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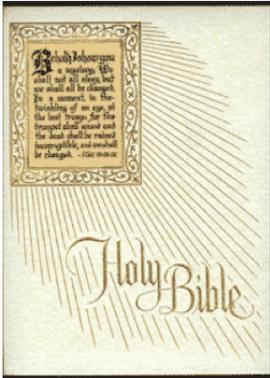
BIBLE NEWS PROPHECY

*The Coming
Eurasian
Union*

**Faith: What is It?
How is Faith Shown?**

**Should Modern Christians
Keep the Feast of Trumpets?**

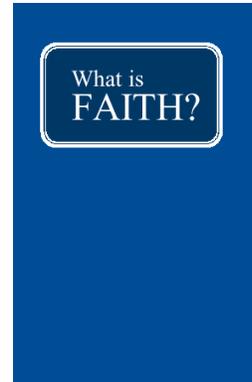
BIBLE NEWS PROPHECY



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THE COMING EURASIAN UNION

Is there a Eurasian union that will be formed? Is one being formed right now? Are any leaders working on that in the 21st century? Does the Bible teach that there will be a Eurasian union? If some type of Eurasian union is formed, who might it benefit and who will it destroy?

Russia's Putin Wants a Eurasian Union

A type of Eurasian union was conceptually proposed by the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, during a 1994 speech at a Moscow university.

In October 2011, Russia's Vladimir Putin formally called for the formation of an organization called the Eurasian Union (EAU).

On 18 November 2011, the presidents of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia signed an agreement, setting a target of establishing the Eurasian Union by 2015. The agreement included the roadmap for the future integration and established the Eurasian Commission (modelled on the European Commission) and the Eurasian Economic Space, which started work on 1 January 2012.

Since then, movement to form the EAU has taken place. Some in other countries have expressed interest in joining it. On May 29, 2014, three nations (Russia, Kazakhstan, and Belarus) signed an agreement to officially form the Eurasian Union. The official formation is scheduled for January 1, 2015.

Here some machine-translated comments from Vladimir Putin about it:

Construction of the Customs Union and Common Economic Space lays the foundation for the formation of a future Eurasian Economic Union. At the same time will go and the gradual expansion of the Customs Union and Common Economic Space through a full connection to the work of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

We do not dwell on it and set an ambitious goal: get to the next higher level of integration - the Eurasian Union.

What we see them and outline the prospects of this project?...

We propose a model of a powerful supranational union capable of becoming one of the poles of the modern world and play the role of an effective "link" between Europe and the dynamic Asia-Pacific region... to create a full-fledged economic union.

...the Eurasian Union will serve as a center for further integration.

So, Vladimir Putin wants the EAU, and then hopes it will result in greater regional and international influence. Many believe that Russia's involvement with Ukraine and Crimea were related to its intended plans for the EAU. Vladimir Putin's interest in eastern Ukraine, Moldova, and certain other lands is related to his desire to have them part of his EAU.

What about Western sanctions? Notice the following:

ST. PETERSBURG, April 17 (RIA Novosti) – Western sanctions against Moscow could drive integration between the Asia-Pacific region and the proposed economic union of post-Soviet states, widely seen as Russia's counterweight to the EU, Russian State Duma Speaker Sergei Naryshkin said...

Naryshkin said the proposed Eurasian Economic Union (EAU) is a "serious geopolitical player" that will in the future bridge Western Europe, which has fallen into recession in the past seven years, with the fast-growing Asia-Pacific region.

The move comes amid Moscow's efforts to reassess its participation in the global economy and focus on the Eurasian project. (Western sanctions to push integration of Eurasian Union and Asia-Pacific – Russian official. The Journal of Turkish Weekly, April 17, 2014. <http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/165766/western-sanctions-to-push-integration-of-eurasian-union-and-asia-pacific-russian-official.html>)

Western sanctions seem to be encouraging the development of the Eurasian Union. For one example, when Europe publicly considered reducing its energy purchases from Russia as the result of Crimea, Russia announced an energy sales deal with China.

A Coming Eurasian Confederation Will Include China and Likely India

The following was written by the late Herbert W. Armstrong prior to the more recent proposals and plans for a Eurasian Union:

“Gog” in the land of “Magog” is the vast regions of the U.S.S.R. in northern Eurasia extending from the Baltic to the Pacific. “Meshech” is Moscow, “Tubal” is Tobol’sk.

Notice the allies who come with them in this future battle. You will find “Gomer,” “Togarmah,” “Magog,” “Meshech,” “Tubal” identified in Genesis 10 as the sons of Japheth, father of the Eurasians. (Armstrong HW. Why Russia Will Not Attack the United States, reprint 1980, p. 8)

The second woe, with its symbols of horses and horsemen...and is also referred to as an event in the Day OF THE Eternal in Joel 2:4. This refers to a tremendous military power--also to the NORTH--due north! They come with an army of two hundred million! Think of it--an army of two hundred million! World events are now moving rapidly to make possible a Communist Eurasian army of that unbelievable manpower! (Armstrong HW. The Book of Revelation Unveiled at Last! 1972 edition. p. 38-39).

The idea of a Eurasian Union is consistent with biblical prophecy, as well as some of the late Herbert Armstrong’s prophetic understandings. It should be noted that Eurasian army does not need to be partially or fully ‘communist’ (though many of the lands that Herbert Armstrong referred to were controlled by communists when he wrote what was quoted above).

Many steps for the proposed EAU have been taken:

Strategic experts say the Eurasian Union is Moscow’s teeth crushing reply to USA on NATO expansion in Eastern Europe and central states will come in a position to bargain whether to look towards Europe or enter into Eurasian Union to grab maximum economical and financial benefits offered to them. (Alam SS. Why Dream of Eurasian Union? 29 July 2013. <http://blogs.thenews.com.pk/blogs/2013/07/why-dream-of-eurasian-union/>)

Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan have agreed to set up a Eurasian economic union, modelled on the EU, with a target date of 2015. The three countries already have a customs union but now aim to go further by removing

trade barriers. (Russia sees union with Belarus and Kazakhstan by 2015. BBC, November 18, 2011. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-15790452> viewed 08/12/13)

Our political decision to join the Customs Union and the Common Economic Space, and Eurasian Union in future, has distinct military-political and security content as well. As reports “Armenpress”, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia Tigran Sargsyan stated this...(Armenia’s decision to join Eurasian Union has military-political content: Armenia’s PM. Armenpress.am, March 29, 2014. <http://armenpress.am/eng/news/755965/armenia%E2%80%99s-decision-to-join-eurasian-union-has-military-political-content-armenia%E2%80%99s-pm.html>)

And while that may not sound like much of a start, the European Union started originally as a trade pact between the relatively small nations of Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg (called Benelux), and now has 28 nations part of it.

This Eurasian Union is also expected to have more military cooperation. Russia is also attempting to involve various other nations, directly or indirectly with this including China and India. And actually, India has been proposed as a regular member of this yet to be formed EAU.

There are several reasons that China wishes to be involved. One of them is that Russia and China want to increase the convertibility of the rouble and the yuan. Both want to increase the two currencies’ role in international trade. Both wish to propose them to be part of a type of combined global reserve currency. Both want to topple the dominance of the USA dollar, as well as decrease the influence of the USA.

And, let us not forget that the USA keeps increasing its debt through massive deficit spending and inflating its currency through various programs. Financial experts should realize that what the USA has been doing is diminishing the value of its dollar. Biblically the USA is adding ‘dross’ to its currency, which is not good (Isaiah 1:22,25; Proverbs 25:4a). At some point in time in the future, this will result in disaster for the USA according to biblical prophecy (Habakkuk 2:6-8).

What is happening in Asia, and elsewhere, shows that the world is moving away from the US dollar. Many of the arrangements that the Chinese, Russians, and others (such as the Europeans) are doing are making it easier for the ultimate break from the dollar and the final time of the Gentiles.

The Bible Tells of a Military Block Forming

The Bible uses terms like kings of the east/sunrise (Revelation 16:12), kings of the Medes (Jeremiah 51:11), and “many kings” associated with of the northern Eurasian regions (Jeremiah 50:41). The Bible teaches that more than one nation will be involved in a military block that will be formed—and this block is consisting of Eurasian nations.

Vladimir Putin has repeatedly called for a militarily stronger Russia as well as one allied with many other nations in Asia and even some in Europe.

Russia already supplies a lot of military weaponry to nations in Asia, including India, while India is also developing its own weapons. China also buys weapons from Russia and is also developing its own weapons. Russia and China themselves already have a variety of military agreements. They have issues with the West.

Years ago, I read an article out of India where the author claimed that Russia, China, and India believe that the Americans and Europeans truly will never accept them as equals and hence have decided that they need to take additional steps leading to cooperation with each other. And, also to be opposed to the West in various ways.

Notice the following::

Plans for a Eurasian Union are a feeble rear guard action aimed less at NATO and the West and more at the increasing relevance of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

The SCO has China as its sponsor. And, while it is not clear at all that China has designs for control of any kind over Central Asia, it is the power with the most momentum in the region. It has now become cliché to say that Central Asia’s markets are flooded with Chinese goods and businessmen. (Peterson A. Central Asia unlikely to become another unstable Middle East. Global Times, August 13, 2013. <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/803601.shtml#Ugqr96z8az4> viewed 08/13/13)

So, China is a sponsor of SCO and according to at least one reporter, the SCO situation is what the Eurasian Union is really all about. Hence, some see that the proposed Eurasian Union is really about building an economic and military confederation. That being said, Russia’s Vladimir Putin does consider that the EAU will help him counterbalance the West and NATO.

Militarily, the Bible shows that a type of Eurasian military

union will happen involving those from the north AND the east and frighten the European King of the North:

...the king of the North... 43 He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels. 44 But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many. 45 And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him (Dan 11:40,43-45).

Places like Armenia (called Ararat below) are prophesied to be involved with the Northern power (kings of the Medes below):

27 Set up a banner in the land, Blow the trumpet among the nations! Prepare the nations against her, Call the kingdoms together against her: Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz. Appoint a general against her; Cause the horses to come up like the bristling locusts. 28 Prepare against her the nations, With the kings of the Medes, Its governors and all its rulers, All the land of his dominion. 29 And the land will tremble and sorrow; For every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon, To make the land of Babylon a desolation without inhabitant. (Jeremiah 51:27-29)

Armenia currently has candidate status with the Eurasian Union. Whether or not it joins the EAU, it is prophesied to be aligned with the Eurasian power that will fight against the end time European Beast power.

The New Testament shows that a group of nations known as the Kings of the East will form:

12 Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. 13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 14 For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. 15 Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.” 16 And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon (Revelation 16:12-16).

Note: The literal translation of Revelation 16:12 is “the kings of the sunrise” and thus this would seem to also

include China, Japan, Korea, Indochina (including Vietnam), Indonesia, and other lands (since Indonesia is Islamic, it is likely to wish much closer alignment with the Chinese in the end after the King of the North overwhelms the Islamic King of the South per Daniel 11:40-43). India is also likely one of those kings.

Russia, with a border that extends east to the Pacific ocean, would appear to be one of the Kings of the East. There will be an end-time confederation of Asian nations with some European involvement that will be part of this eastern confederation.

Other parts of the Bible also show that this “Babylonian/European” empire will be destroyed by a northern power.

In the Book of Jeremiah, for example, it is shown that a northern people (which most logically would seem to be Russia) will be part of the force that concerns and then eventually invades, end time Babylon (which will be a European power):

50:41 “Behold, a people shall come from the north,
And a great nation and many kings
Shall be raised up from the ends of the earth.
42 They shall hold the bow and the lance;
They are cruel and shall not show mercy.
Their voice shall roar like the sea;
They shall ride on horses,
Set in array, like a man for the battle,
Against you, O daughter of Babylon.
43 “The king of Babylon has heard the report about
them,
And his hands grow feeble;
Anguish has taken hold of him,
Pangs as of a woman in childbirth...”(Jeremiah 50:41-43).
3 O Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal...6
from the far north and all its troops--many people are
with you (Ezekiel 38:3,6).

Thus, the European empire (the “daughter of Babylon”) is to be destroyed by a northern (apparently Russian led) force. And one that cooperates with nations in the East, as well as maybe Iran, and possibly the Ukraine. (While the fulfillment of Ezekiel 38 happens long afterward, the fact that it refers to the peoples of the FAR NORTH helps show that there is a power further north than the final European King of the North, which is consistent with Daniel 11:44).

Notice also that the Bible shows Babylon tied together with birth pains/pangs to a group from a far country:

1 The burden against Babylon which Isaiah the son of

Amoz saw.

2 “Lift up a banner on the high mountain,Raise your voice to them;Wave your hand, that they may enter the gates of the nobles. 3 I have commanded My sanctified ones; I have also called My mighty ones for My anger—Those who rejoice in My exaltation.” 4 The noise of a multitude in the mountains, Like that of many people! A tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together! The LORD of hosts musters The army for battle. 5 They come from a far country, From the end of heaven—The LORD and His weapons of indignation, To destroy the whole land. 6 Wail, for the day of the LORD is at hand! It will come as destruction from the Almighty. 7 Therefore all hands will be limp, Every man’s heart will melt, 8 And they will be afraid. Pangs and sorrows will take hold of them; They will be in pain as a woman in childbirth; They will be amazed at one another; Their faces will be like flames (Isaiah 13:1-8).

Thus, both the accounts in Jeremiah and Isaiah seem related to the same invaders. This is referring to an end time confederation that has a distance to travel—apparently a type of union of powers from the east including Russia, who is also the major power of the far north.

And this type of confederation is something that Vladimir Putin has repeatedly called for. This is something he will continue to advocate and work towards. And whether he leads it or not, it will form.

A northern confederation (that appears to be led by Russia and probably includes the far north and far east/Pacific coast portion of Asia) will destroy the European Babylon. The following passage may also apply:

9 For behold, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon
An assembly of great nations from the north country,
And they shall array themselves against her;
From there she shall be captured.
Their arrows shall be like those of an expert warrior;
None shall return in vain. (Jeremiah 50:9)

So, although many worry that Russia will be a major military threat to the USA, the reality is that the Bible indicates that it will be the Europeans that will receive a massive attack involving Russia. And perhaps not too many years from now (nearly 3½ years after the start of the Great Tribulation). This Eurasian union is something that Vladimir Putin advocates and plans to continue to work towards.

Notice the following:

13 Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, 14 saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." 15 So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind. 16 Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. 17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone. 18 By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed—by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths (Revelation 9:13-18).

Where can such an army come from?

Only Asian forces, such as those in China and India and likely many others who will align with them, could put together a 200,000,000 man army. India, China, and others in Asia will apparently align themselves with a Russia confederation against the European Empire.

Notice what Joel 2 indicates some of what that two hundred million man army will do:

2...A people come, great and strong, The like of whom has never been; Nor will there ever be any such after them, Even for many successive generations. 3 A fire devours before them, And behind them a flame burns; The land is like the Garden of Eden before them, And behind them a desolate wilderness; Surely nothing shall escape them. 4 Their appearance is like the appearance of horses; And like swift steeds, so they run. 5 With a noise like chariots Over mountaintops they leap, Like the noise of a flaming fire that devours the stubble, Like a strong people set in battle array. 6 Before them the people writhe in pain; All faces are drained of color. 7 They run like mighty men, They climb the wall like men of war; Every one marches in formation, And they do not break ranks. 8 They do not push one another; Every one marches in his own column. Though they lunge between the weapons, They are not cut down. 9 They run to and fro in the city, They run on the wall; They climb into the houses, They enter at the windows like a thief. (Joel 2:2-9)

That massive army will cause fear and massive destruction.

A Eurasian Union Will Form

Vladimir Putin wants a Eurasian Union to form. Russia has taken steps to try to work with those nations that were once part of the old Soviet Union. But beyond that, Russia has also taken steps to try to improve cooperation with North Korea, China, India, Pakistan, and others.

The fact that the Bible refers to them as "kings of the Medes" and "kings of the east" suggests that the final form of this will be more of a confederation than a single kingdom.

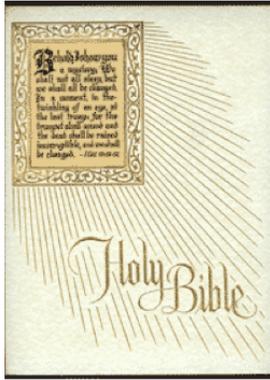
The Bible tells of a time with those kings will get together and will ultimately destroy much of the final Babylonian Empire that the Europeans will end up building.

The currently forming Eurasian Union may well be a prelude to the final cooperation that will involve many of the Eurasian nations.

But even if currently proposed organizations such as the EAU and SCO fail, the reality is that the Bible is clear that in the final end times, a Eurasian confederation will form and be involved in the destruction of the final Babylonian power that the Europeans are in the process of trying to creating.

News events verify that Russia, China, and others are working to increase the power and influence of the Eurasian region. A region that the Bible prophesies will be involved in massive warfare at the end of this age.

STUDY THE BIBLE COURSE



Lesson 3: Christ Will Stop World Suicide

Bob Thiel, Editor-in-Chief

Published 2014 by the Continuing Church of God

Preface: This course is highly based upon the personal correspondence course developed in 1954 that began under the direction of the late C. Paul Meredith in the old Radio Church of God. Various portions have been updated for the 21st century (though much of the original writing has been retained). It also has more scriptural references, as well as information and questions not in the original course. Unless otherwise noted, scriptural references are to the NKJV, copyright Thomas Nelson Publishing, used by permission. The KJV, sometimes referred to as the Authorized Version is also often used. Additionally, Catholic-approved translations such as the New Jerusalem Bible (NJB) are sometimes used as are other translations.

CIVILIZATION is AT THE CROSSROADS! HUMANKIND left it to itself would DESTROY itself from the face of the earth if God would fail to intervene (Matthew 24:22)! But GOD WILL NOT FAIL! God will not let this world continue as it has in the past. Yet, strange to say, many who do believe in a God, refuse to believe He will supernaturally intervene in world affairs.

It is of this doubting end time, just before Christ's return, that Peter speaks: "There shall come IN THE LAST DAYS SCOFFERS, walking after their own lusts, and SAYING, WHERE IS THE PROMISE OF HIS COMING? FOR ALL THINGS CONTINUE AS THEY WERE FROM THE BEGINNING" (2 Peter 3:3-4, KJV).

But Christ will come to stop world suicide!

THE NATIONS WILL BE ANGRY at that time. The battle among them for world rulership will be at a crisis! GREAT DESTRUCTION AND LOSS OF HUMAN LIFE WILL HAVE OCCURRED. The war will be FURIOUS! Yet the issue hangs in the balance. Then—suddenly—CHRIST WILL APPEAR with all His holy angels, and enter their fight. THE NATIONS WILL NOT SUBMIT TO HIM LIKE A LAMB as most people carelessly seem to assume!

They will either reason that Christ's army is only another group of mortal men who have developed a more scientific and ruthless way of waging war for world control or have Satanic influence as the forces of Antichrist! Jesus will have to deal with the nations in a language they do understand—hard, overpowering force. They will have no way to turn.

They will be forced to take their minds off destroying each other! How will this struggle end?

CHRIST WILL DESTROY THEIR WEAPONS AND ARMIES AND LEAVE THE NATIONS POWERLESS TO RESIST HIS RULE! HE, NOT MAN, WILL BE SUPREME ON THE EARTH! Christ's coming to prevent total annihilation is much heralded by the Bible. It is a vital part of God's PLAN.

But how WILL CHRIST PROCEED TO ESTABLISH ORDER IN THIS CHAOTIC, WAR-TORN WORLD?

Order Out of Chaos

Christ, Himself, declared: "I WILL COME AGAIN" (John 14:3). The manner of His coming is placed beyond all controversy by the words of the angels. They appeared on the Mount of Olives to the disciples who were witnessing the ascension of their Lord and Master into the heaven. The angels said, "This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, WILL so COME IN LIKE MANNER as you saw Him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11). Jesus will return IN LIKE MANNER AS HE WENT!

Christ is therefore coming PERSONALLY and VISIBLY, to be present on the earth. When He comes again, He will come, not as a sufferer, nor as a man of sorrows, but as a KING and AS A CONQUEROR, to occupy a throne of glory. His own words are: "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, THEN HE WILL SIT ON THE THRONE OF HIS GLORY:" (Matthew 25:31).

There are numerous predictions throughout the Bible that Jesus Christ will occupy A THRONE, and reign as king thereon. God has declared, "Behold, the days are coming.

. .That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A KING SHALL REIGN AND PROSPER, And execute judgment and righteousness IN THE EARTH.” (Jeremiah 23:5).

Christ will cause SATAN, THE PRINCE WHO NOW RULES OVER MANKIND, to be bound (Revelation 20:2).

Then, at that time, “The Lord shall BE KING OVER ALL THE EARTH: in that day shall there be ONE Lord, and his name one” (Zechariah 14:9, KJV).

Final Important Instructions

Now we are ready for the actual lesson. Is your Bible in front of you? If not, STOP RIGHT HERE! Go and GET YOUR BIBLE.

Also several sheets of paper, and a pencil or pen, so that you can MAKE NOTES to help you remember what you learn.

This course is based on the New King James Version because it is intended to be a literal translation and uses a version of the English language that people commonly use in the early 21st century. For most of the lesson, you can use other translations, but the questions and answers specifically refer to the NKJV unless otherwise stated. So, for most, the NKJV is the best choice to use with the Study the Bible Course.

Now we are ready to begin this lesson. REMEMBER you should open your Bible to every passage we give you in this lesson. Do not simply believe us (the teams directed by late C. Paul Meredith and/or Bob Thiel)—believe what the Bible really teaches.

You should READ, and re-read, and actually study EVERY PASSAGE IN YOUR BIBLE. This is a Bible STUDY course—a study of the Bible, not just a study of these words we sent you. Our words are intended to show you where to look in your Bible—to help you to know how to study the Bible.

Now, with your Bible, a good dictionary, and your note paper and pencil or pen on a desk or table before you, here is the METHOD of study: Write down, neatly on your note paper, the caption “Lesson 3, Part 1,” and underscore it. Next, write down the lesson heading and the question section heading. Then, underneath, number each question, and write down the answer to each, in your own handwriting (some of you may prefer to type or text).

As an EXAMPLE, for the question section, this is what you will write under your heading, Christ Will Come With Wrath:

1. Daniel 2:28—“But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be IN THE LATTER DAYS. . .”

Also write in any other thoughts or comments you want to remember. Study and understand this question, then read question number two.

Keep these lessons and your own notes and answers fastened in the binder. DO NOT SEND US YOUR ANSWERS TO THESE REGULAR LESSONS. Keep them for reference. (It may be that we will offer a free certificate to those who complete the entire course and/or significant portions of it, but that would be after 2014, and we would expect to announce this online and likely elsewhere. If we do end up so, we would ask that you simply send in a copy of the lessons you completed.)

2. The second question of Lesson 3 should be handled as you did the first question, except that you need not write out all the verses. Verses 42 and 44 are the most important and must be written or typed out.

By writing down all these answers, and by writing down all the words of the every Bible passage that answers a question, you will find you will REMEMBER what you have learned. It takes a little more time, but you will really LEARN your lessons that way, and remember them.

Furthermore, you can quickly REVIEW your lessons, as necessary, if you have them in this form.

WE ARE GIVING YOU THE BRIEF, COMPREHENSIVE, TRUE OUTLINE OF THE BIBLE. You will want to refer to these lessons AND THE EXPLANATION OF THEM IN YOUR OWN WORDS time after time in future years as you apply them to clear up related points in the Bible. Remember, you are to spend at least a half hour every day studying YOUR BIBLE with this Study the Bible Course.

LESSON 3

Christ Will Come With WRATH

1. To whom did God REVEAL what is to HAPPEN IN THESE LATTER DAYS? Daniel 2:28.
2. Were there to be four successive world, ruling kingdoms? Daniel 2:31-40. (A later lesson will explain the full significance of these four empires). In the days of the last ten kings (represented by ten toes in verse 42), which are yet to arise out of the fourth kingdom, is God going to SET UP A KINGDOM THAT WILL NEVER

BE DESTROYED? Daniel 2:44.

3. A stone is to destroy these last ten kings. Who is this stone? Acts 4:10-11. Does it STRIKE the image on its ten toes? Daniel 2:34.
4. Where else is the event of the end of this kingdom described? Revelation 17:12-14. Are ten kings also mentioned here?
5. Is this person mentioned in Revelation 19:11 to MAKE WAR? He is called King of Kings and Lord of Lords (verse 16). Who is He? Revelation 17:14. Who is the Lamb of God? John 1:29. Do these verses show that it is Christ who will come with an army of angels to make war with the nations of the earth?
6. What will be a PURPOSE in His coming? Revelation 19:15. What will happen to the great men who oppose Him? Verses 17-18.

COMMENT: The phrase "flesh of ALL people," found in Revelation 19:18 does not refer to ALL people on earth, but to ALL who are in the armies gathered against Jerusalem. Compare with Zechariah 14:12-15.

7. Does Revelation 11:15-19 speak of this same time? How do we know? Verse 15. Is this angel the last of seven angels which will sound? Revelation 8:6.
8. Is this the SEVENTH TRUMPET? Compare this with 1 Thessalonians 4:15 and 1 Corinthians 15:52. Is the trumpet in 1 Corinthians 11:52 the last trumpet? Note there are no more trumpets blown after Revelation 11:15. Will the KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD BECOME THE KINGDOMS OF CHRIST at the last trumpet? Verse 15.
9. Christ came the first time as a meek lamb to be slain. How will He come the second time? Will Christ be WRATHFUL? Revelation 11:18. Did Zephaniah the prophet foretell this same TIME OF GOD'S WRATH? Zephaniah 1:15. Is the GREAT DAY OF THE LORD A DAY OF GOD'S WRATH on the inhabitants of the earth? Verses 14-16.

COMMENT: The "Day of the Lord" INCLUDES THE BLOWING OF ALL SEVEN TRUMPETS, six of which are blown in a period of months immediately preceding Christ's return.

10. Read also Isaiah 13:6;(,)Ezekiel 7:19, and Isaiah 34:8. Do these verses verify what the "Day of the Lord" is?
11. Many believe the world will soon have peace. What does the Bible say? Revelation 11:18. When people are angry, some fight. Will there be WORLD-WIDE FIGHTING in these end times? Matthew 24:7;

Revelation 19:19-21.

12. Why is Christ taking over this world's kingdoms? Revelation 11:15-19 gives us some answers. Read it.

COMMENT: GOD DEMANDS OBEDIENCE. He says, "Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments. . ." (Deuteronomy 8:11). In Revelation 11:19 God pictures the ARK OF THE COVENANT. Let us understand why!

What did the earthly ark of the covenant contain? 2 Chronicles 5:10; Deuteronomy 10:4-5. Does the world today keep God's commandments? Are the people today destroying the earth? Revelation 11:18. "Thou shalt not kill" is one of these commandments,(,)Exodus 20:13 (KJV).

We therefore know that Christ will come with wrath to punish the nations because they are VIOLATING GOD'S LAWS!

13. The Bible shows that the saints, at Christ's second coming, will be transformed and be forever with Him in 1 Thessalonians 4:17. Most people today seem to believe that when they are changed they will lead a life of idleness. When Christ and his armies of angels begin to subdue the nations, will the saints have nothing to do? Read Daniel 7:18, KJV. What does the word "take" signify?

The converted are not to live a life of idleness when they are transformed. They will have an active part with Christ in taking over the kingdoms of this world.
14. What else will happen at the blowing of the great trumpet (the seventh) at which Christ comes? Isaiah 27:12-13. IS ISRAEL REGATHERED? Verse 12. What do they do? Verse 13.
15. If they worship God--come out of this Babylonish world in which they will have been scattered--will they escape His future plagues? Revelation 18:4.

Divine Wrath To Fall on Lawless World

1. The world is rebellious. Even after Christ is present in person on this earth, the nations will not accept Him. What is one thing will God do to encourage THE ACCEPTANCE OF CHRIST and His government? Revelation 16:1.
2. Upon what do these BOWLS OF WRATH fall? So, isn't the rebellion world-wide? Revelation 16:1.

3. How many bowls are there? Rev. 16:2, 3, 4, 8, 10, 12, 17. Are any of these seven “bowls” of God’s wrath also called “plagues”? Compare verse 17 of Revelation 16 with verse 21.
4. Do plagues hit end time Babylon? Revelation 18:8.
5. Upon whom is the FIRST BOWL poured? Revelation 16:2.

COMMENT: It will be poured upon all who are participating in this world’s major civil-religious system when Christ comes again.

6. How do we know the first bowl will occur AFTER Christ comes? (Remember that Christ comes at the last trumpet--Revelation 11:15. This trumpet introduces the seven last plagues.)
7. How will the nations be acting when Christ returns? Revelation 11:18. Will it be the time of God’s wrath also? Verses 17-18. As all the bowls are the wrath of God (Revelation 16:1), how plain that they will be poured out AFTER Christ intervenes.
8. What are the SECOND AND THIRD BOWLS poured out upon? What do they cause? Revelation 16:3-7. Notice that ALL THESE VIALS WILL PRODUCE SUPERNATURAL EFFECTS. God WILL SUPERNATURALLY INTERVENE IN WORLD AFFAIRS!
9. God will use EXTREME MEASURES. Notice the FOURTH BOWL. Revelation 16:8-9 (There are seven bowls altogether.). Will the HEAT be intense? How intense will the light of the sun be for a short time? Isaiah 30:26.
10. What effect will all this have on the earth’s population? Isaiah 24:6. Will comparatively FEW more PEOPLE BE LEFT at the start of Christ’s rule?

COMMENT: Note particularly that NOT ALL PEOPLE ARE DESTROYED—some are left. With these Christ will start His rule.

11. WHY will God do this? Isaiah 24:5. Christ will execute the wrath of the Almighty on this earth because of its disobedience to God’s laws.
12. What else shows us that God’s wrath will occur when Christ begins to set up His rule on earth? Isaiah 24:10. What is the “City of Confusion”?

COMMENT: In Hebrew and Greek the word “Babylon” means “confusion.” Babylon the great—this world’s

confused system which is the offspring of the old Babylonian system—will fall soon after the intervention of Christ (Revelation 18:2).

13. Does Revelation 18:21, 23 also prove this event will happen at that time? God is thus going to destroy great numbers of rebellious people from earth before Christ sets up His rule. Will most of those remaining REPENT when they are exposed to this severe heat? Revelation 16:9.
14. The FIFTH BOWL is poured out on the area of the earth which will be most actively promoting the fight against Christ’s rule. What is it called? Revelation 16:10. Will these people repent of their evil deeds? Is there light there? What does Christ compare Himself to? John 8:12.

COMMENT: Plainly the word “darkness” of Revelation 16:10 is dual—there will be actual physical DARKNESS—thick clouds—and also spiritual darkness in this area and wherever the beast’s system is. MUCH IS WRITTEN IN A DUAL SENSE IN THE BIBLE.

Many have believed that the earth’s inhabitants would quickly accept Christ even if they might not recognize Him at first. It is amazing to see in advance what this world actually will do. The fourth bowl will be extremely severe punishment. It will kill a vast portion of this earth’s population. Throughout history, Satan has fought against Christ. Many will fall for “doctrines of demons” (1 Timothy 4:1; Revelation 16:14) and not accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

This Babylonian system’s leaders will suffer this punishment and suffer an additional one at their own capital. They will still be unrepentant. MUCH FORCE, AND LIKELY TIME, WILL BE NEEDED TO OVERCOME OPPOSITION.

World Will Gather to OPPOSE Christ

Gathering at Armageddon

1. What will the SIXTH BOWL of God’s wrath be? Revelation 16:12, 14. What will be the name of the GATHERING PLACE? Verse 16.
2. WHO WILL GATHER THE WHOLE EARTH to FIGHT AGAINST ITS CREATOR? Revelation 16:13-14. Who is the dragon? Revelation 12:9. Are the “spirits” SATAN’S DEMONS? Mark 1:23, 34; Luke 11:18-19.

3. What will the evil spirits do to cause the people to gather? Revelation 16:14. Is the beast a great military leader having power over many armies? Revelation 17:13-14. Is the false prophet a great religious leader? Revelation 13:11-17.
4. Against whom are “all the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather to fight”? Revelation 17:14. (We have already shown that the “Lamb” is Christ. Notice that Christ bears other titles also: Read Revelation 19:11, 16 and 19.) These scriptures DEFINITELY PROVE THAT CHRIST AND HIS GOVERNMENT WILL NOT BE WELCOMED BY BEAST SUPPORTERS.
5. What is described by Revelation 16:15? Is this inset verse a warning to the people of the earth that they keep posted on God’s prophecies so they will not be deceived and become involved in the fight against God which will follow the gathering of the nations at Armageddon?

This 15th verse is an inset thought—a warning to ALL OF US! It does not mean that Christ will come after the first five bowls are poured out. Rather, it is a warning not to join in the military preparations which undoubtedly commence months before Christ returns.

THE SIXTH BOWL REPRESENTS THE CLIMACTIC BATTLE OF CHRIST AGAINST THE NATIONS. IT FOLLOWS THEIR GATHERING AT ARMAGEDDON TO OPPOSE HIM.

6. Is God going to judge the heathen there? Joel 3:12.

COMMENT: “JEHOSHAPHAT” means “judgment of Jehovah” (Peloubet’s Bible Dictionary). So this very place bears the name “Valley of judgment of the Eternal.”

7. When will this judgment take place? Verse 14. Compare the time of this event (verse 14) with the time of the event described in Revelation 14:19.

COMMENT: This battle will be fought in the climactic day of God’s wrath—it will be the day when all seven bowls of the seventh trumpet are administered. This day in which Christ’s feet touch the earth will be ushered in by the blowing of the seventh trumpet. As we have already shown, the terms of the “day of the Lord” and the “wrath of God” are often used in the Bible interchangeably and therefore can describe the same time and the same event. Don’t these two events take place at the same time? Doesn’t God take a direct part in world affairs when either of these terms are used?

8. Will both of these events culminate in the Day of the

Lord? Compare Joel 3:14 with Revelation 14:19-20, KJV. Doesn’t the fact that blood will rise “unto the horses bridles” indicate that there must be a valley?

COMMENT: Notice that the “blood came out of the winepress. . .by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.” A furlong is estimated to equal to 600 feet (Peloubet’s Bible Dictionary). Then 1600 furlongs is over 180 miles! The bloody remains of the rebellious soldiers will fill Palestine’s world famous valley all the way from Megiddo southward, passing right by Jerusalem and extending over 110 miles farther south into the land of ancient Edom. Compare this with Isaiah 63:1-6, where Christ is described as executing His wrath in the land of Edom. Look on a Bible map of Palestine for these places.

Blood Exacted for Rebellion

1. Compare verse 13 of Joel 3 with verse 19 of Revelation 14. Are the events described in each of these references a harvest?

Note that the judgment in both references is in the nature of a harvest in which grapes (rebellious people) of Christ’s wrath are pressed out. Their juice represents a HARVEST OF BLOOD.

2. The VALLEY OF JEHOSHAPHAT is a deep ravine having very steep sides, and borders the City of Jerusalem on the east. Will the harvest of Revelation 14:20 also be just outside a city?
3. Who will conduct this harvest for God? Revelation 14:14. Who is the “Son of Man”? Daniel 7:13-14; Matthew 9:6.
4. What will He do when He comes? Open to Revelation 19:11. Will He not also judge at the Valley of Jehoshaphat? Will He come with armies? Verse 14. Will the people of the earth fight against Him? Verse 19. Will He, with His armies, “tread THE WINEPRESS of the fierceness and WRATH OF Almighty GOD”? Verse 15.

Compare this phrase with the phrases in Revelation 14:19 and Joel 3:12-13. Isn’t it clear that the fight which will occur in the VALLEY OF JEHOSHAPHAT WILL BE THE TREMENDOUS CLIMACTIC BATTLE OF THE WAR? The main clash will occur around Jerusalem which borders this valley.

5. Read also Psalm 2, note verse 8. Will there not also be heathen at the Valley of Jehoshaphat? Joel 3:12. Compare the “rod of iron” of Psalm 2:9, with which

Christ breaks them, with this same rod with which He will rule the nations, in Revelation 19:15.

Doesn't this term include armies? WILL IT NOT BE CHRIST, THROUGH HIS ARMIES, WHO WILL "TREAD THE WINEPRESS OF THE WRATH OF GOD" AT THE VALLEY OF JEHOSEPHAT AND CAUSE THE BLOOD OF THE HEATHEN WHO OPPOSE HIM TO FLOW AT THE WORLD'S GREATEST BATTLE?

6. Why will the nations fight Christ? Psalm 2:2-3; Revelation 11:8. Will they want His type of government? Will CHRIST WIN? Psalm 2:9. Note the word "break."
7. The Valley of Jehoshaphat borders JERUSALEM. Will Christ take Jerusalem also, in this battle? Zechariah 14:2-4. Does Zechariah 14:2 show that one-half of Jerusalem will have been taken by the nations of the earth before Christ liberates it in this battle?

COMMENT: It can now possibly be seen why the world's greatest battle will be fought at the Valley of Jehoshaphat and not at Armageddon: THE BATTLE IS FOR CONTROL OF THE WORLD. Jerusalem, the future world's capital, will be the prize sought.

The "Field of Megiddo" is a flat area located on the south side of the Plain of Esdraelon. It lies about seventy miles north and west of Jerusalem and furnishes a natural gathering place because of the flatness of the land. In ancient times, it was a part of the main highway between Asia and Africa. From this natural gathering place the world's armies will go southward for the big battle against Christ.

8. Who will aid Christ in his battles in the "day of the Lord"? Zechariah 14:5 and 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10. Notice Jeremiah 25:30-33: Christ will "tread out the grapes" wherever there is rebellion! What happens to those who oppose Christ in the battle for Jerusalem? Zechariah 14:11-12. Christ will be successful.
9. What soon follows with the SEVENTH BOWL? Revelation 16:18-21.

Results of Christ's Victory

1. The RESULTS OF THE BATTLE AT THE VALLEY OF JEHOSEPHAT ARE DESCRIBED IN MANY PLACES BECAUSE OF THEIR IMPORTANCE. What has Christ said He will make of Jerusalem and Mt. Zion when He returns? Zechariah 8:3.

COMMENT: JERUSALEM has been chosen by God to

have the greatest influence of any city on the destiny of mankind. ITS VERY NAME MEANS "CITY OF PEACE."

HERE WE SEE CHRIST, the "PRINCE OF PEACE" (Isaiah 9:6) TAKING THE CITY OF PEACE FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING IT THE CAPITAL OF THE EARTH (Jeremiah 3:17). FROM ZION GOD'S LAWS WILL GO FORTH WHICH WILL BRING PEACE TO THE EARTH! (Isaiah 2:2-4). CHRIST WILL PUNISH ALL WHO COME AGAINST HIM.

2. What will happen to the MILITARY LEADER of those nations, the Beast, that will oppose Christ? Revelation 19:19-20.

COMMENT: This describes the same LAKE OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE into which the beast—the military leader—will be cast alive.

3. The "beast" mentioned here is the military leader of the earth who receives military backing from ten dictators and fights Christ at the Valley of Jehoshaphat, Revelation 17:12-14.

The Bible uses the expression "ten kings." These will be ten leaders who are arising in Europe. In Bible times the term "king" was often used to represent a ruler whom we would call a tyrant or dictator today. Doesn't verse 14 also verify this MILITARY LEADER WILL BE OVERCOME?

4. Now notice something else about this military leader. He will maintain a very unusual establishment. Read Daniel 11:45 (KJV uses 'tabernacles,' NKJV uses 'tents'). Observe that this same man is here again identified as a military leader ("therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many"—verse 44). He will MAINTAIN A PLACE OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP—a tabernacle! In Bible language the word "tabernacle" often designates a place of worship (e.g. Exodus 27:21). Why will he maintain a tabernacle? He will do this for the purpose of gaining the SUPPORT of misguided religious people for the conduct of his military ventures. The "false prophet," the "beast of the earth," will encourage the beast's false religion (Revelation 13:11-17).

5. Will the FALSE PROPHET, who will be the head of this tabernacle, meet the SAME FATE as that of the beast his military cohort? Revelation 19:20, also Revelation 14:9-11. Does yet another prophecy verify the same fate for this man?

6. When Christ conquers these ten kings, will He begin to fulfill the prophecy that, in the days of these kings (represented by 10 toes), He would set up a kingdom

that would never be destroyed? Daniel 2:42-44.

COMMENT: Although God will give the kingdoms of this world to Christ to rule when the seventh trumpet is blown, they WILL NOT ACTUALLY BE HIS UNTIL AFTER HE OVERCOMES THEM. Compare Revelation 11:15 with Revelation 17:14.

This World's Man-made Civilization Overthrown

Christ Will Establish New Order

The united armies of Europe will now have been conquered and an enormous death toll will have been taken of all peoples. Many CITIES of this world's civilization—"BABYLON THE GREAT"—the pagan world in which we live, will still be standing, however. Also the "GREAT CITY" (Revelation 16:19), which has furthered this man-made system since the days of the Roman Empire, will still remain.

1. Will God leave these cities standing and erect His new order around them? Or will most BUILDINGS OF THIS WORLD'S SYSTEM BE LEVELED TO MAKE WAY FOR CHRIST'S NEW WORLD ORDER? Revelation 16:18-21. What two physical forces will He use to accomplish it? THIS GREAT HAIL AND EARTHQUAKE WILL LEVEL MOST MAN-MADE STRUCTURES OF THE WORLD! This is the SEVENTH BOWL!
2. The last four of the seven plagues will have a terrible effect; but, with all this, will the people learn to FEAR God? Revelation 16:21. Will they learn at long last that a better system is on the way? Or will they STILL WANT TO CLING TO THE OLD? Revelation 18:9, 11, 17-19. Of what does this vile system consist which people will still long for even after God has destroyed it? Revelation 18:2-3, 14, 19.
3. Was this Lot's attitude when he departed from the vile city of Sodom? Did he want to linger? Look behind? Stay near? And was it for this attitude that his wife DIED? Genesis 19:16, 17, 20, 26.
4. What does God, who knows there are better things ahead, command His people to do about the coming fall of today's civilization—modern Babylon the Great? Revelation 18:20. DOESN'T MAN'S DESIRE TO CLING TO THE present CIVILIZATION SHOW THAT IT WILL TAKE TIME AND EFFORT ON THE PART OF CHRIST, THE SAINTS, AND THE ANGELS TO RE-EDUCATE PEOPLE

IN THE NEW ERA? THEY WILL HAVE TO LEARN THAT GOD'S WAY IS BEST.

Strong resistance to Christ's presence will have been overcome. The world's great religious leader and its great military leader will have been destroyed. Great numbers of the incorrigibly wicked will have been killed. Huge hailstones and the world's greatest earthquake will have destroyed vast numbers of habitations.

5. How WILL CHRIST proceed to ESTABLISH HIS KIND OF GOVERNMENT, which will maintain world order? Will He build a MODEL CITY FOR THE REST OF THE WORLD TO PATTERN AFTER? What city will this be? Isaiah 62:1-2. Will all the earth know of it? Verse 7.
6. Will Israel be the MODEL FOR THE EARTH? Jeremiah 33:7-9. What two groups will compose this nation? Verse 7. Their re-education under Christ will have what effect on them? Verse 8. Will God's MODEL NATION ultimately be PRAISED BY ALL nations? Zephaniah 3:20 and Zechariah 8:3. What will Jerusalem also be called? Zechariah 8:3. Truth is very important to God.
7. Where will this nation have come from? Where will it be located when it ultimately becomes the praise of the earth? Ezekiel 34:1, 12. (The "sheep" are Israel. Have they been scattered?) Where will they be settled? Verse 13. Will not the model city be located within the bounds of the model nation?
8. Though Christ will have conquered the UNITED opposition of the beast-controlled world, will all nations be friendly to Him and His government? Or will He BEGIN HIS RULE AMONG ENEMIES? Psalm 110:2.
9. How will this remaining opposition be overcome? Haggai 2:22. What will He begin to do with this world's remaining rulers? Psalm 149:8. Will He also PUNISH THE HEATHEN? Verse 7. Who will Christ use to do these things? Verses 5-9. Read the entire Psalm. Does this sound like the saints will "go to heaven" and do nothing?
10. Will Christ become discouraged with His task and quit because it WILL TAKE TIME AND PATIENCE? Isaiah 42:4. Who is "my servant," mentioned in verse 1 of Isaiah 42? You will find the answer in Matthew 12:15-18 and Philippians 2:5-7.

Russia and China Will Attempt Final Coup

Russia and China will be important "kings of the east" (Revelation 16:12). Their massive combined army will be

destroyed at the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:12) along with the UNITED armies of all the European and other nations gathered against Jerusalem.

1. What region of the world will end up concerning the King of the North? Daniel 11:44. Notice that the King of the North (Daniel 11:40), is disturbed by a power to his north and east. Where else do we learn about this? Jeremiah 50:41-43

COMMENT: Jeremiah 50:1-3 and 51:7-11 indicate that a northern nation or northern nations (Jeremiah 50:9,41) will destroy Babylon and could be in the forefront of what may be a nuclear attack on Rome itself (cf. Revelation 18:9-10). Only Scandinavia, Inuit areas, or countries once in the old Soviet Union are north of, let's say, a geographically Germanic King of the North. And although many nations are north of Jerusalem (and most prophetic biblical directions seem to be centered in Jerusalem), various scriptures are pointing to those that inhabit the northern extremes of Eurasia.

What is the only militarily powerful nation that is north of Europe? Russia. Contrary to the claims of some Protestant theologians, Russia is NOT the final "king of the north," but is involved in his destruction!

2. When Russia and her Eurasian allies see that the Babylonian beast power can be defeated, will they act? Jeremiah 51:11-32; Isaiah 13:1-8, 17-19. Are not Russia and China, to cite two examples, part of the "ends of the earth" (Jeremiah 51:11; Isaiah 13:5) from the perspective of Jerusalem or Europe?
3. Will a 200 million man army form? Revelation 9:16.

COMMENT: When the Book of Revelation was written, there were not enough people on the earth for a 200 million man army. But God revealed that nearly 2,000 years ago. In modern times, it would seem that it would take an Asian or Eurasian confederation to put together such an army—and that is consistent with biblical prophecies concerning the "kings of the east" (literally, "kings of the sunrise"). Because of its location in the far east and its population, a 200 million man army would be expected to include many from China.

4. What does God do to them? Ezek. 38:18,22. Read also Ezek. 39:1,20. This will be the LAST GREAT REBELLION for 1000 years. (One more will occur 1000 years later. Rev. 20:7,9.)

COMMENT: HOW do WE KNOW IT WILL BE RUSSIA AND CHINA which will have the boldness to come against

Palestine in which Christ's world capital will then be located?

Notice that Gog comes "out of the north parts"—NORTH of PALESTINE! Ezekiel 38:15. Who is Gog? There is a basic KEY to understanding what nations in our day are referred to when they are mentioned in Bible prophecy. If we understand how to use this key, WE CAN KNOW, IN ADVANCE, EXACTLY WHAT THE NATIONS TODAY – Russia, Germany, Turkey, the United States, and many others—WILL DO IN THE TIMES JUST AHEAD OF US! This is vital to know in these end times. What is this key?

The key is this: NATIONS OF BIBLE TIMES NATURALLY GAVE RISE TO NATIONS OF TODAY. Therefore God in prophecy had to use the SAME NAMES WHICH THEY HAD THEN, TO FORE-TELL WHAT THEIR DESCENDANTS IN OUR TIME WOULD DO!

The descendants of these nations have taken other names in modern times, BUT such a small lapse of time has occurred between the bearing of their former names and their present ones that it is NOT AT ALL DIFFICULT, in most cases, to pick up ancient history books and find what each nation's name—its BIBLE NAME—has been!

Thus, knowing a modern nation's BIBLE NAME and knowing the sureness of God's prophecy—knowing what He says WILL happen—WE CAN KNOW EVERY IMPORTANT FUTURE MOVE OF THE NATIONS AROUND US. We shall now see an example of the use of this PRINCIPLE IN ACTION. There will be no guessing. God did not intend that we would have to guess regarding His prophecies, as people today are doing when they seek to interpret them!

Notice that it is Gog and Magog (Ezekiel 38:2) which will come against the nation that Christ's capital will be located in (verse 16). Notice again that Gog and Magog come "OUT OF THE NORTH PARTS" (verse 15)—where Russia, Mongolia and China are today.

Can it be shown that Russia is the nation which will come out of the north to invade Palestine? "From the accounts found among the Arabians, Persians, and Syrians," we learn that these three nations used the names "Yajuj and Majuj" (note the similarity in the names Majuj and Magog) to refer to "all less known barbarous people of the Northwest and Northeast of Asia"—WHERE RUSSIA AND CHINESE MONGOLIA ARE TODAY! (From McClintock and Strong, article "Magog").

Notice that Meshech and Tubal (verse 2) will be associated with them in this invasion. Can we prove these ancient tribes to be also the ancestors of the Russians of today?

Remember, Russia has been formed by the association of a number of great tribes. Professor Sayce says about Meshech and Tubal: "In the Assyrian inscriptions the names appear as Tublâ and Muskâ, and they were known to the classical geographers (Greeks) as Tiberani and Moskhi." After the days of Nebuchadnezzar, the Greeks found them "farther to the north than they had been in the age of the Assyrian monuments. . .they were forced to retreat northward towards the Black Sea, and it was in this region of Asia Minor that Xenophon and his Greek troupes found their scanty remains." (From The Races of the Old Testament). They had migrated NORTH into the land we know as RUSSIA today.

Having **CROSSED INTO THE PLAINS OF RUSSIA** the people of Meshech, called Moskhi by the Greeks, became known as Muskovs. From this word "Muskov" the name of the modern city of **MOSCOW IS DERIVED**. The descendants of Tubal gave their name to the Tobol River and the city of Tobolsk in **ASIATIC RUSSIA**. Thus we have demonstrated by these facts that the nations mentioned in this chapter of Ezekiel's prophecy include the **RUSSIANS AND CHINESE OF TODAY!** It will be Russia and her allies who will come against Palestine after Christ has begun to establish Israel in that land as His model nation.

Christ Will Replace Satan as World Ruler

In Hebrews 2:5 we read this: "For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels." In other words, the Kingdom which Christ will set up on this earth will not be under subjection to fallen angels, such as Satan and his demons. These demons, and the devil who is their head, rule this present earth and sway its inhabitants.

Christ is coming to change this situation. Man has been allowed for 6000 years to experience the effects of his own rule under the sway of Satan. In the coming millennium, he will for the first time see the effect of God's supreme rule over the earth.

1. Who did Christ admit is **THE PRESENT RULER** of this world? Matthew 4:8-9. **SATAN** showed Christ all the kingdoms of the world, and he said to Christ, "All these things I will give You..." Did Christ say they were not Satan's to give?
2. Notice in Ephesians 2:2 that Satan is called "the prince." Has **CHRIST QUALIFIED TO BECOME A PRINCE?** Acts 5:31. Over whom did John say Christ would become ruler over? Revelation 1:5.

3. Does Satan know that his rule of this earth is almost up? Revelation 12:12. When will **SATAN BE DISPOSSESSED** of his rule and **CHRIST** assume his position as **RULER**? Revelation 20:2-4. Doesn't this follow soon after Christ's victory at the Valley of Jehoshaphat?
4. What is another name for Satan? Ephesians 2:2. Has he been deceiving the whole earth? Revelation 12:9. **WHEN SATAN IS SHUT UP IN THE ABYSS WILL IT BE POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO DECEIVE?** Revelation 20:3.
5. How many **SUPREME RULERS** of the earth will there be after Christ has firmly established His rule? Zechariah 14:9.
6. Are the **DEMONS**—wicked angel followers of Satan, who have an unclean spiritual attitude—to be **RESTRAINED** also? Zechariah 13:2.

SUMMARY

CHRIST MUST COME with **GREAT POWER AND GLORY**. He **MUST** supernaturally intervene in the affairs of this world! Nothing less than supernatural force can stop the tide of human self-destruction that is sweeping this earth! Mankind can't stop it!

Only God will have the **POWER** to dispose of Satan who has deceived the inhabitants of the earth all these centuries, who has caused them to violate God's laws unknowingly, or has caused sin to appear so attractive that they were overcome by it. Only **GOD** will have the power to overcome the evil dictators —religious and worldly—who are now rising up, and who, inspired by Satan, are planning to bring the earth under **THEIR** rule regardless of the cost in human lives. **ONLY HE CAN CHANGE HUMAN NATURE**.

ONLY GOD WILL HAVE THE WISDOM to administer the **TERRIBLE PUNISHMENTS** which will come about soon. **ONLY HE** will have the Divine wisdom. He alone will know on whom to administer them. He will know when destruction of vast numbers of human beings by His wrath has proceeded far enough so that only the repentant of all nations are left on earth. With these He will **START A BETTER CIVILIZATION** under a **BETTER FORM OF GOVERNMENT**. All of this is **NOT SOME IDLE PIPE DREAM** conjured up by some uninspired "minister." You **HAVE JUST FINISHED READING IT IN YOUR OWN BIBLE!** **WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?**

No wonder now is not the **ONLY** time of salvation. God says to the people of this nation, "In an acceptable time I

have heard thee, and in a day (not “the day”) of salvation have I helped thee. . .to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages” (Isaiah 49:8, KJV). THE EARTH WILL SOON BE NEARLY DESOLATE due to man’s sins causing God’s bowls of wrath to be poured out upon it. AFTER THIS, THE NEW ORDER WILL BE ESTABLISHED. It is AFTER this that HE WILL REALLY START TO BRING PEOPLE UNDER HIS RULE AND SAVE THEM!

FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW

A HOT WORLD WAR 3 IS COMING!

Make no mistake!—The soon-coming World War 3 will end all wars! It will DECIDE WHO WILL RULE the world.

World War 2 was supposed to have been fought for this purpose, but it did not produce a decisive outcome. The nations know they have the power—and much to spare—to destroy all life from the earth in the form of the Hydrogen Bombs and other devices!

World War 1 of 1914 and World War 2—in which four times as many were killed as in World War 1—were only flashes in the pan! They were only the forerunners of the UTTER DESTRUCTION which is soon to break SUDDENLY upon the nations! The contenders for world rule will not abandon their quest. That’s why God says “WATCH”! (Luke 21:36).

This is a command from God. Let us therefore examine the backgrounds of the ambitious contestants who would rule or ruin this earth. Your very life may well depend upon your being convinced of the deadly seriousness with which gangster nations are out to attain their goal. You need more zeal in studying God’s way of ESCAPE revealed in the coming lessons of the Study The Bible Course.

Here are some amazing excerpts and comments which reveal to you the dogged determination and diabolical cleverness with which each pretender has settled down to attain his aim—kingship over this earth—the office that rightly belongs to Christ!

Germany about to SHOCK the World Again!

Since the above headline was originally written, Germany has shocked the world by rising up from the ruins in WWII and now becoming a major economic and technological power once again.

Down through the ages the Assyrians, the ancestors of modern Germany, called themselves the Herrenvolk—

the “MASTER RACE.” Today the term is still used among themselves. Has today’s Germany given up the idea of achieving this dream?

The keynote of what lies in the Germanic mind was voiced in 1950. Then, according to T.H. Teten’s book *Germany Plots with the Kremlin*, Dr. Adenauer, the leader of Germany, caused much embarrassment by leading a German crowd in singing “Deutschland Uber Alles”—“GERMANY ABOVE ALL OTHERS”—in the presence of Allied representatives. Why was this thought lurking in his mind?

Here are Some Clues to the PRESENT GERMAN ATTITUDE

“No defeat is final. Defeats are simply lessons to be learned in preparation for the next and greater attack,” said German General von Stuelpnagel in 1944. Furthermore, he stated, “In the NEXT WORLD WAR...the same mistake should not be made. The principal ADVERSARY WILL BE THE UNITED STATES, and the entire effort must be concentrated against this country from the beginning. . .our defeat in the present war need not be considered except as an incident in the triumphal march of Germany towards CONQUEST OF THE WORLD”—Deutschland Uber Alles!

Twice already Germany has attempted to seize world rule. And twice Britain, USA, and their allies have prevented her from achieving it. This time she will make sure that the USA is not around!

Adolf Hitler told us of the next step in the carefully laid German military plan to rule the world when he expounded the thesis in *Mein Kampf*. He said that Germany must FIRST DEFEAT THE WEST in order to have a free hand for the “Drang Nach Osten”—the march toward the East—toward Russia! How perfectly all this accords with revealed prophecy! Hitler was following this same plan in the last World War until Russia ceased to supply him with oil to further his war effort and he was forced to turn upon her in an attempt to seize oil from her.

Germany is out to conquer the world. As it is absolutely necessary for YOUR PERSONAL SAFETY that you be convinced on this point let’s examine further overwhelming evidence. Let’s examine the amazing tenacity with which Germany has set out methodically to achieve its goal of world rulership.

Many decades ago leading German industrialists founded a society which they called the PAN GERMAN LEAGUE. Its slogan was “Deutschland uber alles!”—Germany over

all. They utilized the trademark “Made in Germany” as proof of German superiority. Behind their commercial and business methods was a central, PERMANENT strategy—with the GOAL OF CONQUERING THE WORLD!

It was they who were largely responsible for inducing the Kaiser to enter World War 1. It was they who were behind World War 2. Co-operating with the German militarists and the SECRET MOVEMENT started by General Ludendorff, who selected Adolf Hitler as his stooge and protégé, these same industrialists financed the Nazi movement and actually elevated Hitler to power. (Senator Kilgore’s report to the Senate Military Affairs Committee calls attention to this fact.) SOME FELT THAT HITLER WAS MERELY A TOOL. He was the rabble-rouser they needed to sway the masses of German people to get behind their fanatical plot for world rule.

The world heard and saw Hitler. But many of his promoters and backers kept in the background. If Hitler failed in this second round of World War, they planned to let him shoulder the blame before the world, and KEEP THEMSELVES FREE TO SECRETLY PLOT THE THIRD ROUND—WORLD WAR 3! This coming war! While those leaders are now dead, various of their descendants and others still have the same goal.

It was those industrial barons who met together to take action in mid-May, 1943. They knew Hitler’s war was probably lost. They realized the time had come for them to once again go UNDERGROUND—to throw all guilt of World War 2 on Hitler just as they had thrown that of the first round—World War 1—on the Kaiser.

From that time until now German industrialists have led a double life. To the world’s view, they have become merely private business men. BUT SECRETLY THEY HAVE OTHER PLANS! Their job is to keep German industry ready to produce the weapons, munitions, and technologies for the third war. Their mission is to finance the new movement, by whatever new name they may call it, whenever the time is ripe.

Here is a view of how one GREAT INDUSTRIALIST, for an EXAMPLE, has carried out his part in this plan. It is the hoax of multimillionaire industrialist Fritz Thyssen. It is revealed in the book, *The Nazis Go Underground*, written by Curt Riess. At the beginning (note the extreme cleverness) of World War 2, Thyssen was sped into neutral Switzerland proclaiming loudly that Hitler had duped him into financing the Nazi party, and then, once in power, Hitler had double-crossed and confiscated his wealth, and left him poor. The Nazis went through the pretense of removing Thyssen

from their party. Thyssen wrote a book about his “shabby” treatment at their hands. But when the Nazis invaded France later, where Thyssen was, the very Nazis who were supposed to hate him, left him unmolested and soon he was back in Berlin where the Nazis were, living in luxury. The whole RUSE was to deceive the Allied nations into placing confidence in Thyssen in event of an Allied victory so he could supply them with funds for World War 3.

Today, thanks to this deeply-laid plan and others like it, Krupp and many other outstanding German businessmen are actively establishing great factories all over the world to finance World War 3. The Nazi plans are well-laid. (Interestingly, within five minutes of reviewing the above, in 2014, which was written in the 1950s, I, Bob Thiel, walked onto a jet airliner and noticed that the huge automatic walkway had the name ThyssenKrupp—an industrial power that exists to this day.)

MANY OF THE NAZIS WENT UNDERGROUND, MAY 16, 1943!—two years before the war ended! The German generals, scientists, industrialists, bankers, and others, knew that War 2 was lost. So at that time they organized themselves for the future. The most thoroughly organized secret government of modern history began to function—UNDERGROUND! In 1951 Dr. Adenauer admitted the presence of 134 former Nazis, who served under Hitler, in high echelons in his Bonn government.

What about now? Germany is Europe’s biggest economy. It is well recognized that Germany dominates the European Union in many respects. Furthermore, even today various Europeans are WORKING FEVERISHLY on ultramodern weapons and other projects. From the Large Hadron and F.A.I.R. collider projects to the new Galileo “GPS” system to laser weaponry (ELI) to the European Space Agency, the German-dominated European Union is taking militaristic steps. Germany also makes nuclear weaponry for France. In addition to those, the Europeans have control over hundreds of nuclear weapons that the USA has put at their disposal. Europe has more military might at its disposal than most think.

Today you hear much of about the European Union, a potential UNITED STATES OF EUROPE. Where does it fit into Germany’s plan for world conquest?

Dr. Adenauer and his press reveal that Germany regards the creation of a United Europe as the first step in the erection of a Third Power bloc. In 1950 Dr. Adenauer wrote, “A federated Europe will become a Third Force in the world.” Later he said, “No one has more to gain through the unification of Europe than the Germans who

are the most numerous and most dynamic among the nations west of the U.S.S.R. {Russia}.” Dr. Adenauer here showed that GERMANY desired a United States of Europe and points out that it WILL NATURALLY LEAD it once it is formed—in the 21st century, we are seeing the rise of such a German-dominated power.

We know what Germany’s plan is. WE know how the United States of Europe will be used by it to attempt world domination. PROPHECY shows 10 kings—TEN DICTATORS—will arise in Europe and GIVE THEIR POWER TO GERMANY.

You may be saying to yourself, well since most of the above was written in the 1950s, it cannot be true of the Germans in the 21st century. Many believe that Germany has been a reliable ally for decades and would not attempt domination again. You might believe that, and even many Germans and other Europeans believe that, but you would be wrong.

Notice the following prophecy:

5 “Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger
And the staff in whose hand is My indignation.
6 I will send him against an ungodly nation,
And against the people of My wrath
I will give him charge,
To seize the spoil, to take the prey,
And to tread them down like the mire of the streets.
7 Yet he does not mean so,
Nor does his heart think so;
But it is in his heart to destroy,
And cut off not a few nations.
8 For he says,
‘Are not my princes altogether kings? (Isaiah 10:6-8)

Isaiah tells of a time when the end time Assyrian power will be sent against an ungodly (NKJV), “hypocritical” (KJV) nation. The Hebrew word used signifies being “soiled” or impious, and certainly that is now the case for the nation known as the United States. The Snowden leaks of USA espionage have enraged the Germans.

Not only do they feel that the USA has been hypocritical here, they were outraged to learn that according to leaked documents from the National Security Agency (NSA), Germany was one of the most spied upon nations by the USA. Another NSA document said that the only nations that the USA considered to be “close friends” that did not warrant extensive USA espionage was the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand—the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic dominated lands. Germany and others have noticed this and will take steps against them later (cf. Daniel 11:39;

Psalms 83:3-8).

But notice verse 7 of Isaiah 10. It says this “Assyrian” power does not think that it will destroy at the time of the end. Yet, it is in his heart, his history, his outlook on the world to do so.

Why?

Because as verse 8 indicates, he considers that he is part of a master race.

The Vatican Enters the Scene

Does Germany have any plans for receiving the aid of a “Great Church” in helping her achieve world domination? The “Madrid Circular Letter,” which reflects the thinking of those in authority in Germany, states, “The German people, well-trained and steeled under national socialist leadership, are dominated by two sovereign ideas: the concept of a German Reich, and Germany’s mission of leadership in the world. . .the religious tradition embodied in the concept of the Reich, sparks our political mission and is especially attractive within the Catholic world.”

The GERMAN IDEA OF THE ACHIEVEMENT OF WORLD RULE PLEASES THE CATHOLIC WORLD GREATLY! Now let’s see why this is so. It affects our lives—your life—much more than you probably realize!

On February 10, 1952 in his pontifical exhortation, the POPE SAID, “THE WHOLE WORLD MUST BE REBUILT from its foundations.” Secretly the Vatican diplomats have been laying the foundations of a PROGRAM that WILL REMAKE WESTERN CIVILIZATION! It has to be PLANNED SECRETLY so it will not be discovered until it is too late to stop! The Vatican contends that peace can be maintained only by a CATHOLIC-DOMINATED international organization which has IRON TEETH TO CRUSH OPPOSITION.

“This organization,” said Pope Pius in his Christmas message of 1944, “will be vested. . .with supreme authority and POWER TO SMOTHER. . .AGGRESSION.” Note the organization which the pope will invest with this power will have military might enough to quell resistance to the Church. This coming world-ruling organization would therefore be a UNION OF CHURCH AND STATE with the pope, which both biblical and certain Catholic prophecies indicate will be a type of anti-pope and final Antichrist, promoting this (Revelation 13:11-18). The Vatican cannot plan this directly with the Russians, and the United States is not fired with a desire to rule the world that way. But the various Germans and other Europeans have all the qualifications the pope final desires. Germany needs the

man power of the millions of people that the Vatican can throw to her support and the final apostate Church needs the power of the German military might! These things also fit into prophecy completely: In Lesson 3, section 'Gathering at Armageddon,' read question 2. And section 'Results of Christ's Victory,' read questions 4 and 5. TIME IS RUNNING OUT!

The Vatican, consistent with various Catholic "private prophecies" believes that Europe will rise again for a final revival of what has been called "the Holy Roman Empire."

One more thing needs considering. Will GERMANY PLAY ALONG WITH RUSSIA until she can subdue the West? The answer is "yes." In at least six or seven separate instances within the last two hundred and fifty years, in which Germany has turned on the West, she has first made a pact with Russia to make herself safe from the East. Now will be no different.

The events mentioned here are certain to happen. The astounding union of German-dominated United States of Europe with a great church is going to rise up! READ your newspaper—read the news magazines that cover international news. You can see the things described here taking form, day by day. The world will "wonder"—stand aghast—when it sees this union of Church and State appear (Revelation 17:8). You need not stand aghast. Remember, God says: "Watch and pray that you may escape." There is a reason. For God promises escape to His own.

Continue to study these lessons with all diligence. You will grow in grace and knowledge and can have God's protection in escaping the ravages of Hot War 3. But you must also watch world events too so you will be ready!

Important!

FILE these FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW sheets just following LESSON 3. REVIEW them now and then. It is vital to keep these facts constantly in mind. "Watch!"

SHOULD MODERN CHRISTIANS KEEP THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS?



By Bob Thiel

Should Christians keep the Feast of Trumpets, called Rosh Hashanah by most Jews? Do you know what it is? What are some of the things modern Christians learn from keeping it?

The Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hoshana) begins the evening of the first of Tishri (a month that almost always begins in September on the Roman calendar—it is observed from sunset September 24–sunset September 25 in 2014 and September 13–sunset September 14 in 2015).

People in the Church of God have long kept it.

One COG leader, Herbert W. Armstrong, taught:

"AND THE Lord spake . . . saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a Sabbath, a memorial [not a shadow] of blowing of trumpets, an HOLY CONVOCATION. Ye shall do no servile work therein . . ." (Leviticus 23:23-25).

Here is pictured to us that next blessed event in God's redemptive plan, when Christ shall COME again, in clouds with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God (I Thessalonians 4:14-17). It shall be "at the last trump for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall [all] be changed" (I Corinthians 15:52).

Unless Christ returns to resurrect the dead, we would never gain eternal life if there is no resurrection

“then also those which are fallen asleep in Christ have perished” (I Corinthians 15:18).

Christ directly intervenes in world affairs at the seventh or the last trump (Revelation 11:15-19). A trumpet is a symbol of war. He comes in a time of worldwide war when the nations are angry! As soon as the work of gathering in the first fruits (pictured by Pentecost) is completed at the end of this present age, then Christ will begin to set up again the tabernacle of David (Acts 15:16) to set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people (Isaiah 11:11) to search out and to find His lost sheep that the ministers of the churches have failed to search out and save during this period (Ezekiel 34:1-14).

Notice exactly when this takes place! “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they [Israel] shall come which were ready to perish...and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem” (Isaiah 27:13).

When will Israel be regathered? At the sound of the trump at the Second Coming of Christ. Because the churches have forgotten the Festival of Trumpets, many think that the return of a part of the Jews to the Holy Land and the setting up of a nation called Israel now is the fulfillment of this prophecy!

Christ’s direct intervention in world affairs will be the next event in the plan of redemption. (Armstrong HW. Pagan Holidays- or God’s Holy Days-Which?).

The Feast of Trumpets certainly points to the blowing of trumpets and the Bible shows a variety of prophetic events will accompany the blasts of various trumpets.

The Old Testament

The Hebrew scriptures state:

2 The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts...²⁴ In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a sabbath-rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation (Leviticus 23:2,24).

1 ‘And in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work. For you it is a day of blowing the trumpets. 2 You shall offer a burnt offering as a sweet aroma to the Lord: one young bull, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year, without blemish. 3 Their grain offering shall be fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths

of an ephah for the bull, two-tenths for the ram, 4 and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs; 5 also one kid of the goats as a sin offering, to make atonement for you; 6 besides the burnt offering with its grain offering for the New Moon, the regular burnt offering with its grain offering, and their drink offerings, according to their ordinance, as a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the Lord. (Numbers 29:1-6)

4 They also kept the Feast of Tabernacles, as it is written, and offered the daily burnt offerings in the number required by ordinance for each day. 5 Afterwards they offered the regular burnt offering, and those for New Moons and for all the appointed feasts of the Lord that were consecrated, and those of everyone who willingly offered a freewill offering to the Lord. 6 From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the Lord, although the foundation of the temple of the Lord had not been laid. (Ezra 3:4-6)

(Note: Because animal sacrifices are past in Christ per Hebrews 10:3-10, we Christians do not offer those - we are to offer ourselves as living sacrifices (Romans 12:1). However traditionally an offering is taken up on this day consistent with what the Apostle Paul taught in 2 Corinthians 9:6-8, as well as Deuteronomy 16:16 as Ezra is tying the first day of the seventh month in with the Feast of Tabernacles.)

In our household, we traditionally have the youngest child blow a trumpet at the start of this Holy Day as well as throughout it.

The seventh month is called Tishri in Hebrew and the Feast of Trumpets is referred to as the first of Tishri in some Jewish literature. Although the Jews now call it Rosh Hoshana, that was probably not its original name:

“Rosh Hashana, which literally means head of the year” {it was} “not called Rosh Hashanah until Talmudic times” (Kramer, Amy J. Rosh Hashana Origins. Copyright © 1998-1999 Everything Jewish, Inc. http://www.everythingjewish.com/RoshH/RH_origins.htm 9/16/04).

(The time of the primary development of the Talmud was 70-500 A.D.) Since the terms ‘head’ and ‘year’ are not in the Old Testament passages about it, it appears that the COG term for it ‘Feast of Trumpets’ appears to be more biblically-based than the relatively-new Jewish term ‘Rosh Hashanah’ (which has numerous spellings).

It is not totally clear how or when the Jews tied together the “Book of Life” and the Feast of Trumpets, but they did

some time ago.

From my reading in the Talmud, it appears that since many Jewish leaders have taught that the creation was most likely in the Fall, rather than in the Spring. This seems to be related to an interpretation of Genesis 1:11. In that verse, when God states, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit," they conclude this would be towards the early Fall, for that is when there is both green grass and fruit on trees. Jewish leaders believed that the Feast of Trumpets symbolized the beginning of creation, and hence by, inference, life..

The Book of Life

The Talmud itself essentially concludes that the fact of the three different trumpet blasts in Numbers 10:1-10, represents three books, one of them being the Book of Life.

The first biblical allusion to the Book of Life appears to be Exodus 32:32-34,

"Yet now, if You will forgive their sin--but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written."

And the LORD said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book. Now therefore, go, lead the people to the place of which I have spoken to you. Behold, My Angel shall go before you. Nevertheless, in the day when I visit for punishment, I will visit punishment upon them for their sin."

Moses knew that he was mentioned in this book. It also appears from the above passage that God is speaking both about a book and a day of punishment.

The apparently same book is mentioned in Psalm 69:27-28 where both concepts are also discussed:

27 Charge them with crime upon crime; do not let them share in your salvation. 28 May they be blotted out of the book of life and not be listed with the righteous (NIV).

Furthermore, the same book may be mentioned in three other Psalms:

7 Then I said, "Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. 8 I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart." (Psalms 40:7-8).

8 You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book? (Psalm 56:8).

16 Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them (Psalm 139:16).

In Malachi 3:16 it states:

Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, And the LORD listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the LORD And who meditate on His name.

These verses show that those that fear the LORD are mentioned in a book, but those that are not righteous are not in it.

In Isaiah 27:13 it is written:

13 So it shall be in that day: The great trumpet will be blown; They will come, who are about to perish in the land of Assyria, And they who are outcasts in the land of Egypt, And shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

These passages appear to be referring to the last trumpet--the one signaling the return of Christ and the establishing of the Kingdom of God.

The New Testament

Some Jewish traditions about the meaning of the Feast of Trumpets have similarities to what the New Testament seems to teach about it.

In addition to discussing the Book of Life on that Day, Jewish tradition says Rosh Hashana:

"Rosh Hashana...is the Day of Judgement...It is the Day of Shofar Blowing..." (The Jewish Holiday of Rosh Hashanah. High Holy Days on the Net. <http://www.holidays.net/highholydays/rosh.htm> verified 9/12/07).

The New Testament frequently mentions the blowing of trumpets.

Jesus taught:

30...and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other (Matthew 24:30-31).

This is similar to what the Apostle Paul taught:

16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

So both Jesus and Paul taught that the saints would be gathered when a particular trumpet sound goes forth. And that Jesus will come with a trumpet blast.

Which trumpet?

The last trumpet:

51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. 52 For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed (1 Corinthians 15:51-52).

Because this is referring to the last trumpet, scripture clearly does not support the concept of a pre-tribulation rapture, like many evangelicals believe in.

Although his writings are not part of the New Testament, Polycarp was a disciple of the Apostle John and looked forward to the fulfillment of this trumpet as he wrote:

Wherefore, girding up your loins," "serve the Lord in fear" and truth, as those who have forsaken the vain, empty talk and error of the multitude, and "believed in Him who raised up our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, and gave Him glory," and a throne at His right hand. To Him all things" in heaven and on earth are subject. Him every spirit serves. He comes as the Judge of the living and the dead. His blood will God require of those who do not believe in Him. But He who raised Him up from the dead will raise up us also, if we do His will, and walk in His commandments, and love what He loved (Polycarp. Letter to the Philippians, chapter II. Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 1 as edited by Alexander Roberts & James Donaldson. American Edition, 1885.)

This last trumpet is in 1 Corinthians 15 is the seventh trumpet in Revelation 11:15,

15 Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"

Thus, trumpets, at least prophetically, should be important to Christians

The New Testament and the Book of Life

Whose names are in the Book of Life?

Christians and various ones from Old Testament times.

Jesus taught:

18 And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. 20 Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." (Luke 10:18-20)

Paul writes:

3 And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life (Philippians 4:3).

22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect (Hebrews 12:22-23).

John recorded:

5 He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels (Revelation 3:5).

Thus, it is the saints whose names are written in the Book of Life. And the saints are those that are resurrected at the last trumpet.

Other passages in the Book of Revelation mention that those that worship the beast (13:1,8;17:8), those that are involved with abominations (21:27), and those who take away words from Revelation (22:19), will NOT be among those whose names are written in the Book of Life.

The Book of Revelation has Many Trumpets Blown

The Talmud teaches that certain Old Testament passages (Numbers 10:1-10) related to blowing a trumpet to sound an alarm are also related to the Feast of Trumpets. Since three different types of trumpet blasts are mentioned in that passage, Jewish scholars have concluded that they

represent three books that will be opened on the first day of Tishri. The Talmud also considers that the Feast of Trumpets to be a time of judgment.

Interestingly, it is clear from the Book of Revelation that seven trumpets will be blown (8:2), punishment comes upon those who are not protected by God (9:4), and then judgment will come (11:18).

Here is information on the first six trumpets (italics shown below are not in the Bible, but were added by commentators/editors):

8:1 When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. 2 And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets. 3 Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand. 5 Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake. 6 So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

First Trumpet: Vegetation Struck

7 The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.

Second Trumpet: The Seas Struck

8 Then the second angel sounded: And something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. 9 And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

Third Trumpet: The Waters Struck

10 Then the third angel sounded: And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. 11 The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter.

Fourth Trumpet: The Heavens Struck

12 Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night. 13 And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!"

Fifth Trumpet: The Locusts from the Bottomless Pit

9:1 Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. 2 And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. 3 Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. 4 They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. 5 And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. 6 In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them. 7 The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. 8 They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. 9 And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. 10 They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months. 11 And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon. 12 One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things.

Sixth Trumpet: The Angels from the Euphrates

13 Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, 14 saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." 15 So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind. 16 Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred

million; I heard the number of them. 17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone. 18 By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed — by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths. 19 For their power is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents, having heads; and with them they do harm. 20 But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. 21 And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts. (Revelation 8:1-13, 9:1-21)

So, a lot of trumpets are blown in the Book of Revelation, and a lot were to be blown on the Feast of Trumpets (Leviticus 23:24)--hopefully many can see the connection.

But the most important, in a sense, trumpet associated with the Feast of Trumpets, could be the last, the seventh one. Here is what Revelation teaches about that (again, italics not in the Bible, but added by commentators/editors)

Seventh Trumpet: The Kingdom Proclaimed

15 Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" 16 And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying: "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. 18 The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth." 19 Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail. (Revelation 11:15-19)

The coming Kingdom of God is some of what Jesus wants His servants to proclaim now and then the end will come

(Matthew 24:14).

Did Early Christians Observe the Feast of Trumpets?

Although the observance of the Feast of Trumpets was not specified, as such, in the New Testament, in addition to teaching about what it meant, both Jesus and the Apostle Paul kept it.

The Bible teaches that Jesus kept the Law and did not sin (Hebrews 4:15), hence He kept all the Fall Holy Days including the Feast of Trumpets.

Perhaps it should be noted that the Apostle Paul must have observed the Feast of Trumpets after his conversion to Christianity.

Notice some statements from the Apostle Paul:

17...Men and brethren, though I have done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers (Acts 28:17)

4 though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: 5 circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; 6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. (Philippians 3:4-6)

Since Paul kept the customs of his people, he, too, kept all the Fall Holy Days including the Feast of Trumpets. If not, he could not have made that statement which is in Acts 28:17 nor the one being blameless in the law in Philippians 3:4-6.

Some may wonder if after the time of Paul, whether early Christians observed the Feast of Trumpets. And the answer is yes, the faithful Christians did. And they did in Gentile-dominated areas.

For example, Polycarp of Smyrna kept the Fall Holy Days:

I will give the narration in order, thus coming down to the history of the blessed Polycarp... So also he pursued the reading of the Scriptures from childhood to old age, himself reading in church; and he recommended it to others, saying that the reading of the law and the prophets was the forerunner of grace, preparing and making straight the ways of the Lord, that is the hearts, which are like tablets whereon certain harsh

beliefs and conceptions that were written before perfect knowledge came, are through the inculcation of the Old Testament, and the correct interpretation following thereupon, first smoothed and levelled, that, when the Holy Spirit comes as a pen, the grace and joy of the voice of the Gospel and of the doctrine of the immortal and heavenly Christ may be inscribed on them. And he said that they could not otherwise receive the impression of the seal which is given by baptism and engrave and exhibit the form conveyed in it, unless the wax were first softened and filled the deep parts. So also he thought that the hearts of the hearers ought to be softened and yield to the impress of the Word. For he said that it unfolded and opened, like closed doors, the minds of recent comers; and accordingly the prophet was bidden by God, Cry out mightily and spare not, Raise thy voice as a trumpet. What must one say, when even He that was gentler than all men so appeals and cries out at the feast of Tabernacles? For it is written; And on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried saying, If any man thirsteth, let him come to Me and drink. (Pionius, Life of Polycarp (1889) from J. B. Lightfoot, The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 3.2, pp.488-506.)

Polycarp, according to the above, seems to have endorsed the Fall Holy Day season which begins with the Feast of Trumpets, includes the Feast of Tabernacles, and ends on The Last Great Day.

Also in Asia Minor, it is recorded that late into the fourth century, John Chrysostom condemned professors of Christ who observed the Feast of Trumpets:

The festivals of the pitiful and miserable Jews are soon to march upon us one after the other and in quick succession: the feast of Trumpets, the feast of Tabernacles, the fasts. There are many in our ranks who say they think as we do. Yet some of these are going to watch the festivals and others will join the Jews in keeping their feasts and observing their fasts. I wish to drive this perverse custom from the Church right now...If the Jewish ceremonies are venerable and great, ours are lies...Does God hate their festivals and do you share in them? He did not say this or that festival, but all of them together. (John Chrysostom. Homily I Against the Jews I:5;VI:5;VII:2. Preached at Antioch, Syria in the Fall of 387 AD. Medieval Sourcebook: Saint John Chrysostom (c.347-407) : Eight Homilies Against the Jews. Fordham University. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/chrysostom-jews6.html> 12/10/05).

The wicked and unclean fast of the Jews is now at our

doors. Thought it is a fast, do not wonder that I have called it unclean...But now that the devil summons your wives to the feast of the Trumpets and they turn a ready ear to this call, you do not restrain them. You let them entangle themselves in accusations of ungodliness, you let them be dragged off into licentious ways. (John Chrysostom. Homily II Against the Jews I:1; III:4. Preached at Antioch, Syria on Sunday, September 5, 387 A.D.).

Now, while many of John Chrysostom's arguments are in error, the fact is that he would not have given at least two messages related to it if none who professed Christ did not observe the Feast of Trumpets and the other Fall Holy Days.

Additionally, supporters of the Church of Rome, Jerome and Epiphanius, near that same time wrote that the faithful, who they considered to be "the Nazarenes" kept the Fall Holy Days.

Furthermore, notice that the Sabbath-keepers in Transylvania in the 1500s (and probably later) kept the Fall Holy Days such as the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Trumpets (called Day of Remembrance below):

The Sabbatarians viewed themselves as converted Gentiles..They held to the biblical holidays...The Day of Atonement was a day of fasting, although they emphasized that penitence is more easily achieved by a peaceful and quiet meditation on the law and one's life than by fasting. The Day of Remembrance (New Year, which they celebrated in the Fall of the year) was the day on which they thanked God especially for the creation of the universe. There is no mention of circumcision, so it is unlikely that they practiced circumcision (Liechty D. Sabbatarianism in the Sixteenth Century. Andrews University Press, Berrien Springs (MI), 1993, pp. 61-62).

People attempting to be faithful to the Bible have observed the Feast of Trumpets throughout history and we in the Continuing Church of God continue to do so in the 21st century.

Continuing Church of God Statement of Beliefs on the Feast of Trumpets

In its Statement of Beliefs, the Continuing Church of God states:

The Feast of Trumpets helps picture the blowing of the seven trumpets in the Book of Revelation

(Revelation 8,9,11:15-18), including “the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (1 Corinthians 15:52) “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first” (1 Thessalonians 4:16). Every seven years, a year of land-rest and debt release begins with this day (Leviticus 25:1-7; Deuteronomy 15:7-11).

The Feast of Trumpets is important and should be considered to be highly relevant for those who profess Christ.

The Bible clearly teaches that Jesus will come with the sound of a trumpet blast (Matthew 24:30-31; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17), and calls that the “last trump” (1 Corinthians 15:51-52). Those that do not observe the biblical holy days, simply cannot properly understand biblical prophecy, and many who call themselves evangelicals have accepted a pre-tribulation rapture theory that cannot occur, as 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 cannot occur until the last trumpet is blown (1 Corinthians 15:51-52).

The Bible does support the view that those currently listed in the Book of Life will be resurrected at the last trumpet (1 Corinthians 15:51-52), which is pictured by the Feast of Trumpets (that occurs on Tishri 1).

Early professors of Christ, in Gentile regions, observed the Feast of Trumpets. Faithful Christians still do so to this day.

Those of us in the Continuing Church of God are blessed as we believe the New Testament and observe the biblical Holy Days - thus we can have a more accurate (cf. Acts 18:26) understanding of what God’s plan truly is.

FAITH: WHAT IS IT? HOW IS FAITH SHOWN?

By Bob Thiel

Jesus said, that along with mercy and judgment, faith was one of the weightier, more important, matters of the law (Matthew 23:23).

One day:

5...the apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith” (Luke 17:5).

Instead of actually telling them how to increase their faith, Jesus suggested that they had only a little.

But in other parts of the Bible, He and others gave more details about how faith could be increased. This short paper will discuss several aspects of faith. To cover all would be too difficult to cover. For one reason, the NKJV of the Bible has the English word ‘faith’ 243 times in the New Testament (twice in the Old) and the word faithful 53 times in the NT (and 32 in the OT).

What is the Bible Definition of Faith?

The Bible gives a definition of faith:

1 Now faith is the foundation of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. 2 For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. 3 By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible...6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is rewarding those who diligently seek Him “ (Hebrews 11:1-3,6, modified NKJV).

Author’s Note: The preceding was modified as the KJV and NKJV translate the Greek word hypostasis as substance but it literally means under (hypo) stability (stasis) or foundation. Hence, faith is the underlying stability that God’s people are to have.

Do you really believe that God is rewarding those He has called and chosen, those who seek Him? If so, how does that affect your life? The Greek word most commonly translated in the New Testament as faith is πίστις, which is transliterated into English as pistis. BibleSoft defines it to mean:

πίστις pistis (pis'- tis) persuasion, i.e. credence; moral conviction (of religious truth, or the truthfulness of God or a religious teacher), especially reliance upon Christ for salvation; abstractly, constancy in such profession; by extension, the system of religious (Gospel) truth itself: (Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright © 1994, 2003, 2006 Biblesoft, Inc. and International Bible Translators, Inc.)

By system of truth, at least one COG minister felt that it included the concept of the work, and since Christians are part of the work of God, it is fair to say that faith is part of the work. And it certainly does take significant faith at times to do the work. Notice something that Christians are supposed to do:

3...contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. (Jude 3)

Jude is writing to Christians, those who have been called and chosen (1 Corinthians 1:26-28; Matthew 22:14). We are not just to have faith, but promote it (Matthew 24:14; 28:19-20). And that is what we in the Continuing Church of God are striving to do.

Show Faith By Doing, Not Just Claiming to Believe

Paul wrote:

7 "For we walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7).

In practical terms, this means that we live God's way of life even when we have trials and temptations, when things seem almost hopeless, or when others try to deceive us. Paul also wrote:

"Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law" (Romans 3:31).

Furthermore, James wrote:

17 Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

18 But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe — and tremble! 20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? 21

Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? 22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? 23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God. 24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

25 Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?

26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. (James 2:17-26)

Thus faith goes beyond just believing. Living faith includes action that God approves. Not only keeping the Sabbath or Feast of Tabernacles when it seems difficult, but to tithe, avoid pagan holidays like Christmas, and to be honest in a dishonest society. But also to love those who do not love you (Matthew 5:44-48).

Jesus taught:

48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect. (Matthew 5:48)

We are not saved by works, but by faith:

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

Notice the Bible shows that although we are saved by grace, even that is the gift of God. Also notice that we were created in Christ Jesus for good works.

The Called and Chosen are to be Faithful

While close to all truly in the Church of God believe that they have been called and chosen, all should realize that they are also to be faithful. When Jesus returns, notice who is with Him:

14... He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful. (Revelation 17:14)

We who are called and chosen need to remain faithful. We are not just to obey God, we need to have faith that His ways are best for us.

Notice two other passages of scripture:

18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. (Romans 8:18-19)

28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28-29)

When things go wrong, we need faith to endure to the end.

Faith vs. Feeling

Many confuse feelings with faith. While the faithful should have a godly confidence, faith is not really an emotion to be temporarily worked up.

Now, it is true if Satan is bothering one, immediate action should be taken:

7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. (James 4:7-8)

5..."God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, 7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. 9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. 10 But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. (1 Peter 5:5-10)

And taking those biblical actions should increase faith. But that is not the same as some type of emotional session to temporarily make someone feel that they have faith.

The Just Shall Live By Faith

Christians are chosen to become rich in faith:

5 Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?

(James 2:5)

The Bible, in three places teaches the just shall live by faith.

The first time is Habakkuk 2:4:

4 Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith.

The contrast between the proud and the just indicates that the faithful are not among the proud, but among the upright. The proud have too much faith in themselves.

Paul wrote:

11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "the just shall live by faith." 12 Yet the law is not of faith, but "the man who does them shall live by them. (Galatians 3:11-12)

This last verse shows that while the law is not faith, the faithful will keep it.

In Romans 1:17-19, the Apostle Paul wrote:

17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.

Regarding righteousness of God, Psalm 119:172 states:

172 My tongue shall speak of Your word, For all Your commandments are righteousness.

Hebrews says this about some of the just that were faithful:

13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them. (Hebrews 11:13-16)

So the faithful, while living God's way of life on Earth, are focused on the hope of their future reward with God. They

“seek first the kingdom” (Matthew 6:33). But also on Earth they keep the commandments:

12 Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. (Revelation 14:12)

But it is not always easy to be part of the faithful. The expression ‘patience of the saints’ indicates great difficulty at that time.

Recall that the Bible ties faith in with hope, “faith is the foundation of things hoped for.” Hope is something that we need to have:

5 And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. 16 And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men. (Acts 24:15-16 KJV)

Not only is hope to be exercised, so essentially is faith. One exercises faith by living by it. And this is not simply a ‘blind faith.’ Notice that the Bible teaches:

21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. 22 Abstain from all appearance of evil. (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 KJV)

The Bible teaches that one should be able to prove that there is a God:

20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, (Romans 1:20-21, NKJV)

Of course, we must also look beyond the physical:

16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

By living according to faith, one also helps prove that the commands and instructions in the word of God are true - Christians do not simply have a blind, illogical, or emotional faith. Faith is real - it is the substance of things hoped for

(Hebrews 11:1).

Notice something else that the Apostle Paul wrote:

12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. (1 Timothy 6:12)

The called are to have faith and the examples of those before us should help. When I read some of the lies on the internet about me, or if you learn of some of them, remember what Jesus and Stephen the martyr said:

11 “Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. 12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. (Matthew 5:11-12)

51 “You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you. 52 Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? (Acts 7:51-52)

Jesus is saying that the examples of those who went before us should help us understand what happens to us today. And Stephen made it clear that religious leaders often would not listen to God’s prophets.

Faith Comes By Hearing the Word of God from Those God Has Sent to Preach

Faith is a foundational doctrine:

1 Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God (Hebrews 6:1)

Where does faith come from?

Paul wrote:

2 Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? (Galatians 3:2).

Paul also wrote:

6 But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way...8 “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach)...13 For “whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.” How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him

of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!" But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?" So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed" (Romans 10:6,8,13-18).

He then said that part of Israel's problem was disobedience (vs.21). So Paul makes it clear that for people to have faith, they need to listen to the preachers God has sent. These preachers must be true to the word of God (vs.17). Since hearing comes "by the word of God," this article, most of the sermons, and most of the other information we in the Continuing Church of God put forth extensively quotes the Bible, the word of God.

The importance of preaching and the word of God is confirmed in the following account from the Book of Acts:

10 Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men" (Acts 17:10-12).

Searching the scriptures daily is, thus, also helpful in increasing faith. However, some feel that is all they need to do.

God Will Provide What We Need IF We Put Him First and Have Faith

Many who are not called and chosen worry about many matters. Jesus said that His followers do not have to be like that:

24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

25 "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap

nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

28 "So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; 29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

31 "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. (Matthew 6:24-34)

Do you have faith in God's promises? Jesus said that there were those of little faith, do you want to be considered that way by Jesus?

Comments on Faith

Increasing faith takes a lifetime. Sometimes it seems quite difficult. There are so many aspects of it, that they cannot be covered in a short article. But from the Bible we see that those called of God had faith and lived by faith. That faith is the substance of things hoped for. That faith came by hearing the word of God from the preachers that God sent. That the faithful searched the scriptures to be sure that the preachers were of God. That the faithful were obedient, that they did not forsake the assembling of themselves together, that they exhorted one another, that they prayed, and that they fasted (cf. Matthew 17:20-21).

Faith is a gift of God (Ephesians 2:8) and important aspect of the law (Matthew

23:23). The just are to live by faith (Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11).

The Bible shows that the faithful have demonstrated their faith by keeping the commandments and otherwise doing what God wanted them to do, even while living in an ungodly world.

By believing God and doing all these things, faith can be increased. Please strive to be one that really has faith when Jesus returns.

What is FAITH?

By Herbert W. Armstrong

WHY PEOPLE LACK FAITH

And now, very briefly, WHY don't we have FAITH, and how may we get it, and how may it be increased? So many say, "Well, I have no impression -- I have no feeling, no conviction -- that I shall get the answer."

They want to wait until they get a certain CONVICTION, a certain FEELING, a sort of assurance they can FEEL--before they really believe they shall have the answer.

But THAT is not faith!

That is FEELING!

Your feeling, your convictions, your impressions, has absolutely not one thing or the other to do with FAITH. FAITH HAS ONLY TO DO WITH GOD'S WORD! The one question is, Has God promised it in the Bible? If He has, then probabilities, possibilities, feelings, convictions, impressions, have nothing whatsoever to do with it. God has a thousand ways we know nothing of, of answering and providing whatever He has promised. We don't need to see HOW He is going to do it.

And that's another thing--He almost never will do it the WAY we expect. So don't try to figure out how it is possible for God to do it. You are trusting in SUPER-

NATURAL POWER! Then BELIEVE in that power. God works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform. What He has promised, He will perform; but He will do it HIS way, and in HIS TIME. Leave all that to HIM and just TRUST HIM. Rely upon His word.

God's GIFT

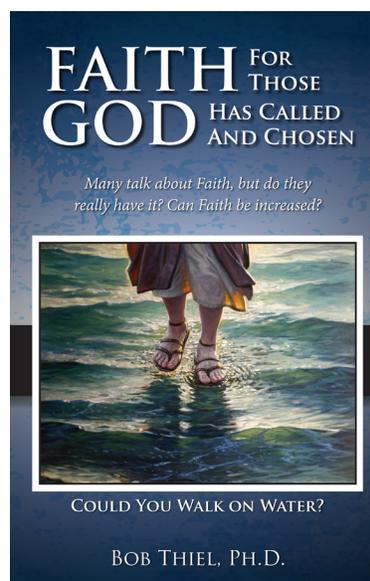
And let us remember, FAITH is the GIFT OF GOD.

So many think that everything else that comes from God is His gift, but the FAITH required to receive these things is something we ourselves must somehow work up, or strain and strive for. But we have to just relax and TRUST GOD, even for the FAITH by which we receive everything else! (Eph. 2:8).

In Revelation 14:12 is a description of the true Church of THIS DAY. Those in this Church have the FAITH OF JESUS. Notice, the FAITH OF JESUS! It is not just our faith in HIM, but His faith--the very faith with which He performed His miracles--placed in us and acting in us.

How can you get it? Draw closer to God. Get to know God. Surrender all the way to HIM, and do His will. And then PRAY. YOU get to know Him in PRAYER. We are too close to the material things. Through PRAYER, much more prayer, you can come closer to GOD and the spiritual things. And what a happy, joyous experience it is, once you have really done it!

Faith is the gift of God (Ephesians 2:8), but it is a gift that Christians can develop. Not through emotional appeals, but through living as Jesus lived and trusting God to see us through tests and trials. Feelings can be deceptive, faith is true.



This booklet and others are available online at www.ccoq.org/booklets

THE FINAL PHASE OF THE WORK: REACHING AFRICA

By Bob Thiel



Africa Conference, Nairobi, Kenya

Where should the Continuing Church of God go?

Jesus taught:

“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20)

He also taught:

14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come. (Matthew 24:14)

So, what does that have to do with Africa?

Well, quite a bit as that is one of the places where Jesus has a lot of disciples. Unlike places such as Europe and North America, internet access is much more limited in Africa, so to better fulfil Matthew 24:14 and Matthew 28:19-20, a conference for Church of God leaders in East Africa was held, after a brief stop in the United Kingdom.

I was able to baptize a man from Mozambique in London on Friday (March 29, 2014) and then conduct Sabbath services for the first time for the Continuing Church of God (CCOG) in the United Kingdom on Saturday. On Sunday morning I flew from the London airport to Nairobi, Kenya.

Late Sunday night, Regional Pastor Evans Ochieng, and his wife Rose (who is a deaconess) met me at the Nairobi airport. We went into Nairobi together.

Leadership Conference in Nairobi

Monday, Pastor Evans Ochieng and I met on a variety of matters pertaining to the work in Kenya and East Africa. A printer from Nairobi met with us and we discussed our literature needs and negotiated prices for magazines and booklets.

Later, church leaders from all around Kenya began to arrive Monday evening, and we met with some of them then. Tuesday, two men came to join us from Tanzania.

Although most leaders had some affiliation with the Continuing Church of God, none had met me prior to the conference. Leaders from groups not affiliated with the Continuing Church of God were also invited and attended.

The conference took place in the Karibu Hotel in Nairobi Kenya. Karibu is a Kiswahili word meaning “welcome,” and we welcomed leaders from all over Kenya as well as from Tanzania. Nearly all attendees had to travel great distances via buses to attend.

Elders, deacons, deaconesses, and local hosts attended the conference. There were a total of 34 leaders in attendance. These leaders represented over 400 congregants, not all of which were part of the Continuing Church of God.

In Kenya, in accordance with Jesus’ words for “teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you,” many subjects were covered from explaining it is all about love to church history to the Godhead to the date & time for Passover to marriage & divorce to baptism to tithing to prophecy to the final phase of the work. There are many physical needs in Kenya, and we also attempted to address some of them.

The conference was held on Tuesday and Wednesday, with after conference meetings lasting to almost midnight. The conference itself was a major success.

Many left Thursday morning to take the long (up to ten hour) bus rides back to their homes. Some stayed later, and I have had meetings all day and into the evening with them. Because of airline issues and mechanical problems, it took me five jet planes, four vehicles, and 50 hours to travel as directly home as the airlines would allow.

Laborers for the Harvest

Brethren, I have repeatedly asked for you to follow Jesus’ admonition to:

38 Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out

laborers into His harvest. (Matthew 9:38)

Well, at this conference in Nairobi, I met many current and potential laborers for the harvest. The conference provided additional training to them so that they can assist the work.

Leaders once part of GCG, LCG, UCG, WCG, COGALC, COGIT, COGTE, CG7, SDA, and/or VWCG, but now part of CCOG also attended. This was the first time I had been able to meet any of them in person (some had email contacts with me prior).

As far as leaders new to the CCOG, after the conference, some later asked to be with CCOG. We (myself and/or Evans Ochieng) discussed differences in the governance, prophetic understandings, and the work between CCOG and some other groups. And we encouraged all who had interest to study and understand our Statement of Beliefs, which we are hoping to translate into at least two more African-languages--Lua and Ekegusii (also called Kikisii). Our Statement of Beliefs is currently available in English, Kiswahili, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese and Tagalog (a Filipino language).

Because of the conference, ministerial visits, our beliefs, and our literature, those affiliated with CCOG has increased. CCOG now has 30 or so congregations in East Africa. We have 500+ people affiliated with the CCOG in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda.

CCOG leaders at the conference showed a tremendous appreciation for the depth of the doctrines, church history, prophetic, and other topics covered. Their discernment of various details related to CCOG and the final phase of the work was impressive. Many in Africa seem to have much more insight into spiritual matters than others elsewhere and my hope and prayer is that those outside of Africa will be like them, search the scriptures to see that what we teach is so (cf. Acts 17:10-11), and have the proper zeal to support the final phase of the work. Many also noted that a certain boldness in proclamation was needed, that they did not see this in other groups claiming to be COG, but did see it in the Continuing Church of God.

Evans Ochieng commented that the unity of the COG as well as much doctrinal, historical, and prophetic detail has been restored in Africa because of the CCOG. I personally was impressed at how many of them explained the depth that they had studied CCOG literature and why they concluded that only CCOG could be leading the final phase of the work.

Plans for the Work in Africa

On this trip, I carried as many Bibles, Bible News Prophecy magazines, and new church history booklets as the standard weight limits allowed into Kenya. So much so, that both suitcases seem to have sustained some damage from the weight on them. I intentionally brought light-weight luggage in order to maximize the amount of literature I could bring with me. The new church history booklet was a hit at the conference.

I also brought a new laptop for Pastor Evans Ochieng as well as two CCOG festival banners that can be used for the Feast of Tabernacles. Having a computer should aid in his managing various aspects of the work in Africa, including literature production.

Because of the tremendous needs in this region, we also sent many Bibles, songbooks, prophetic books, magazines, and history booklets to arrive after the conference to Pastor Ochieng and others in Africa. There is tremendous poverty in this part of the world, and many lack their own Bibles or electronic access to scripture, that us sending Bibles and other literature can help remedy.

Our members there face great adversities from their extended families and society when they leave the religions of their families to embrace the truth of the Bible and live as a real Christian. Their willingness to suffer persecution and sacrifice for the truth and the work should be an example to all who wish to believe that they are Philadelphian (Revelation 3:7-13) Christians.

George Lemi, a CCOG group leader in Tanzania, and our primary translator of literature into Kiswahili, was able to attend the conference in Nairobi, Kenya. We discussed with him and others plans to greatly increase CCOG congregants in Tanzania. We also discussed plans to do so in Uganda and elsewhere.

At the conference, I noted that many of the leaders spoke two or three languages (normally English, Kiswahili, and/or their tribal language).

Nearly all in Kenya are comfortable with the English language. Most of those in Kenya and Tanzania are also comfortable in Kiswahili. Yet, in those areas, as well as Uganda, many are more comfortable in their native tribal languages. As the bulk of those with the CCOG are comfortable with the Lua language, I proposed to the leaders that we begin to translate the Statement of Beliefs of the Continuing Church of God into Lua, produce a songbook in the Lua language, our Continuing History of the Church of God booklet into Lua, and ultimately, our

Bible News Prophecy magazine into Lua.

We currently produce our Bible News Prophecy magazine in the English, Kiswahili, Mandarin Chinese, Tagalog, and Spanish languages. Although our songbook, The Bible Hymnal, was originally just produced in English, prior to the conference we had begun a project to start to produce an edition in Kiswahili that hopefully should be available by the time you read this. A songbook in the Lua language is now in progress and hopefully something will be ready before the Feast of Tabernacles in 2014.

During the conference, I laid out plans for reaching Africa. This included going over how our current internet sites, field ministry, and radio interviews cover this region of the world. I also revealed our plans for an Africa specific website, which is expected to have our materials online in at least three languages, with other languages probable in the future. I laid out that we should have congregation locations, leaders emails, and even photographs of meeting sites so that it would be easier for interested individuals to attend with CCOG.

The leaders from Kenya and Tanzania were supportive of the plans and seemed impressed that the CCOG was truly interested in Africa and its part in the work.

A Door That is in the Process of Opening Even Further

Although at this time, relatively few in Kenya and Tanzania have direct access to the internet without going to an internet café (which few can afford), I noticed that nearly all had cellular telephones.

Once “smart phones” become popular in Kenya (I had not noticed any while there), we should be able to reach many, many more than we have been able to over the internet. Our plans for the internet and congregations should be ready by the time many of those in East Africa will have additional abilities to access them. This “door” is opened for Philadelphians (Revelation 3:7-8) to proclaim the gospel (cf. Acts 14:28, 1 Corinthians 16:9; 2 Corinthians 2:12) of the kingdom (Matthew 24:14) is being opened more for us and we expect to go through it to reach even more. Please pray that God will more fully open this door for us (cf. Colossians 4:3).

Many aspects of the final phase of the work are right now going on behind the scenes, and like the situation in Kenya, will be ready when the time is right for others to hear the message of the Kingdom of God,

Africa is somewhat functioning as another “proving ground” that the way this work is being led is the way that Jesus Christ wants us to. We in CCOG also expect to lead what the Bible refers to as the “short work” in Romans 9:28 and many steps are being taken related to that as well.

Additionally, from a physical perspective, there are tremendous needs in Africa and we are always trying to figure out how to best serve the needs of our brethren, including widows and orphans, there.

Despite physical poverty, Africa is a significant part of the final phase of the work. It is my hope and prayer that the comments, perceptions, and support there may serve as motivations to those in other parts of the world to better follow their Philadelphian example and support CCOG as we lead the final phase of the work.

The work of God through the Continuing Church of God is bearing fruit (cf. Matthew 7:15-20) around the world (Matthew 28:19-20) and Africa is showing that this is so.

*Fulfilling
Matthew 24:14
and
Matthew 28:19-20*



Continuing Church of God www.ccog.org
Daily Bible News Prophecy www.cogwriter.com

CCOG.ASIA This is a website targeted towards Asia. It has articles in Mandarin Chinese as well as some in English, plus other Asian languages.

CCOG.IN This is a website targeted towards those of Indian heritage.

CCOG.EU This is a website targeted toward Europe. It has materials in many European languages.

CDLIDD.ES La Continuación de la Iglesia de Dios. This is the Spanish language website for the Continuing Church of God.

PNIND.PH Patuloy na Iglesia ng Diyos. This is a website targeted towards those in the Philippines or those of related heritage.



BibleNewsProphecy channel
www.youtube.com/BibleNewsProphecy

ContinuingCOG channel
www.youtube.com/continuingcog

The leading pastor in *Continuing Church of God* is a regular radio guest using radio to reach audiences in many areas.

The *Continuing Church of God* also uses printed and electronic magazines, books, and weekly letters to the Brethren to also support Matthew 24:14 and Matthew 28:19-20

