum of discourses that Armstrong, as an advertising pioneer, used to conceal from the public the limitations of the product he was selling. And he was selling a product, his self-educated readings of biblical prophecy that were eerily similar to the readings of Ellen G. White in many aspects.

At the beginning of Armstrong's ministry, the tension Armstrong produced through his heteroglossic discourse [many-voiced discourse] energized otherwise tired subjects, thereby guaranteeing that a prophecy seminar in a local lecture hall [school, civic center, Masonic lodge] would produce committed disciples eager to support his ministry. As his ministry grew, he kept virtually the same heteroglossic discourse, broadcasting his words across first America using the few clear-channel 50,000 watt radio stations that existed, then overseas via pirated, off-shore radio stations.

Armstrong needed other-language first-language speakers to understand flat-vowel, Mid-America speech—and as America became a world super power, more and more nations taught their students English, and in particular American English at a student level, thus supplying the base for the energized tension that caused many Europeans and Africans to request “free” literature, with the number of publications sent out into the world justifying the continued sacrifice of his disciples in supporting his worldwide ministry ... the winter of 1980-1981, I was living in Anchorage without a reliable vehicle. My wife worked for the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) as a drivers' license examiner; she worked across town, and to get to work, she took the city bus into downtown, then caught a bus out to Dowling Road. She had a brief wait in the

downtown bus station—and the bus station had a *Plain Truth* literature stand that was distributing a high number of *Plain Truth* magazines each month.

When she started riding the bus, she saw that all of the magazines stocked on the stand were being thrown into the garbage can every morning; so she began to take the magazines from the garbage can and restock the stand with them.

The men who were stocking the stand told the minister, Earl Roemer, that the stand was suddenly no longer producing and recommended that the stand be relocated elsewhere—and this is what was done. It was only years later, in deer camp on Kodiak, that I told Earl why the stand quit distributing the number of magazines it had before.

The stand never produced much for the Church or for God. But then, the object of the stands was to keep publication numbers high and thereby justify the ministry of Herbert Armstrong, showing to members just how effective his ministry was at *spreading the Word of God to all the world*. ... I understand that in East Africa, the inside of mud huts was “papered” with pages of the *Plain Truth* magazine, the magazine sent free to all who requested a subscription.

Narrative energy comes from in-text conflict, with a principle source of narrative energy being direct narration by the author, especially in doubled-voiced discourse where the author tells one story that has in the story a narrator telling another story.

The author of Hebrews identifies Scripture as doubled-voice discourse when this author says, “For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-lipped sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit [spiritual], of joints and of marrow [physical], and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart [again spiritual, as in Matthew’s three sets of fourteen generations].

How do endtime disciples understand Jesus, in John’s Gospel, telling His disciples:

Is this what you are asking yourselves, what I meant by saying, “A little while and you will not see me, and again a little while and you will see me”? Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy. *When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.* So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, He will give it to you. Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full. *I have said these things to you in figures of speech.* The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father. In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf; for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. (John 16:19–27 emphasis added)

The birth analogy is metaphorical; for human birth is not spiritual birth yet human birth has similar elements to spiritual birth, notably the pain that comes from bringing forth a nation in a day:

Before she was in labor
she gave birth;
before her pain came upon her
she delivered a son.
Who has heard such a thing?

Who has seen such things?
 Shall a land be born in one day?
 Shall a nation be brought forth in one moment?
 For as soon as Zion was in labor
 she brought forth her children.
 Shall I bring to the point of birth and not cause to bring forth?
 shall I, who cause to bring forth, shut the womb?"
 Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her,
 all you who love her;
 rejoice with her in joy,
 all you who mourn over her;
 that you may nurse and be satisfied
 from her consoling breast;
 that you may drink deeply with delight
 from her glorious abundance." (Isa 66:7–11)

In human birth, the pain of opening the womb precedes birth and does not follow birth, but in the chiral image of human birth—spiritual birth—birth pains follow and do not precede the birth of sons of God. The movement in the narration of the verse is from physical [*Before she was in labor / she gave birth*] to spiritual [*before her pain came upon her / she delivered a son*]. The energy of the passage comes from the tension between physical and spirit, the conflict between the author writing about *what is* [physical birth] and *what isn't* heard or seen [spiritual birth].

Perhaps it takes a novelist to first feel, then identify the heteroglossia of Hebrew structured discourse. I am certain that being a novelist before entering UAF's graduate writing program fall semester 1988, helped me deconstruct the novels of others ... as an aside, one wanna-be pastor from the former WCG sought to dismiss what I write with the phrase, *He's just a novelist*. That is true: I am just a novelist, not a pastor wanna-be. I wasn't called to make disciples, but to reread prophecy, the domain of born-of-spirit writers working outside the box of orthodoxy. And those who receive me receive my reward that came with being called to reread prophecy.

All of the preceding, going back to the first words of this piece, brings me to Luke's Gospel and to the Book of Acts and to what Mikhail Bakhtin, 20th-Century Russian theorist and literary critic, wrote about Second Sophist novels, with one citation almost capturing the essence of what he writes,

Rhetorical-judicial categories predominate in the conception of human beings, which was definitive for the heroes of Sophistic novels, ancient biography and autobiography and later in chivalric romances, novels of trial and analogous rhetorical genres. The unity of a man and the coherence of his acts (his deeds) are of a rhetorical and legal character and therefore, viewed from a later psychological concept of the human personality, they appear external and merely formal. It is no accident that the Sophistic novel was born out of a utopian fantasy of the law having nothing to do with the actual legal and political life of rhetoricians. (M.M. Bakhtin. "Discourse in the Novel." *The Dialogic Imagination*. Ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin; University of Texas Press, 1981. 407)

The Law having nothing to do with actual legal and political life—a utopian fantasy? But isn't this fantasy what's taught within greater Christendom? Isn't the Christian laity "condemned to be free," a concept advanced by the atheist philosopher

Jean-Paul Sartre? Aren't Christians "free" from the Law, with Luke's Gospel historically used by Marcionists to support their *dualistic* perception of God that had the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob being the wrathful Hebrew God, a separate and lower entity than the all-forgiving God of the New Testament, with Jesus being the Savior sent by the New Testament God and with Paul being this God's chief apostle?

Marcionites pitted opposing gods against each other, opposing forces against each other, one good or spiritual, the other lower, material, and evil—this differs from how the Hebrews used physical versus spiritual imagery, which uses the physical [lower than the spiritual] to reveal the invisible spiritual through preceding the spiritual in this world. The physical doesn't oppose the spirit. There is no conflict between Abraham and Christ Jesus, no conflict between Isaac and the born-of-spirit disciples. But without the man Jesus being baptized and the spirit of God descending in the bodily form of a dove to enter into Him about where a whale breathes, disciples would have little knowledge of how they, themselves, are born of spirit. Disciples wouldn't realize that when the glorified Jesus *breathed* on ten of his first disciples and said, "Receive *pneuma 'agion*" (John 20:22), the Holy Spirit was given and these ten disciples were suddenly born of spirit through receipt of the indwelling spirit of Christ.

Is there any opposition between God the Father using His breath, His spirit [*pneuma Theou*] to speak words to the man Jesus, who, having fulfilled all righteousness, was raised from the watery grave representative of the Flood of Noah's day, and had His inner self raised from death through the indwelling of the spirit of God, thereby causing Jesus to be born again, or born from above as the Son of the Father, not as an adopted son, but as a one-off created Son who was to be the first of many sons (Rom 8:29), each of whom would be created through the sudden indwelling of spirit of Christ in the spirit of the person ... no, there is no conflict here, except with what orthodox Christendom has traditionally taught about a closed godhead.

If a person wanted to advance the proposition that Jesus was both fully man and fully God, the hypercorrection to what Marcion taught about Jesus not being a man but only being fully God appearing as a man, there would be no better way than to put the story of Christianity into a Sophist novel, with the hero of this novel being Christ Jesus and with the heroine being the Apostle Paul, who would undergo a series of trials and journeys that would finally unite hero and heroine. In the course of this novel, there would be (as there was in almost every Second Sophist novel) storms and dangers, repeated escapes from death, a trial scene, imprisonment, and a shipwreck ... do these episodic motifs seem familiar? They should. They are the structural elements of Sophist novels, but they are also the structure of the Book of Acts, not at all a coincidence.

The last scene of the novel would have the hero and heroine uniting in marriage—in the case of Acts, the last scene would have Paul martyred and meeting Christ Jesus in the air, thus ending the Christian era and experience. So there is good reason for the last scene of Acts to be torn off and thrown away.

At the same time that proto orthodox Christians were battling Marcion and his ideology, these Christians also battled with the continuation of the Circumcision Faction, Ebonite Christians, that didn't recognize Paul as an apostle. A Sophist novel showing that the early Church came about through the evangelism of Paul would work

to marginalize these Ebonite Christians and any other remnant of the Circumcision Faction, with this novel showing Paul's credentials for being an apostle.

Why is any of this important when it comes to what Herbert Armstrong didn't know? Because Armstrong, following in the footsteps of Andrew N. Dugger and Clarence O. Dodd, traced the history of the Church through Sabbath observance, with none of them realizing that within the Christian narrative, the Christian who kept Sunday as an observant Jew kept the Sabbath was identified as a *Sabbath-keeping Christian*.

Armstrong had little or no knowledge of the actual history of the spiritual Body of Christ; for Armstrong sincerely believed Jesus had promised His disciples in Matthew 16:18 that the Church would never die ... that isn't what Jesus said. Did the gates of Hades prevail over Jesus' earthly body? No, they did not. Yes, Jesus died at Calvary. Yes, His body was dead in the Garden Tomb for three days and three nights. But the gates of Hades could not prevail over His body for the Father resurrected Jesus' body to life after the third day by returning to Jesus the glory He had before He entered His creation as His unique Son. Likewise, the Father who raised Jesus to life will collectively raise Christians to life as sons of God through a birth process better represented by that of butterflies than by human beings; for spiritual birth proceeds through four stages, not three.

All spiritual growth by sons of God occurs in this world where change is possible, thus making the living inner self in a mortal fleshly body analogous to the larvae stage of a butterfly, with this inner self being characterized by the worm that never dies. The death of the fleshly body is now represented by the chrysalis stage of a butterfly: the body is dead but life continues, only to emerge as a new creature more glorious than the caterpillar that grew from a tiny larva to, say, a tomato hornworm, the size of my fingers.

There is, indeed, a history of the Church, a history allegorized by the author of Matthew's Gospel declaring that there were three sets of fourteen generations between Abraham and Christ—three sets of physical/spiritual ministries, with the use of <seven> suggesting that each portion of each set was complete in itself, with the ministry resting [coming to an end] on the seventh day. And in this, the author of Matthew's Gospel advances additional knowledge concerning the seventy weeks prophecy given to Daniel.

Again, Scripture when read closely discloses that in at least the first two clusters of fourteen generations, more generations were present than the author of Matthew counts. Luke's genealogy of Jesus, while problematic for many reasons, has more than fourteen generations named in the third cluster. And it's time to reload, not to pump more bullets into a dead horse, but to hunt four beasts, each a demonic king.

6.

Nearly 90 years ago, Herbert Armstrong's wife, Loma, became convinced she needed to keep the seventh-day Sabbath. Armstrong sought to prove her wrong—I sought to prove my Seventh Day Adventist stepfather wrong about the Sabbath—and Armstrong engaged in an extensive self-directed study of the Bible and soon realized that Christians were to keep the Sabbath, one link of the Royal Law. But he didn't end his self-directed study with keeping the Law: within a short while he encountered J.H. Allen's book, *Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright*. And apparently from Allen's book, Armstrong

came to believe that the English speaking peoples possessed Joseph's birthright, including the "right" to be identified as end-time Israel. He concluded that the *key of David* was understanding that the stone under the throne of Great Britain was King David's throne; that the English speaking peoples of Great Britain, the Commonwealth nations, and the United States of America were endtime Israel.

He was wrong about what the *key of David* was.

King David was a poet and a very good poet who composed his psalms in Hebraic thought-couplets—

As a Semitic language, Hebrew like Aramaic and Arabic is written without vowels. Only consonants are inscribed or written. And consonants represent interruptions of the vowel stream; consonants "tend" toward silence. So to read Hebrew text, the reader has to "know" what word the inscribed cluster of consonants is supposed to represent so that the appropriate vowel stream can be uttered. Unlike Greek or English that is written with vowels or "breath" included in the inscription of the word (only "meaning" has to be added to words), the meaning of the Hebrew consonant cluster has to be known before vowels or "breath" can be added to the inscribed consonant clusters. It is for this reason that Moses is told, "Write this as a memorial in a book and recite it in the ears of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven" (Ex 17:14 emphasis added) ... Joshua needed to "hear" what vowels Moses inserted between the consonants of the clusters he wrote; for in hearing Moses recite the words, Joshua would memorize the vowels and know the meaning of the inscribed consonant clusters.

Not every reader of Hebrew has the luxury of hearing the author of a text recite what the author writes in the hearing of future readers; so Hebrew poetry developed that has a concept or a thing said twice, and with the double delivery of the concept, the likelihood of assigning the appropriate vowels is greatly increased for the context will now eliminate some meanings and point readers toward most likely meanings ... the inclusion of vowels in Hebrew script didn't appear until the 6th-Century CE or thereabouts. In the modern nation-state of Israel, vowels for words are only included through third-grade texts. Beyond third grade, students are expected to know what vowels belong in the words of a text.

King David, using the structure of Hebraic doubling in poetic discourse, used the first presentation of an idea or concept to represent the physical presentation of the concept—as expressed in darkness, death, distance—and then used the second presentation of the same concept as the spiritual presentation, as expressed by light, life, the inner self of a person.

The Apostle Paul understood how David and especially Isaiah and the prophets used Hebraic doubling to create thought-couplets from the physical presentation of an idea followed by the spiritual presentation of the same idea. Hence Paul wrote that the visible physical things of this world—the things that have been made—reveal the invisible things of God (Rom 1:20) and the physical precedes the spiritual (1 Cor 15:46). And this understanding is the *key of David*.

But understanding the *key of David* doesn't stop with the physical revealing and preceding the spiritual: King David had the spirit of the God of Abraham with him (see Ps 51:11), but the God of Abraham was the God of living ones, not dead ones (Matt

22:32). The God of Abraham was not the God that raised the dead body of Christ Jesus back to life (Rom 8:11) ... if the God [*Theos*] of the living Abraham is not the God of dead Abraham; is not the God that resurrects the dead, then the God of Abraham cannot be alone as God. There has to be another, the God that resurrected Jesus from death. And this David knew as he reveals what he knows in verse one of Psalm 146, of Psalm 148, of Psalm 149; for David places *Yah* in the physical position of the introductory thought-couplet, and *YHWH* [*Y^aH^{d-n}W^{ai}H*] in the spiritual position.

David was not born of spirit; couldn't be born of spirit for the spirit had not yet been given. The spirit was not given prior to when the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] in the bodily form of a dove descended upon and entered into [*eis* — from Mark 1:10] the man Jesus when raised from baptism. The glorified Jesus then directly transferred the spirit of God in His spirit [*pneuma Christou*] to ten of His first disciples when He breathed on them and said, “Receive *pneuma 'agion*] (John 20:22).

Therefore David had the spirit of the God of Abraham as the physical shadow and type of disciples having the spirit of God in the spirit of Christ in the form of the indwelling of Christ ... David having the Holy Spirit [for the spirit/breath of the God of Abraham would have been holy breath] forms the physical presentation of a living thought-couplet [analogous to Paul telling the holy ones at Corinth that they were living epistles in the Book of Life], with the spiritual presentation of this living couplet being disciples of Christ Jesus being born of spirit through the indwelling of Christ.

Again, the *key of David* is understanding that the physical things of this world—those things that are not of light and life—reveal and precede the spiritual things of God.

Armstrong repeatedly argued that no human person is truly born of spirit so as to be a spiritual milk drinker; that spiritual birth lay in the future for begotten disciples. What he argued was not true for the Elect. Thus, Armstrong prevented himself from grasping what the *key of David* is and what this key unlocks ... this key unlocks Scripture, thereby allowing Scripture to be read as it was intended to be read.

The *key of David* (from Rev 3:7: Isa 22:22) isn't about earthly thrones—where King David's throne is—or even about earthly Jerusalem. If it were, the metaphorical naming phrase, *valley of vision* (Isa 22:1, 5), wouldn't have been used for Jerusalem, the city of David.

Based on what Herbert Armstrong had come to believe about British Israelism and the people of Britain representing the endtime descendants of the tribe of Ephraim, Armstrong believed knowing the identity of endtime Ephraim and his elder brother Manasseh, whom Armstrong identified as the people of the United States of America, was the mythical *key of David*. Thus for Armstrong, the English speaking peoples of the world were the peoples of endtime *Israel* about whom prophecy had much to say.

As an aside, there are more English language speakers in India than in the United States, Great Britain, and the former Commonwealth nations combined ... Armstrong didn't permit facts to ruin a good story, and he was telling a whopper when it came to the core of British Israelism.

King David as a poet (a very good one) composed his poetry in thought-couplets that in some of his psalms he stacked eight deep, with the first four sets of couplets representing physicality whereas the last four sets of couplets representing the things of

God, with physical/spiritual pattern holding for each couplet, each pairing of couplets, and each squaring of couplets whereas Isaiah and other prophets usually wrote in simple thought-couplets or in two deep sets, with squared stacks being about as far as prophets went before moving away from a thought or concept.

What non-poets usually do not know is that the focus of any poetic discourse is not the phenomenon that inspired composition, but the artifice itself: the poem. Words used to communicate information need not be placed in poetry; prose is entirely adequate. By placing words in the structure of a poem, the poet calls attention to the words, not to what caused the poem to be written. Thus for King David to write in psalms to be sung with music, David's words—inscribed consonant clusters—represent the inner self of the person, with the aspiration needed to transform the consonant clusters into vocalized words [the addition of vowel sounds] being as human breath and the accompanying music being as the physical body of a person; as his physical body. And as a man after the Lord's heart, David used his poetry to simultaneously conceal and reveal knowledge of God.

Again, to unlock what David wrote in his psalms, endtime disciples need the *key of David*, which again isn't knowledge of where the authority [the throne] of David resides in this world today—contrary to what Pharisees believed, the Messiah will not be of David but of the roots of Jesse as new growth from these roots—but knowledge that the Apostle Paul gave to born-of-spirit disciples:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith." For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For *what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For His invisible attributes, namely, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made.* So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks to Him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. (Rom 1:16–23 emphasis added)

And,

So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. Thus it is written, "*The first man Adam became a living being*"; *the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.* But *it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual.* The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven. (1 Cor 15:42–49 emphasis added)

God gave the *key of David* to Hebrews in the composition of their poetry, but God also took this *key* away as Isaiah reports, saying that he, Isaiah, was commissioned to

blind the people and prevent the people from hearing the words of the Lord lest Israel turn to the Lord and be healed of its transgressions.

Then one of the seraphim flew to me [Isaiah], having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for." And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me." And He said, "Go, and say to this people: '*Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive. Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.*'" Then I said, "How long, O Lord?" And He said: "Until cities lie waste without inhabitant, and houses without people, and the land is a desolate waste, and [YHWH] removes people far away, and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land. And though a tenth remain in it, it will be burned again, like a terebinth or an oak, whose stump remains when it is felled." The holy seed is its stump. (Isa 6:6–13 emphasis added)

Now, consider the question, in the days of the prophet Isaiah was the Lord trying to save Israel or had the Lord already determined that Israel was to be destroyed?

The holy seed is its stump—the house of King David, the house of Jesse, was already cut off, felled, with only the stump of Jesse remaining, and that stump burned with fire in the vision of Isaiah ...

What importance should be placed on the stone under the throne of Queen Elizabeth II? Absolutely none! The glorified King David will not sit on that stone. No spiritual being will ever sit on an earthly throne.

In applying the *key of David*, David's life as a man, as king, as a repentant sinner represents the physical life he lived. What the prophet Ezekiel writes will represent the spiritual man:

Then He said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are indeed cut off.' Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: Behold, I will open your graves and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am [YHWH], when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am [YHWH]; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares [YHWH]." The word of [YHWH] came to me: "Son of man, take a stick and write on it, 'For Judah, and the people of Israel associated with him'; then take another stick and write on it, 'For Joseph (the stick of Ephraim) and all the house of Israel associated with him.' And join them one to another into one stick, that they may become one in your hand. And when your people say to you, 'Will you not tell us what you mean by these?' say to them, Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: Behold, I am about to take the stick of Joseph (that is in the hand of Ephraim) and the tribes of Israel associated with him. And I will join with it the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, that they may be one in my hand. When the sticks on which you write are in your hand before their eyes, then say to them, Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: Behold, I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will gather them from all around, and bring them to their own land. And *I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. And one king shall be king over them all, and they shall be no longer two nations, and no longer divided into two kingdoms. They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols and their detestable things, or with any of*

their transgressions. But I will save them from all the backslidings in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes. They shall dwell in the land that I gave to my servant Jacob, where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children's children shall dwell there forever, and David my servant shall be their prince forever.” (Ezek 37:11–25 emphasis added)

The glorified David—not the earthly man—shall reign over the united kingdom of resurrected Israel as the man David ruled first over Judah from Hebron for seven years and six months, then over all of Israel for thirty-three years from Jerusalem. As David’s earthly reign from Hebron formed a type of the entirety of his earthly reign, David’s earthly reign from Jerusalem formed a type of David’s reign over resurrected Israel; thus making David into a living thought-couplet occupying the physical position of a doubled couplet while he lived physically, with the glorified David ruling over resurrected Israel here on earth during the Millennium occupying the physical position in the spiritual couplet that will now have the glorified David reigning as king in New Jerusalem when this Bride of Christ comes to the new earth that is not physical following the end of the Millennium.

In the man David is seen the *key of David*, a living doubled thought-couplet. For in the lives of disciples there is a physical portion when the inner self of the person is spiritually dead and there is a spiritual portion when the inner self is resurrected from death and lives spiritually through the indwelling of Christ Jesus. Then there will be another couplet stacked over the first, with this second couplet occupying the spiritual portion of the doubled couplet. And in the physical position of this second couplet, the born-from-above disciple will be “filled” with spirit and thereby liberated from indwelling sin and death. In the spiritual position, the glorified inner person receives a glorified body and is received in heaven as a son of the Most High God.

Twice glorified *Philadelphians* will be pillars in the temple. They will not come and go but will reign as pillars, support columns, forming the backbone of New Jerusalem.

The glorified Christ Jesus, when dominion over the single kingdom of this world is taken from the Adversary and his angels and given to the Son of Man, Head and Body, will sit for the Thousand Years on the throne presently occupied by the still-reigning prince of this world. This will be spiritually analogous to David ruling from Hebron; whereas the Adversary’s reign over the single kingdom of this world has been as Saul’s reign was over Israel, with Saul having an evil spirit after the spirit of the God of Abraham left him and went to David (1 Sam 16:13–14). Then after the Thousand Years, the coming of the new heavens and new earth, the coming of New Jerusalem, the glorified Christ will reign as God the Father has, with this reign being analogous to David reigning from earthly Jerusalem.

The legends associated with the stone under the throne of the British monarchy make for an interesting story, but so too does the beheading game played in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (ca mid 14th-Century), and in *Sir Gawain*, the men of Troy end up in Britain and with King Arthur’s throne. In British Israelism, the men of Troy represented the tribe of Dan and came to Ireland where they defeated the Celtic King Arthur. In both stories, migration occurred from Asia Minor to the British Isles, but in the case of *Sir Gawain*, the Troy link is actually to Virgil and the *Aeneid*, with the author

comparing himself to Virgil [justified by the quality of his work], thus making *Sir Gawain* the Christian or spiritual reality of its pagan ancestor, *Aeneid*, which was set in ancient Carthage: the main action in *Sir Gawain* occurs in *faerie*, the mythical landscape of Northern European oral cultures where the rules of reality and normality are suspended, and *Sir Gawain* as a person is the personification of righteousness.

Herbert Armstrong claimed that Ambassador College[s] offered a Liberal Arts education to its students, but it taught no literature. When my wife was a student there in 1967, she asked why no literature. Garner Ted told her that the authors were dead and no one could ask them why they wrote what they had or what their writings meant ... as a midlife graduate student in UAF's graduate writing program, taking a course on Medieval Literature, I had to write a publishable end-of-semester paper. Instead of writing criticism, I chose to write in the style, grammar, and voice of a late 15th-Century pamphleteer, producing a piece titled "Whorish Pamphleteering" that mocked the religious pamphlets of the transition into the modern era. I wrote the paper late at night, with the paper due in the morning, and at the end of the paper I had my protagonist run down one side of a hedge and the mounted scarlet knight chasing him took the other side of the hedge, which, without thinking I labeled as Osage orange. But after taking a break and returning to the piece, I realized that Osage orange is a thorny North American scrub tree, and that I needed to change the hedge to another plant. Not having time to research what plants were used for hedges in Britain, I changed Osage orange to roses and submitted the paper.

The professor liked the piece and graded it accordingly, but why I'm relaying this story is that professor identified the rose hedge as a symbol for the War of Roses, which I had not even considered when I changed Osage orange to roses. I reread the paper to see if it really supported that reading of the rose hedge—and it did. I got credit for having put more into the paper than I consciously inserted. And so it is with most pieces of literary writing: "criticism" as a writing genre is itself creative.

If Armstrong had made Literature part of Ambassador College's curriculum, there is no guarantee that Hebraic poetics would have been understood. But by excluding Literature, at least in the early days of Ambassador College (AC), Armstrong guaranteed that Isaiah's commission would remain firmly in place: "Israel" would be spiritually blind and deaf, with the non-poetic Authorized King James' Translation reinforcing this blindness and deafness.

What Herbert Armstrong didn't know about the Bible as literature—about the Bible being the spiritually lifeless word of God—puts Armstrong in the position of being a blind and deaf representative of spiritual Israel in a similar way that the natural descendants of Israel were blind and deaf because of their idolatry that produced the commission of the prophet Isaiah. That should be a scary thought, especially so when Armstrong borrowed much of what he taught about the visions of the prophet Daniel from Ellen G. White, also spiritually blind and deaf.

In fairness to both Armstrong and White as well as Andrew Dugger, Daniel's visions were sealed and kept secret until the time of the end, which Paul mistakenly thought had come upon the humanity in the 1st-Century CE (see 1 Cor 10:11; 1 Thess 4:15, 17). What had come upon humanity was the reality of the First Unleavened (from Matt 26:17 — take out the extra words added by translators), the Preparation Day for the Great

Sabbath of the Sabbath (from John 19:31), with the *Great Sabbath of the Sabbath* casting as its shadow outwardly circumcised Israel under Moses leaving Egypt on the dark portion of the 15th day of the first month, journeying the short distance from Rameses to Succoth (Ex 12:37) by the light of the full moon. The reality of this *Great Sabbath* will be the Second Passover liberation of spiritual Israel from indwelling sin and death, this liberation to occur on the dark portion of the 15th day of the second month, a Thursday on the weekly calendar. *The Sabbath* for Christians will now be the seven endtime years when no work is done; for the New Covenant has the Lord placing the Law inside of Israel and writing it on the hearts of Israel so that all of Israel *knows the Lord*: no one shall teach, “each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know [the Lord], from the least of them to the greatest” (Heb 8:11, also Jer 31:34).

What Armstrong and the remaining splinters of his ministry did not, do not understand is that until the kingdom is given to Christ Jesus—until all authority in heaven and on earth is given to Christ—no one should attempt to make disciples for Christ Jesus for no one can come to Christ unless the Father draws the person (John 6:44). It is presumptuous for Christian theologians or evangelists to undertake baptism tours among Unbelievers. If God wants to person as His son, God will draw the person from this world and deliver the person to Christ Jesus, who will then call the person in a manner analogous to how He called His first disciples, whom the Father had given Him:

I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. *I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.* (John 17:6–10 emphasis added)

When God sets His hand to save the world, He'll save the world. He doesn't need the help of an army of theologians teaching spiritual Israel that *grace is sufficient for salvation*, or that *Christians are to keep the Sabbath*. It is human vanity that causes spiritual *Lilliputians* to presume they have to help God if God is going to complete the work He began.

While it is easy for Sabbatarian Christians to see how 8th-day Christians are spiritually blind, having figuratively built their houses on the east side of the Jordan, refusing to cross into the Promised Land, the topographical representation of the Sabbath, the Millennium, and heaven itself, it is not so easy for Sabbatarian Christians to see how they and their brothers are also blind and deaf, their blindness coming from the commission given Isaiah. But what was it that the Lord told Isaiah in vision when the prophet asked, *How long shall Israel be blind and deaf?* And the answer given was, *Until cities lie waste without inhabitant, and houses without people, and the land is a desolate waste, burned by the Lord, leaving a tithe of Israel in the land.* Then, with this tithe still in the land, the land will be burned again. The land shall be like a stump that remains after the forest has been burned. And the holy seed is this stump. The holy seed grows as a root sucker from the stump of Jesse (Isa 11:1–5). The holy seed is not of David nor from David, but is new growth springing from Obed, the root of Jesse.

For those who do not understand the difference between a branch and a root sucker, in the natural realm a deciduous tree takes in calories as carbohydrates that are stored over winter in the tree's roots. If something happens to the above ground growth of the tree, the stored calories push out from the roots in the form of new growth coming from the stump of the tree or coming from around the stump, growing as new trees from the roots of the felled tree ... Israel's Messiah does not descend from David—to say that David is the ancestor of the Messiah, or that the Messiah will sit on David's throne is to wave the banner of ignorance. The Messiah comes from the roots of the charred stump of Jesse and by extension, David, king of Judah before becoming king of all Israel. And David left this knowledge with Israel when he wrote,

[YHWH] says to my *Adonai*:

"Sit at my right hand,

until I make your enemies your footstool."

[YHWH] sends forth from Zion

your mighty scepter.

Rule in the midst of your enemies!

Your people will offer themselves freely

on the day of your power,

in holy garments;

from the womb of the morning,

the dew of your youth will be yours.

[YHWH] has sworn

and will not change His mind,

"You are a priest forever

after the order of Melchizedek."

Adonai is at your right hand;

He will shatter kings on the day of His wrath.

He will execute judgment among the nations,

filling them with corpses;

He will shatter chiefs

over the wide earth.

He will drink from the brook by the way;

therefore He will lift up His head. (Ps 110:1–7 indented lines are spiritual portions of thought-couplets)

Unitarian Christians [Arians] contend that the possessive plural <*Adonai*> is a misreading, that the word should be <*Adoni*>, always a human lord and never God because of the absence of the plural /ai/ ending. The plural form <*Adonai*> is explained as *pluralis excellentiae*, when this is not the case. The plural is "plural" because *YHWH* and *Elohim* are plurals representing both the God of living ones (from Matt 22:32) and the unknown God of dead ones that raised Jesus from death (see Rom 8:11; John 1:18; chap 17).

Of the descendants of King David, all that remains is a landscape of stumps. This the author of Matthew's Gospel knew.

7.

The movement from physical to spiritual undergirds all of Scripture: this movement underlies the New Covenant, the Second Passover liberation of Israel, spiritual birth,

thought-couplets poetics, and biblical prophecies. And when this movement pertains to prophecy, nations and peoples within the geographic region of ancient “Eden” topographically represent the conscious mental landscape of all human persons; hence, Bible prophecies apply inwardly to everyone ... the concept of geographical landscapes forming the chiral image of mental landscapes is not one that has been significantly explored by theologians, but one incorporated in phrases such as the *mountain of God*, or in cities being *assemblies* as in New Jerusalem being the Bride of Christ. This concept is compatible with fleshly bodies of people being clay houses (Job 4:19) or vessels of clay or in the most intriguing example, being the whale [great fish] that swallowed Jonah, with Jonah representing the inner self of the person.

The “fruit” of the spirit, according to Paul, is nine facets of character (Gal 5:22–23), nine attributes of a single fruit that has the spirit being a tree [vegetative growth] and the character of a person growing as harvestable fruit. Paul likens Gentile converts to wild olive scions grafted to the root of righteousness, Christ Jesus (Rom chap 11). In Daniel, King Nebuchadnezzar is likened to a tree whose crown is in heaven, the tree felled and its stump banded (Dan chap 4). And in the “P” creation account, born of spirit disciples are represented as “vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind” (Gen 1:12), and ancient Israel [circumcised in the flesh Israel] is represented as dry land (v. 10), with Moses having parted the waters and Israel crossing the Sea of Reeds on dry land.

Jesus only spoke in figures of speech, in metaphoric and metonymic expressions (John 16:25); for the words of this world that name the things of this world are incapable of naming the things of heaven except when used metaphorically. Love as a man knows *love* is at best a dark shadow of “love” as God loves His sons. Nevertheless, the only means by which a person can express the person’s understanding of the mysteries of God is through human words used metaphorically—

Thoughts sprout and grow from mental landscapes, with “lust” as a thought growing from the spiritual equivalent to the fertile fields of the Nile Delta; with “idolatry” also growing in their fields figuratively irrigated by the foot (flood irrigation) as if these fields were vegetable gardens. But the figurative hard barley representing the firstfruits of God grow on the representation of ancient Judean hillsides, watered by the early rains, gathered into barns over a seven week period between the Wave Sheaf Offering and the Feast of Weeks, these seven weeks—like the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread—representing the seven endtime years of tribulation, with the harvest becoming heavier as the counting of weeks advances seven days at a time, the harvesters working six days then resting on the seventh; resting on the forty-ninth day, the day before two loaves of bread made from new grain, beaten fine, and baked with leavening are waved before God, the baking process having killed the leavening [yeast].

Disciples are these two loaves, one of which represents the Elect, disciples glorified while still dwelling in fleshly houses; the other represents those persons who were not glorified through the indwelling of Christ Jesus before receiving glorified houses in which to dwell. This “other” includes the righteous of old as well as all those who come out of the seven endtime years of tribulation.

When the First Unleavened and seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (the high Sabbath of the seventh day of this Feast included)—eight days altogether—are laid over the seven counted weeks leading up to the Feast of Weeks, also a high Sabbath, disciples able to think in metaphors see that the Feast of Unleavened Bread (preceded by the First Unleavened, from Matt 26:17, that is the Preparation Day for the great Sabbath of the Sabbath, from John 19:31, thereby making for eight days when Israel eats the bread of affliction) will have the last high Sabbath of Unleavened Bread representing the harvest of humanity that comes from the seven endtime years of tribulation.

The first high Sabbath of Unleavened Bread symbolizes the day when Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth (Ex 12:37) on the 15th day of the first month, and represents the day of the Second Passover liberation of Israel, the 15th day of the second month. This high Sabbath has been and presently is the great Sabbath of the Sabbath that is Unleavened Bread. But this changes when dominion over the single kingdom of this world is taken from the Adversary and given to the Son of Man. Circumcised of heart Israel will no longer be greater Christendom; will no longer be spiritual Cain that martyred its righteous brother, spiritual Abel. Another son will be born to the second Adam, a spiritual Seth, born through the Holy Spirit being poured out on all flesh (Joel 2:28) when the Son of Man begins to reign on the second day of doubled day 1260. This spiritual Seth is the third part of humanity (from Zech 13:9), and this spiritual Seth has only to endure to the end to be saved (from Matt 24:13; 10:22). This spiritual Seth has no work to do, no message it must take to the world, no evangelism to undertake. Its work will be “enduring,” learning to trust God; for this spiritual Seth will not be able to buy or sell without marking itself for death. And on the last day of the Endurance, the last day of all seven endtime years of tribulation, Christ Jesus will return as the Messiah, thus transferring “greatness” from the first high Sabbath of Unleavened Bread to the last high Sabbath.

After the Second Passover liberation of Israel, the high Sabbath at the end of Unleavened Bread becomes the high Sabbath that is the Feast of Weeks, Pentecost. It is for this reason that the high Sabbath of the Feast of Weeks is not seen in the Millennium.

In this piece, I have too often used Herbert Armstrong’s lack of spiritual birth to excuse his errant teachings. Nevertheless, I’ll do it again; for Armstrong never taught his disciples not to eat leavened bread on the First Unleavened. A great many of his disciples went out for hamburgers after Passover services ...

Did all of his disciples on the 14th day of the first month eat what was leavened after taking the Passover sacraments and thereby making themselves unleavened? I cannot speak for all, but I can discuss many: tired from last minute cleaning, their homes having had leavening and leavened crumbs removed, with no time to eat before heading to Passover services, many of Armstrong’s disciples ate hamburgers in restaurants (at least in America) so as to leave crumbles there after Passover services, the leavened buns filling their stomachs but sparking no thought about actually reading Matthew’s Gospel in Greek and seeing what the author said about the night on which Jesus was betrayed and taken. A better meal would be eaten the following night, the *Night to be Much Remembered*. So at roughly ten o’clock at night on the night of the 14th, a hamburger was enough to take the edge off hunger.

How dense can disciples be? By ingesting the broken bread and sipping from the cup, the disciple symbolically ate the body and drank the blood of Christ Jesus, the Passover Lamb of God, who was without sin. The disciple was without sin, with leavening representing sin on the First Unleavened and throughout the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. So why would disciples, having just taken the symbols of the Passover and becoming free of sin, willingly take sin [in the form of a hamburger bun] back inside themselves? Is this not what Christians will do in the great Apostasy, when after having been liberated from indwelling sin and death at the Second Passover, these Christians almost immediately return to ingesting Sin [unbelief of God] and thereby commit blasphemy against the Holy Spirit?

I know that Armstrong's disciples, members of the former Worldwide Church of God (WCG), went out for hamburgers after Passover services—after truly working hard all day getting the tiniest specks of dust out from between carpet fibers in a last minute effort to remove all *leavening* from houses, there was no time to grab more than a bite so as to satisfy what Paul had commanded in 1 Corinthians 11:22.

Pressure was on members of WCG to clean homes, businesses, vehicles, and to have them clean before the high Sabbath began, with it preached from podiums that the pressure members felt came from the Adversary. There truly was no time to eat on the day of the 13th. But the pressure dissipated after Passover services. So I, and most of my acquaintances in WCG, would after Passover services meet together in a restaurant where we talked in an environment less somber than Passover services where chitchat was forbidden. And those (including myself some years) who hadn't finished unleavening shops and work spaces would return home to do more cleaning as wives knocked themselves out preparing the meal for *Night to be Much Observed*, usually an over-the-top Thanksgiving-type meal.

Where did we go wrong?

We were wrong in about everything we did; for we made the Feast of Unleavened Bread into a physical observance as we placed more focus on a Cheez-It © lost on the pickup's floorboards than upon removing sin from our lives, not that we didn't examine ourselves before taking the Passover sacraments, but that we put more effort into physically cleaning houses than went into changing inner selves.

Where is there any love toward brother and neighbor in physically cleaning one's house, with the ministry telling members that they had to clean their own homes for the leavening in their homes represented their sins—and somebody else couldn't remove their sins for them ... what is it that Christ does for us if not take upon Himself our unintentional sins?

One spring on the Kenai, I didn't have time to vacuum the pickup's floorboards to the satisfaction of the deacon; so I hosed down the floorboards, floor mats, and under the seat. The WCG member at the shop at the time, my last customer for the day—sun was setting and we were about to leave for the *Night to be Much Observed* meal at a friend's—was appalled, but I assured him that in the mud on the floorboards was no leavened bread that I would eat ... I'm not sure he believed me.

I did wash a Cheez-It © out from under the seat and onto the ground. A year earlier, I had been criticized because I dumped baking powder into the outhouse hole—I was supposed to remove leavening from my property. I asked those who criticized if they

would go into the outhouse hole and get that baking powder so I could dump it on my neighbor's property, thereby giving him my sins. They weren't that interested in my affairs.

Eden and the Garden of Eden here on earth formed [past tense, for both were erased when the world was baptized into death as that Cheez-It © was] the spiritually lifeless shadow and copy of heavenly Eden, the garden of God (Ezek 28:13) where iniquity [unbelief leading to rebellion] was found in an anointed guardian cherub. Eden's geographical boundaries encompassed the Fertile Crescent:

A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates. (Gen 2:10–14)

As earthly Eden was destroyed by wickedness, so too was heavenly Eden. As the world was baptized into death with the Flood of Noah's day, so too was Eden, the shadow and copy of heavenly Eden, suggesting that the rebellion of the anointed guardian cherub, now the Adversary, destroyed heaven through a reality typified by the fate of Korah and his friends (Num chap 16), a rent in the fabric of heaven opening and spirit gushing from this rent as blood and water gushed from the wound in the side of the crucified Christ Jesus (John 19:34), this spirit forming the Abyss in which all that is physical was created, a rent that can still be seen in X-ray photographs of the universe... the new heaven and new earth that will replace the existing heaven and earth are recreations, the second or spiritual presentation of what has been physical.

From west of the Nile—the exact location of the Pishon and of the Gihon is unknown—to the Tigris and then on to the Euphrates, the pre-Flood land of Eden incorporated Egypt (the topographical representation of Sin), Assyria (the representation of Death), and Babylon (the representation of transactions, buying and selling) as well as Judea (the representation of life). As in a Venn diagram that has circles overlap, these overlapping segments forming new fields (transforming three into seven), the major empires within “Eden” overlapped, giving rise to other peoples and giving to Scripture a Middle East focus or centrality, which has caused the peoples of the Book to vie with each other for dominance over shifting sand and stony hillsides.

When pre-Flood Eden existed as a type of heavenly Eden, and when earthly Eden was destroyed because of “the wickedness of man was great—“every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Gen 6:5)—the wickedness of man will have a human author, the first Adam, who when seeing Eve eat the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil ceased to believe God and ate from that tree himself ... by the thought of his mind and the act of his hand, Adam introduced unbelief of God into this world, this unbelief leading to death (Gen 2:16–17; Rom 5:12; 6:16).

John addresses the physical presentation of *sin*: “Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness” (1 John 3:4).

Paul addresses the spiritual presentation: “whatever does not proceed from faith [*pisteos* — belief, as in *belief of God*] is sin” (Rom 14:23).

When the hand or body transgresses the Law—as in murder, an act of the hand, being sin (Matt 5:21) or as in adultery, an act of the body, being sin (*v.* 27)—the Law is

physical and the sin is covered by Christ Jesus' death at Calvary. But when the Law moves from being written on tablets of stone to being written on tablets of flesh, murder moves to being anger (of the heart) and as such sin (v. 22) and adultery moves to being lust (of the mind) and as such sin (v. 28). And unbelief replaces transgressing the Law as sin.

Unbelief prevented the nation of Israel (except for Joshua and Caleb) numbered in the census of the second year from entering the Promised Land (Heb 3:19). Unbelief following liberation from indwelling sin and death at the Second or Spiritual Passover will prevent the vast majority of "Christians" from entering heaven: they will be like the nation of Israel that left Egypt. And the third part of humanity (again, from Zech 13:9), none of whom are today Christians, will be like the children of Israel that crossed the Jordan behind Joshua [in Greek, 'Iesou — Jesus]. This third part is today Muslim, Buddhist, Hindi, Shinto, atheist; and this third part will be filled with the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] when the Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh (again, Joel 2:28) three and a half years before Christ Jesus returns as the Messiah.

Israel's forty year trek from Egypt to Canaan represents the seven years of the Affliction and Kingdom and Endurance in Jesus.

When dominion over the single kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man on doubled day 1260, all peoples will immediately be *My people* (Rev 18:4), the people of God. All peoples will be filled with spirit and taught by God, but being filled with spirit wasn't enough to prevent Christian unbelief in the Affliction. Likewise, being filled with spirit will not prevent *third part* unbelief. Something more is needed, the testimony of the two witnesses, their testimony being the defeat of Death through their resurrection when dominion over the single kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man.

A "thing" is established not by the testimony of one witness, even when that witness is Christ Jesus, but by the testimony of two or three witnesses. The defeat of Death, the demonic King of the North, wasn't established by the resurrection of Christ Jesus, about whom the Adversary can claim that Jesus was resurrected from death because He came from heaven as the unique Son of the God who created all things physical. The defeat of Death will be established by the resurrection of the two witnesses, two brothers who will be as Moses and Aaron were.

The endtime good news [gospel] that must be proclaimed as a witness to all nations and to all peoples is, *All who endure to the end shall be saved* (Matt 24:13–14). All will be saved because all will be filled with spirit and liberated from indwelling sin and death. All will have the Law [Torah] written on hearts and placed in minds so that all *know the Lord*. All will be taught by God, not by other men. And unless a person returns to sin, thereby committing blasphemy against the spirit [figuratively splashing out spirit so as to take unbelief leading to death back inside the clay vessel], all will continue to be liberated from indwelling sin and death and will be saved spiritually.

This third part of humanity will be the *last that is first*.

And Herbert Armstrong, because he was not born of spirit and did not understand spiritual birth, never understood what the endtime gospel was that must be proclaimed to the world. He skipped past the third part of humanity and went directly from the Affliction, the first 1260 days of the seven endtime years (when the Adversary remains

the prince of this world), to the Millennium, ignoring all of the Endurance in Jesus, represented by Revelation chapters 13 through 19.

If a ministry is based on a particular reading of prophecy, and if that reading of prophecy is wrong—not just a little wrong or mistaken, but fundamentally wrong in everything it proclaims—then the ministry functions as a false prophet ... Herbert Armstrong was fundamentally wrong in what he proclaimed, and knew he was. But he persisted; he persevered; and he continued to proclaim the same physical reading of sealed and secret prophecies. In doing so, he did more harm than good to two, three generations of Christians who were willing to keep the Commandments and to believe God, especially if they had been rightly instructed.

Just prior to Passover 2004, my wife and I were invited to dinner by the Detweilers, he a Brethren pastor and his wife newly convinced to keep the Sabbath. Also invited was Chris King and his wife.

Chris, then in his late 90s, was a lifelong [seven generations long] German Seventh Day Baptist. And I sat with Chris and explained why Christians should keep the Passover. He listened—his mind was sharp—and when I finished what I wanted to say, he said, “That sounds right, but nobody ever taught us this.”

I was flushed with sadness. *Nobody ever taught us this*—why not?! The pastor of the German Seventh Day Baptist Church at New Salem was a Messianic Jew who kept a Passover Seder service at home every year [I know for he invited me to the service a few days after visiting the Detweilers]. Why wouldn't he broach the subject of keeping the Passover with his congregation? Was he a theological coward, more concerned about his paycheck than teaching what he knew to be true? And why had generations passed without anybody introducing the Passover to willing believers? I have read Huguenot Passover instructions from a 1737 translation (French into English) of their beliefs. Huguenots in America early in the 18th-Century [when German Brethren formed their first Sabbatarian community] kept both the Passover and Easter. So among Anabaptists in 18th-Century America was knowledge of both the Sabbath and of Passover observance.

Nobody ever taught us this—I did. And what Chris King did with what I gave him is between him and Christ; for he died not long afterward. He died before he could challenge the German Seventh Day Baptist pastor about why he wasn't teaching the congregation to keep the Passover ... maybe the congregation wasn't to know to keep the Passover. After all, if they wouldn't believe Paul, they wouldn't believe Jesus—and if they won't believe Jesus, they won't believe anyone who teaches what Jesus taught. They, like Sabbatarian Christians in the splinters of the former Worldwide Church of God, have set themselves up to be physically martyred in the Affliction; for every Christian has to make two journeys of faith as Abraham made two, the first into belief of God as Abram “believed” God that his offspring would come from his loins (Gen 15:6), and a second journey into ontological obedience that makes belief of God complete, analogous to Abraham's journey to the land of Moriah where he was commanded to sacrifice Isaac.

At the Second Passover liberation of Israel, every “Christian” who professes belief of God by declaring that Jesus is Lord will be filled with spirit and thereby liberated from indwelling sin and death without doing anything: the Law [Torah] will be written on hearts and placed in the Christian in a manner analogous to the parents of a Hebrew male having their son outwardly circumcised on the 8th-day following birth. At and after

the Second Passover liberation of Israel, whatever journey the Christian would have taken to arrive at Sabbath observance, topographically represented by the Land beyond the Jordan, will be made for the Christian by having the Law written on hearts; therefore, following the Second Passover, it is a Christian's second journey of faith that has significance, the journey from belief of God to ontological obedience.

The war being fought inside the Elect between the now-living inner self that desires to keep the Commandments and the spiritually dead fleshly body that does what the inner self hates (from Rom chap 7) will be, for all Christians following the Second Passover, moved from inside to outside Christians, with other Christians—those who are theologically of Cain—functioning as fleshly bodies have for the Elect, doing what the obedient inner self hates. For those Christians who really want to obey God, their Christian brothers, their Christian neighbors will betray them, and will even martyr these obedient Christians, all the while believing they do God a favor.

For the obedient, the place of safety is the grave, not Petra (nor Palmer, Alaska, an inside joke). And this Herbert Armstrong never understood ... the living inner selves of martyred Elect, sacrificed as Jesus was sacrificed, will join the souls [*psuchas* — from Rev 6:9] that presently sleep under the heavenly altar. The Elect, when filled with spirit, will be as Jesus was, in that they will be without sin and without any covering for sin but their obedience.

Following the Second Passover liberation of Israel, no Christian will be under grace. All of spiritual Israel will be stripped of the garment of Christ's righteousness; for without indwelling sin and death, there will be no need for the glorified Christ to bear the transgressions of His disciples, those in whom He dwells through the indwelling of His spirit [*pneuma Christou*]. Under the New Covenant, God will no longer remember sins, transgressions of the Law (Heb 8:12; Jer 31:34) ... if sins are remembered no more, then no covering of sins is needed. Unintended transgressions of the Law will not matter. Whether the Christian believes God matters; for if the Christian believes God, the Christian will be able to perfectly keep the Law. To do otherwise will be blasphemy against the spirit.

Herbert Armstrong, like physically minded Pharisees in the 1st-Century, could not envision a Christian being able to believe God yet not keep the Sabbath—and this possibility does stretch minds. But as in Chris King saying, *Nobody taught us this*, there are a great many Christians today who believe God but who have been so falsely taught that they do not know to keep the Sabbath or the Passover. Thus, God will have to take the teaching of Christians [this includes Sabbatarian Christians] away from their present pastors and do the job Himself by writing the Law on hearts and placing it in minds. Then all will be without excuse. All will know the Law, know the Lord, and know what is expected of each of them.

And God will get the attention of Christians through their liberation from indwelling sin and death following the sudden death of all firstborns, legal [in heaven] and biological [on earth], in a day. Roughly 2.4 billion persons will die suddenly, and the only link from dead person to dead person will be their birth order, that of having opened the womb but not having taken the Passover sacraments of eating unleavened bread and drinking from the cup on the night when Jesus was betrayed, the dark portion of the 14th day of the first month, this month to begin with the first sighted new moon

crescent following the spring equinox wherever the person lives ... a person will keep the Passover in the spring of the year, not at harvest time. Therefore, the person in the Southern Hemisphere will keep the Passover half a year out of sync from the person in the Northern Hemisphere, this declaration supported by what the prophet Ezekiel relayed in a millennial prophecy:

Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: *In the first month, on the first day of the month, you shall take a bull from the herd without blemish, and purify the sanctuary. The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering and put it on the doorposts of the temple, the four corners of the ledge of the altar, and the posts of the gate of the inner court. You shall do the same on the seventh day of the month for anyone who has sinned through error or ignorance; so you shall make atonement for the temple.*

In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall celebrate the Feast of the Passover, and for seven days unleavened bread shall be eaten. On that day the prince shall provide for himself and all the people of the land a young bull for a sin offering. And on the seven days of the festival he shall provide as a burnt offering to the [YHWH] seven young bulls and seven rams without blemish, on each of the seven days; and a male goat daily for a sin offering. And he shall provide as a grain offering an ephah for each bull, an ephah for each ram, and a hin of oil to each ephah.

In the seventh month, on the fifteenth day of the month and for the seven days of the feast, he shall make the same provision for sin offerings, burnt offerings, and grain offerings, and for the oil. (Ezek 45:18–25 emphasis added)

In the Millennium, in whichever hemisphere a person lives will not matter for the same offerings will be made spring and fall. In the Millennium, when and how holy days [festivals] are to be kept change; for the symbolism attached to each day will have changed. And the change comes from Jesus being the Passover Lamb of God, covering Israel with His righteousness, then liberating Israel from indwelling sin and death, then moving from being Israel's high priest to being King of kings and Lord of lords.

For as long as the sins of Israel were covered by the sacrifice of a Passover lamb, Israel did not die for transgressions of the Law for Israel had no indwelling spiritual life. But when the spirit was given, Israel received indwelling eternal life (not all who claimed to be of Israel, but those truly born of spirit through the indwelling of Christ Jesus). However, the transgressions of the inner self were covered by the garment of Christ's righteousness; they were not paid-for. No spiritual death penalty occurred to cover them. And Christ Jesus as Israel's high priest bearing or covering the transgressions of the inner self is the reality of grace.

But when Israel is liberated from indwelling sin and death at the Second Passover, the garment of Christ's righteousness will be stripped away. Israel will have to bear its own transgressions; for Israel should never again transgress the Law. To do so will be blasphemy against the spirit.

Herbert Armstrong never understood the symbolism that grace represented; never understood the symbolism of the Sabbaths and high Sabbaths of God; never understood how this symbolism changed after the spirit was given, and how it will change following the Second Passover. Plus, Herbert Armstrong trusted rabbinical Judaism to give him his calendar by which he kept the Passover, but rabbinical Judaism has been unfaithful for a very long time. Their calendar isn't to be trusted, for approximately one year in three rabbinical Judaism will keep the Passover a month too early because of when rabbinical Judaism adds the month Veadar, adding the month into following spring

rather than the preceding spring. In other words, Armstrong wasn't the last Elijah; wasn't *God's essential endtime man*; but was a pastor in a long line of pastors working to advance understanding of the mysteries of God. In this, he helped. However the harm he did, or his ministers did by claiming he was more than he was undercuts the good he did.

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The world is a dangerous place. No one need tell anyone that. No biblical prophecy is needed for a Christian to know that Iran possessing nuclear weapons will change geopolitics. No biblical prophecy is needed for a Christian to understand that Islamists killing Islamists is a theological cancer that will kill the Body Politick. Everyone realizes that Black on Black violence in inner cities, if not stopped, will eventually spread to suburbs and ignite a race war. No one, even today, is unaffected by drug related violence, by the resurgence of Fascism, by hatred of fellow human persons, said with the understanding that there probably are exceptions at the margins of civilization. But the point is no one needs biblical prophecy to identify global hotspots where ideological spontaneous combustion is ready to burst into flames that will threaten human life everywhere. And this doesn't take into consideration nuclear contamination already in the Pacific, or about to enter the Columbia River, or that could possibly enter the Mississippi if dams on tributaries failed.

No one needs biblical prophecy to scare the person into fearing for bodily safety. Twenty-four hour television news channels already do that, with their commercials for gold sellers paying to keep these stations on the air. So it costs nothing to be sacred. It costs plenty to not be afraid; for to have no fear, the person must walk in this world as Jesus walked. The person must walk as an outwardly uncircumcised Judean, a Judean circumcised of heart.

Why bother with Bible prophecy, especially when most prophecies have obvious fulfillments?

Why should an American atheist be concerned about Palestinian rockets landing on Israeli schools, and Israeli missiles blowing up Palestinian leaders as they drive from one rocket launch site to the next?

Why should America spend billions to nation-build in Iraq or in Afghanistan? Is the reason because American political leaders are willing to resist any ideology that would return women to being fully clothed and covered; any ideology that would threaten the amorality of Western civilization; any ideology that threatens to behead homosexuals, that threatens to cut the throats of liars, that threatens to cut off the hands of thieves, that threatens to stone adulterers? From the perspective of both social Democrats and free market Capitalists, these would be good reasons to fight 7th-Century fundamentalism *over there* rather than *here* where war fought among skyscrapers would harm the commodities market, while clogging streets with the dead bodies of Gay Pride activists.

But if there is a God—and there is—whose side would He be on in a war between peoples that almost keep the Commandments but have no love for neighbor and brother versus people that make no pretense of keeping the Commandments but have a little love for neighbor and brother but more love for themselves? Or would God even bother to take sides in such a conflict, choosing instead to turn His back to what is happening

and wait until He is ready to intervene in the affairs of men to bring human self-rule to an end?

Because Herbert Armstrong was not born of spirit [I'm doing it again, excusing his falseness], he had no understanding of spiritual matters, no understanding of the mysteries of God. As a self-educated intelligent person, Armstrong realized that a third of the Bible pertained to still unfilled prophecy. What he didn't realize was that all of the Bible formed the lifeless shadow and copy of the living Book of Life in which disciples are epistles and the Word of God is the glorified Christ Jesus.

Armstrong didn't realize, however, that earthly Jerusalem is merely the shadow of heavenly Jerusalem, the Bride of Christ; that Nebuchadnezzar as the human king of Babylon was the shadow and type of the Adversary, the spiritual king of Babylon (Isa 14:4); that Nebuchadnezzar never reigned over the children of men wherever they dwelled (Dan 2:38), never reigned over beasts of the field or birds of the air (same verse). Armstrong never realized that Nebuchadnezzar was not the head of gold of the humanoid image that both he and Daniel saw in vision, that Daniel spoke hyperbole in telling him that he was, spoke in metaphoric speech; for the king's vision was—in Daniel's words—"what will be in the latter days" (v. 28) when the great horn that is the first king of the federated King of Greece is broken (Dan 8:8) because he is an uncovered legal firstborn at the Second Passover liberation of Israel.

This great horn would have appeared on the image Nebuchadnezzar saw as an erect penis—and this horn is conspicuously missing from the image, but legs, feet, and toes are present, with the kingdom of the Son of Man as a stone cut by no human hands smashing the gold head, silver arms and chest, bronze belly and thighs, iron legs and feet, and mingled iron and miry clay toes. All of the metals of the image are present when the image is smashed: the image would have been bicolored, yellow [gold and bronze] and white [silver and iron], and in this color pattern, the little horn on the head of the fourth beast (the King of the North) can be identified as can be the firstborn of the spiritual king of Babylon, the great horn of the King of Greece.

The stone cleaved without hand doesn't come as a thrown brick, but is the split Mount of Olives that comes together to swallow the armies of the Adversary (Zech 14:4, also Rev 12:16; Ex 15:12; Dan 9:26) as the Sea of Reeds came together to swallow Pharaoh's army.

Common bronze (90% Cu, 10% Sn) is the color of 14 carat gold (58.5% Au) when copper and silver are mixed with the gold.

Armstrong never realized that the four beasts of Daniel chapter seven are the four kings that emerged from around the stump of the broken (because he was first) great horn of the King of Greece (chapter eight) and are also the four horsemen of Revelation chapter six, that the little horn of Daniel chapter seven is the little horn of chapter eight and by the little horn the two visions can be aligned, with both being for the *latter days*.

And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, and it called, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision." So he came near where I stood. And when he came, I was frightened and fell on my face. But he said to me, "Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end." ... He said, "Behold, I will make known to you what shall be at the latter end of the indignation, for it refers to the appointed time of the end. ... And he shall even rise up against the Prince of princes, and he shall be broken—but by

no human hand. The vision of the evenings and the mornings that has been told is true, but seal up the vision, for it refers to many days from now." (Dan 8:16–17, 19, 25–26)

And,

But the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end. And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; His kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him. (Dan 7:26–27)

This compares to,

And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever, just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure. (Dan 2:44–45)

And,

“And now I will show you the truth. Behold, three more kings shall arise in Persia, and a fourth shall be far richer than all of them. And when he has become strong through his riches, he shall stir up all against the kingdom of Greece. Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion and do as he wills. And as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity, nor according to the authority with which he ruled, for his kingdom shall be plucked up and go to others besides these. Then the king of the south shall be strong, but one of his princes shall be stronger than he and shall rule, and his authority shall be a great authority. ... But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.” Then I, Daniel, looked, and behold, two others stood, one on this bank of the stream and one on that bank of the stream. And someone said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream, “How long shall it be till the end of these wonders?” And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream; he raised his right hand and his left hand toward heaven and swore by him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a time, and that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end all these things would be finished. I heard, but I did not understand. Then I said, “O my lord, what shall be the outcome of these things?” He said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end.” (Dan 11:2–5; 12:4–9)

The visions of Daniel were not to be understood until the generic *time of the end* was upon humanity. Therefore, if this *time of the end* is not yet upon humanity, then Daniel’s visions remain sealed and secret. However, if the *time of the end* has come upon humanity, then Daniel’s visions can be read and understood. My argument is that this generic *time of the end* began 1900 years after the Body of Christ died at the end of the 1st-Century (ca 100–102 CE, most likely on or about the second Passover of 101 CE, with the time of the end beginning May 8, 2001, the second Passover, when the NSA picked up electronic chatter about the Twin Towers, chatter that Dick Cheney reported to President Bush but chatter that slipped through cracks until 9/11) ... Justin Martyr (dob 100 CE) claimed to be contemporary with the Apostle John, a claim that is otherwise without support. But the claim would have slight merit if John were still alive

after Justin was born, and this seems to be the case, with John living seventy years after Calvary and with John's physical death representing death of the Body of Christ.

Other than the Body of Christ died at the end of the 1st-Century and will be returned to life at or near the beginning of the 21st-Century, none of the preceding can be established ...

The period between 71 CE, forty years after Calvary, and 101 CE seems to be the period when the Father quit drawing disciples from this world, but the Body of Christ continued to live through those disciples already drawn and inwardly glorified remaining physically alive. This period would form the shadow and copy of the period between 1972 and 2002, the period in which the Father began to draw those individuals whom He foreknew and predestined to be glorified but who were not yet born of spirit; who would not be born of spirit until a century of time-cycles passed.

Herbert Armstrong placed importance on the year his ministry began, 1931, when he was ordained by the Oregon Conference of the Church of God, Seventh Day, 1900 years after Calvary ... if 1900 years has importance as the length of time when the Body of Christ was spiritually dead, then Armstrong's argument would deny spiritual birth to Jesus' first disciples, meaning that for Armstrong their mother was not heavenly Jerusalem, despite what Paul claimed.

In order for Armstrong to retain a 1260 day tribulation [what he taught], he had to misread all of Daniel's visions that were sealed and kept secret through assigning to them fulfillment by the course of history stretching from Babylon to Rome—

But Rome is outside of ancient Eden, therefore outside of biblical prophecies.

The two iron legs that physically satisfied Daniel's explication of Nebuchadnezzar's vision were the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Empires, with ambassadors from the Chinese Empire [the size of the Roman Empire and perhaps more advanced] claiming that the Seleucid Empire was the size of China and had technology similar to that of their own empire. So the Seleucid Empire, mostly inside ancient Eden, as one iron leg of Nebuchadnezzar's image satisfies the type of the image. This will have the Ptolemaic Empire as the other iron leg, with neither leg stronger than the other.

The person who inserts Rome, the Roman Empire, the Roman Church, or the Roman See into Daniel's visions is a false prophet, said without caveat! And Herbert Armstrong, like Ellen G. White before him, identified the two legs of Nebuchadnezzar's vision as the Western Roman Empire that had Rome as its capital, and the Eastern Roman Empire that had Byzantium as its capital. Such identification can only come from a poor understanding of history, or deliberate fraud; for the Roman Empire didn't split until the days of Constantine in the 4th-Century CE. And the kindest thing that can be said about such a person is that he or she is unintentionally ignorant. The most accurate thing that can be said is that the person seeks to deceive others more ignorant than him or herself.

Ancient Chaldeans [Babylon] defeated both Assyria and Egypt and sacked Jerusalem. As such, earthly Babylon forms the lifeless chiral image of spiritual Babylon that rules over both Sin [the King of the South, Egypt] and Death [the King of the North, Assyria] but that cannot give life—spiritual Babylon will continue to rule Sin and Death until the Second Passover liberation of Israel when all firstborns not covered by the blood of Christ will perish in a day. Armstrong didn't realize that at the Second Passover,

Sin would be separated from Death [the King of the South from the King of the North after the pattern of Daniel 11:5]. Spirit-filled Christians will be liberated from indwelling sin and death, but they will remain mortal, subject to Death from outside causes such as martyrdom.

The problem Christians have never been able to overcome is their small-mindedness. Why would a Baptist in California or a Catholic in Brazil be more important to God than a Buddhist in China? Neither are. So why would God save only Christians—and then, which Christians—but not save the Muslim who manifests love for unbelievers that come to him, or the Hindi who never harmed even a bug?

Until God sets His hand to save humanity by bringing to an end the Adversary's reign as prince of this world, the prince of the power of the air, wars and rumors of war will continue as they have since the days of Noah. There will be hunger and poverty and great perils. There will be nuclear plumes that threaten life on a continental scale. But there will be only a few who sigh and cry about abominations committed by spiritual Israel—it is for the sake of these few that God will intervene to keep alive some of humanity ...

God's purpose for establishing a demonstration to show angelic sons of God that the Adversary's schema for self-rule are all doomed to fail would be satisfied by humanity wiping out humanity. God doesn't have to prove the negative; He doesn't have to prove that only His governance leads to life. He only has to show that self-rule doesn't work. In order to squelch the concept, introduced when iniquity was found in an anointed guardian cherub, He only has to permit the Adversary's rule over humanity to utterly fail. But for the sake of the Elect, the demonstration doesn't end when dominion over the single kingdom of this world is taken from the Adversary and his angels. The demonstration continues for another thousand years.

And yes, human beings serve as pawns played by cosmic forces on the fields of Eden, where ideas are personified by physically living persons ...

I would like to quote from the beginning of Chapter Three of, *A Philadelphia Apologetic, Volume One*:

A point on a two-dimensional plane would (if it could) perceive a cylinder as a circle: none of the cylinder's height (a third dimension) would be discernible. But because a point on a two-dimensional plane perceives a cylinder as a circle doesn't make the cylinder any less tall, and if the point were to call a cylinder a circle, the point would merely illuminate the limitations that have been placed upon it.

Likewise, three-dimensional objects in a fourth dimension—space-time, a dimension necessary to allow for movement of entities possessing mass—will be unable to perceive evidence of life in another inclusive dimension; i.e., heaven. And that is what heaven is: a timeless supra-dimensional realm in which the four known forces exist as unfurled primal force. It is the dimension that exists on the other side of a sudden creation, a dimension in which all living entities must function as one entity in a similar way to how cells in a human person function together to produce one person. Timelessness dictates that what-is must co-exist with what-was and what-will-be, and in this analogy, disobedience or lawlessness is like a cancerous tumor. Because of conflicting values, disobedience produces paradoxical gridlock in a timeless realm, and as such, must be eliminated whenever found. Thus, denying the existence of an inclusive dimension and a supreme deity reveals the limitations placed upon the thoughts of the person doing the denying.

(There is another understanding of a fourth dimension that makes it like the first three dimensions, an understanding that does explain some of the difficulties produced by quantum mechanics.)

Nietzschean antinomianism is both valid observation and a revealing of how little is culturally known about the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; it can be likened to a point both describing a cylinder in two dimensions and denying the cylinder's existence in an unperceived third dimension.

Although that point on a two dimensional plane when encountering a cylinder would not be able to perceive any of the cylinder's height, if the cylinder cast its shadow onto the two dimensional plane, that point could determine the cylinder's height by observing where the light was and where the light was absent (or where it was dark). However, the shadow would be meaningless unless the point knew to attach significance to the presence and absence of "light," which would through the cylinder's shadow reveal to the point the height of the "circle" (the point would not have a word for a "cylinder").

Now move to more dimensions: human beings are not points on a two dimensional plane, but rather, they are enlivened jars of clay in four dimensions. But human beings will have no more knowledge of what occurs in another dimension—heaven—than a point on a two dimensional plane has of height. Only through shadows can human beings "see" into the heavenly realm, but these shadows are not cast upon the earth's geography ... shadows made in the heavenly realm are cast upon the mental topography (mental landscape) of humankind, with this mental topography revealed through the actions or acts of fleshly human beings. Unrighteousness is, now, spiritual darkness stemming from something or someone in the heavenly realm blocking the "light" that is God. And it is the prince of this world that blocks that light. Therefore, the visible things that have been made—the left hand enantiomers—reveal the invisible things of God as the physical precedes the spiritual. The first Adam, a clay corpse before the Lord breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, serves as the visible, physical shadow and copy of the last Adam, a living human being before the divine breath of the Father descended upon Him as a dove, thereby imparting a second life, a spiritual life—as the right hand enantiomer—within the same mortal tent of flesh as was born of water from the womb of Mary. The first Adam and the last Adam are enantiomorphs, with chirality being the central metaphor informing typological exegesis. ...

The perishable is visible because it is not "light"; the imperishable cannot be seen by human eyes, except by the shadow that the spiritual casts, with this shadow not being a dark likeness lying lifeless on the ground but the perishable or natural. So the man of dust was the shadow and type of the man of heaven as physical breath is the shadow and type of spiritual breath that is the glory of God.

Herbert Armstrong was as a point on a two-dimensional plane: he was unable to discern spiritual "height" or said otherwise, he was unable to eliminate physicality from his thinking. For Armstrong and his ministers, the *physical* blocked the light that is God and left him/them in spiritual darkness with their eyes open. They weren't/aren't blind. They said/say that they "see"; therefore they are as the Pharisees were who asked Jesus,

Some of the Pharisees near Him heard these things, and said to Him, "Are we also blind?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, 'We see,' your guilt remains. (John 9:40–41)

Because of what was preached and is still being preached from Sabbatarian Church of God pulpits, guilt remains for unbelief remains ... it is extremely unlikely that any minister in the splinters of the former Worldwide Church of God doesn't know what has been and is being declared in this extended message. I know for certain that some know

... one minister, upon reading a draft of the first edition of *A Philadelphia Apologetic* in 2002, returned the copy with his comments, which initially were critical but as he continued through the manuscript to just past halfway changed in tone and ended with a note: *If I read more, I will have to agree with you.* He didn't read more.

One fellow (not a minister) in Norway after reading for a year said, *If you're right, then everyone else is wrong—and I can't go there ...* I don't like what Armstrong taught about God working with one person at a time. I don't want to believe that is so. But where are others with understanding? Show yourselves. For I say what Paul said,

If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are ... of the Lord. If anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized. (1 Cor 14:37–38)

As previously stated, the transfer of dominion over the single kingdom of this world from the Adversary and his angels to the Son of Man, Head and Body, serves as the witness mark by which all biblical prophecies can be spiritually aligned. This transfer is identified by John the Revelator as [the] Kingdom that is sandwiched between the Affliction (the first 1260 days of the seven endtime years), and [the] Endurance in Jesus, the last 1260 days. This *Kingdom* encompasses the doubled day 1260, counted from “0” to “1260” in the Affliction and from “1260” to “0” in the Endurance, with the first day numbered 1260 representing the last day on which the Adversary holds dominion over living creatures and with the second day numbered 1260 representing the first day that the Son of Man holds dominion in a countdown to the beginning of the Thousand Years when the Adversary will be bound in the Abyss.

John the Revelator wrote, “I, John, your brother and partner in the Affliction and Kingdom [no definite article] and Endurance in Jesus [no definite article, and no *patient*], was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus” (Rev 1:9) ... without <Kingdom> and <Endurance> having their own definite articles, they are not separate from <Affliction>: they share its definite article, thereby making *Affliction*, *Kingdom*, and *Endurance* into one entity of 2520 days duration. John's vision is about this entity, not about all of history leading up to the transference of dominion. This also causes the letters to the seven named churches to be delivered on the Day of the Lord, the day when dominion is transferred ... as a disciple in Ephesus could visit disciples in Laodicea at the end of the 1st-Century CE, an endtime disciple of spiritual Ephesus will be able to telephone (or post a photo to a spiritual Laodicean's Facebook wall) disciples of the other six named Churches, the seven Churches co-existing in the 21st-Century as they co-existed in the 1st-Century.

The seven named Churches represent seven endtime mindsets that do not necessarily have seven geographical locations: in one fellowship can be members of several of the named Churches. And this was not understood by Herbert Armstrong who taught that the seven Churches were seven Church eras, beginning with Ephesus in the 1st-Century and concluding with Laodicea in the 20th-Century ... he did not expect the return of Christ to be in the 21st-Century as evidenced by what he wrote in the cited portion of that December 8, 1947, co-worker letter.

John laid out the chronological structure for the Book of Revelation: the Affliction first, during which the 1260 day ministry of the two witnesses (Rev 11:3–14) occurs, with the Affliction representing the time, times, and half a time of Daniel 7:25, and the 1260

days of Revelation 12:6. During the Affliction, the Adversary remains the prince of this world. All authority in heaven and on earth has not yet been given to the glorified Christ; thus, Revelation chapter 4 through 11:14 belong to the Affliction, with these forty-two months symbolically representing the six hours between midnight and dawn; between when the death angel passed over all the land of Egypt, slaying all uncovered firstborns in that land, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of prisoners to the firstborn of livestock (for all firstborns belong to the Lord unless redeemed) and when dominion over the single kingdom of this world is taken from the Adversary and his angels and given to the Son of Man.

The forty-two months of the Affliction equate to the six hours between midnight and dawn when Israel was to remain in their houses. Thus, an hour equates to seven months; a half hour to three and a half months, 105 days. And a timeline for the Affliction can be worked out—and has been worked out, with the beginning date for this timeline being the second Passover in a year when the 15th day of the second month occurs on a Thursday, and the great Apostasy of day 220 occurs on a Sunday in December ...

The year isn't known. But in moving from physical to spiritual, the midnight hour physically comes when the night can get no farther away from the light—when dusk and dawn are equally far—thus, the spiritual midnight hour will come when humanity can get no farther away from God, the light of day; when dusk and dawn are equally far. Hence, the question must be asked, can humanity get farther from God than it is? Yes, but not very much farther. Has human governance demonstrated that self-rule will not work; that democracy will not work; that representational democracy will not work; that collectivism will not work; that autocratic dictatorships will not work; that monarchies will not work? Yes, yes, and yes. But is humanity on the brink of annihilating all life? It possesses the capacity to do so, and Islamic Twelvers would push for doing so, and the modern nation-state of Israel has promised not to be driven into the sea, that it would take the world down first. Rounds are chambered, safeties are off, and fingers are on triggers. But this is what Herbert Armstrong preached in that 1947 co-worker letter. And what has occurred since I was one year old? A lifetime lived under the shadow of sudden destruction—and I loop back to what Jack Etsel said while eating fried chicken in 1985, *Armstrong preaches that time is short because time is short for him.*

Do I preach that time is short because it is short for me, or is it really short?

The visions of Daniel were still sealed and secret in 1985. This Armstrong didn't know and really couldn't know because he wasn't born of spirit. But as everyone ages, coming day by day closer to the person's end, most everyone believes that the world has gone to hell and is about to come to an end. Such was preached at the close of the first millennium of the Common Era. Such was preached as the bubonic plague scourged Europe. Such was preached during and following World War I when the swine flu was killing millions. And if the generic *time of the end* is not upon humanity, such will be preached a century from now.

My argument is that the visions of Daniel are not about the course of human affairs, but about what happens at the end of this age—and mostly about what happens in the Affliction, the last 1260 days of when the Adversary and his angels hold dominion over humanity; over all living creatures. My argument is that biblical prophecies are

ultimately about the mental landscape of living creatures; that they warn against not manifesting genuine love for neighbor and brother, against relying on the realm of transactions. And when Scripture is “read” as a book about the mind, not about the Islamic State eventually possessing nuclear weapons—*Allah will provide*—and beheading the world, or about Russia establishing a world-ruling empire ala the doctrine of *the Third Rome*, effectively used by Stalin to rally Mother Russia to fight Nazis, then Scripture is the better instruction manual for how to live than anything else written. Scripture is about how a person is to relate to neighbor and brother, parents, God. Scripture is a unified storied told by many authors, most of whom knew little or nothing of the story. And evidence that through poetry, redacted history, prophecies about regional nations, biography, and corrective epistles a unified story about how a person is to live his or her life, from the outside to the inside—while assuring participants in a demonstration of mindsets that more life lies beyond death—has been told for all who have eyes to see is perhaps the strongest evidence that God exists prior to the Second Passover liberation of Israel.

But before dismissing the immediacy of the day, this day, today, Christ Jesus left His disciples with the example of Him washing feet and eating the Passover, changing the symbols from a sacrificed bleating lamb to eating unleavened bread representing His body and drinking from the cup representing His blood. Moses left Israel with a model for keeping the Passover; Christ Jesus altered this model but kept the structure. And following the Second Passover liberation of Israel, the nation to be circumcised of heart, the Passover will again be altered. But until then, what will not be altered is that the person who is of Israel, the firstborn Son of God, will either take the sacraments on the dark portion of the 14th day of the first month or be as a person of the nations, an Egyptian. And if the person is a biological firstborn, the uncovered person will die when death sweeps around the globe, following the darkness of being as far from God as humanity can get.

Because of the difference between 1260 days and 1290 days, the thirty days between the Passover in the year of the Second Passover and the second Passover has significance that is outside the shadowing of Scripture ... the majority of filled-with-spirit Christians will rebel against God on day 220 of the Affliction, with this day beginning the count for the 1290 days, complete 250 days into the Endurance when almost all of the third part of humanity (from Zech 13:9) will rebel against the Adversary who has been cast to earth and comes claiming to be the Messiah. This third part's rebellion against the Antichrist will be made complete in the 45 days between 1290 and 1335 days after the great Apostasy of day 220 of the Affliction, and when this occurs is recorded:

Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!" (Rev 14:12–13)

Another time marker: God effectively pulls the fangs of the Adversary 295 days into the Endurance; for if after this marker the Adversary kills one of the saints, the person is sealed in death and assured of salvation. If the Adversary is to have any chance of preventing a holy one from entering heaven, the Adversary will have to permit the person to live and perchance join the rebellion against God in order to engage in

transactions. The holy one, though, has to do nothing but endure to the end to be saved. No work beyond feeding him or herself will be necessary. No preaching will be necessary. All that is needed is to believe that *God will provide*, the mantra of Islam, with former Muslims making up a significant percentage of the prophesied third part of humanity. And this is what Herbert Armstrong didn't know and Sabbatarian Christendom cannot accept.

God will provide—God will teach all to *know the Lord*. And when the Law [Torah] is written on hearts and placed in minds, all will, indeed, know the Lord. So Armstrong's ministry (as well as the Christian ministries of this present era) only hindered potential disciples from coming to obedience. And that should not have happened nor should it continue to happen as it is today. But when those who teach are in need of teachers themselves, the result will be, "In those days there was no king [no Caesar] in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25).

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