

The
LANTERN



II Peter 1:19

OF THE SCATTERED FAITHFUL

“So we regard the words of the prophets as confirmed beyond all doubt. You're doing well by paying attention to their words. Continue to pay attention as you would to a light that shines in a dark place as you wait for day to come and the morning star to rise in your hearts.”

(II Peter 1:19 - GW)

The Lantern

OF THE SCATTERED FAITHFUL



II Peter 1:19

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Be Slow to ANGER
(See page 15)

Editor:

Gary Liebold

Writers:

Gary Liebold
Geary Whiting

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All scriptures used in *The LANTERN* magazine are from the New King James version of the Bible, unless otherwise noted.

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United States: Church of God, Scattered Faithful
P.O. Box 7480
Seminole, FL 33775

Treasurer:
Geary Whiting

Secretary:
Leonard Hatter

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Personal from the editor



GOD'S LAW AND CHRIST'S SACRIFICE

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (I Corinthians 10:16).

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ instituted the use of unleavened bread and wine as the New Testament symbols for Passover observance. The BREAD symbolizes Christ's broken body as payment for our physical sins, the WINE represents Christ's shed blood as payment of our spiritual sins.

Yes, **SIN IS** the transgression (violation) of law! **"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth [violates] also the law: for sin is the transgression [violation] of the law" (I John 3:4 - KJV).** What law is the Bible referring to? Spiritually, it's GOD'S LAW -- the TEN COMMANDMENTS! We can see the context of this law by looking at **Romans 7...**

"What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law" had said, Thou shalt not covet" (Verse 7).

"Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Verse 12).

"For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin" (Verse 14).

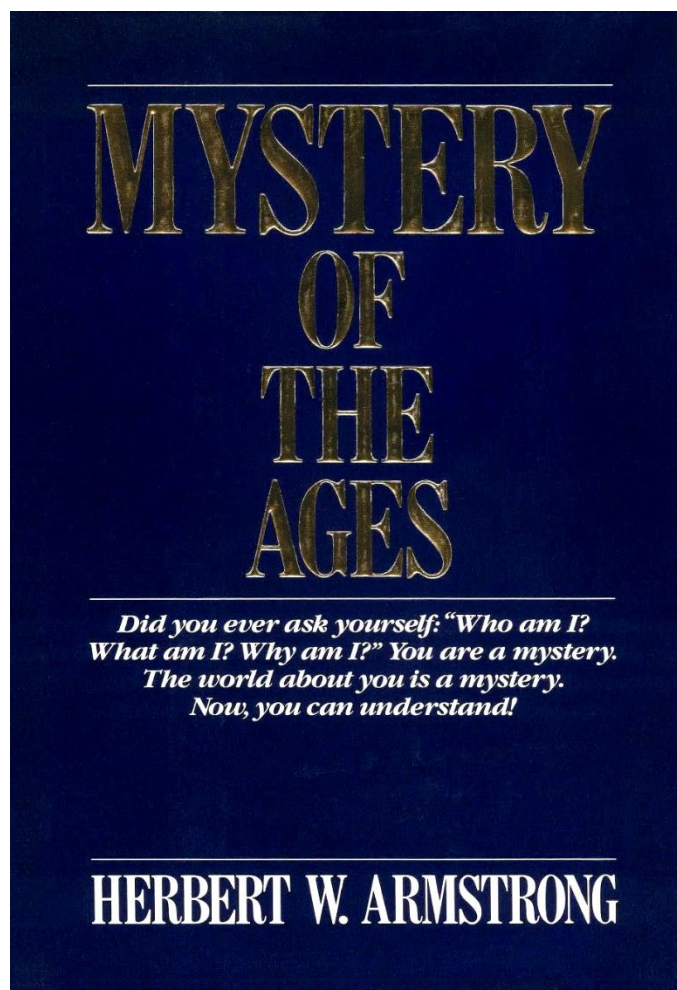
Except for Jesus the Christ (**I Peter 2:21-22**), every human being has sinned, by violating God's ROYAL law (**James 2:8-12**). **"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).** By breaking God's law, a penalty is incurred. That penalty is ETERNAL DEATH. **"For the wages of sin is death..." (Romans 6:23).** Those "wages" are earned for SIN -- the breaking of God's commandments.

Romans 6:23 doesn't end by leaving us in a state of hopelessness and despair with no way out from the DEATH penalty. The verse continues **"...but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."** Through Christ's shed blood, our past sins (when repented of), are forgiven ... ETERNALLY forgiven! **"And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission [forgiveness]" (Hebrews 9:22).**

"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (Romans 5:8-10).

The Passover is the first step in God's Master plan and has such deep meaning for us. Without the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and the shedding of His blood, our sins could NEVER be blotted out. The DEATH penalty would remain in effect, and we could never have been reconciled to God the Father. However, through Christ, those PAST sins are FULLY forgiven and will NEVER be spoken of again!

Gary R. Liebold



OVERVIEW SERIES: MYSTERY OF THE AGES



WHO AND WHAT IS GOD?

After years of intense study, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong discovered that the Bible is like a jigsaw puzzle -- with thousands of pieces that need to be put together to understand it -- and the pieces will only fit together in one way. There are

mysteries in the Bible that have eluded the understanding of mankind for centuries, mysteries connected intricately, like those symbolic puzzle pieces.

Gary Liebold

Mr. Armstrong wrote the book, *Mystery of the Ages*, in order to simplify the main mysteries encompassed within the Bible. This book puts together the many pieces of a great puzzle so they can be better understood, and so that the Bible will no longer be a such a mystery.

Recently, I gave a sermon where I encouraged all of us to go back and re-read *Mystery of the Ages* again. It's just that important of a book to us as Christians. However, *Mystery of the Ages* is a very long book -- 363 pages, not including references at the final index. So, as an aid, or supplement to reading this book, I decided to

put together a series of OVERVIEWS of the main seven chapters of the book, covering, of course, the seven mysteries of the Bible that Mr. Armstrong expounded upon. These overview articles are not meant to take the place of reading *Mystery of The Ages*, but to serve as a summary or supplement; and to serve as an encouragement, to even to spur you once again into reading the book and study it on your own.

As we each read this book, we should compare it constantly with our own Bible to see these truths with our own eyes. It will make a lot of sense as nothing ever did before.

CHAPTER ONE: WHO AND WHAT IS GOD

In this first chapter of *Mystery of The Ages*, Mr. Armstrong covered what he defined as the first basic mystery of the Bible, "**Who and What is God.**" The purpose of this chapter was to help make God real to us, as real as our own human father is. If we read this chapter along with our own personal Bibles, we can understand that God reveals Himself through the Bible, if we honestly look to understand it.

With so much knowledge at our fingertips in this end-time civilization, even the most highly educated should know who and what God is! Perhaps many people would admit that they believe in the existence of God, while many others would say that they are just not sure whether God really exists. On page 38, Mr. Armstrong writes, "**Spiritual things -- invisible things -- are a mystery to them. They do not understand those things, real though they are, because they cannot see them. They remain a deep mystery, so they deny their existence.**"

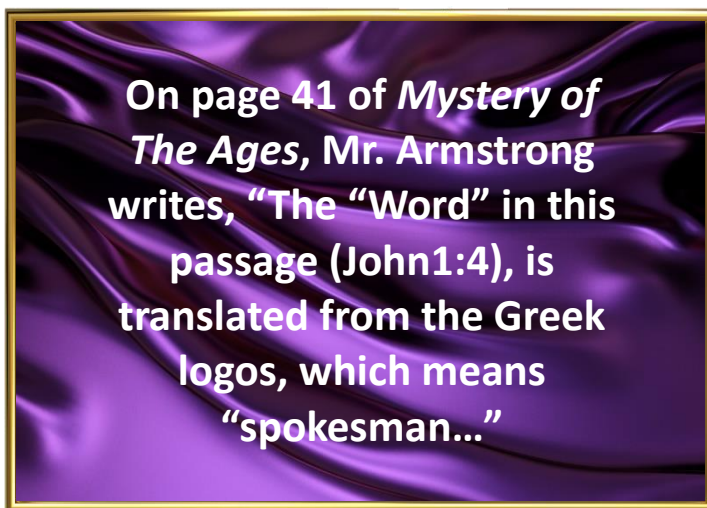
So, what does the Bible reveal about who and what God is? What aspects, or characteristics, does He show about Himself to those who take the time to search for the truth, and believe what the Bible teaches? Just WHO and WHAT, then, is God? How does He reveal himself?

GOD -- CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE

If we look, it's easy to see that God is the CREATOR of everything in the vast universe. He created the stars, the galaxies in endless space, the earth, mankind and everything on this

earth. This is His job, His purpose -- It's what God does. He designs, forms and shapes. He gives life! He CREATES! God is the great giver of all, and even His laws, which should be precious to us, and His way of life, is the way of giving, not getting. Getting is the way of this world.

The earliest revelation of God's identity is found in the New Testament in the first chapter of the book of John. "**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men**" (John 1:1-4).



On page 41 of *Mystery of The Ages*, Mr. Armstrong writes, "**The Word**" in this passage is translated from the Greek *logos*, which means "spokesman," "word" or "revelatory thought." It is the name there used for

an individual Personage. But who or what is this Logos? Notice the explanation in verse 14 "**And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.**"

In other words, the Word was Jesus Christ! Continuing pages 41-43, "**When he was born as Jesus Christ, he was flesh and blood, materialistic and could be seen, touched and felt. But what was he? As God -- as the Logos? That is answered in John 4:24, "God is a Spirit," and spirit is invisible. We know what his form and shape was as the human Jesus. ...So, here we find, as originally revealed, two Personages. One is God. And**

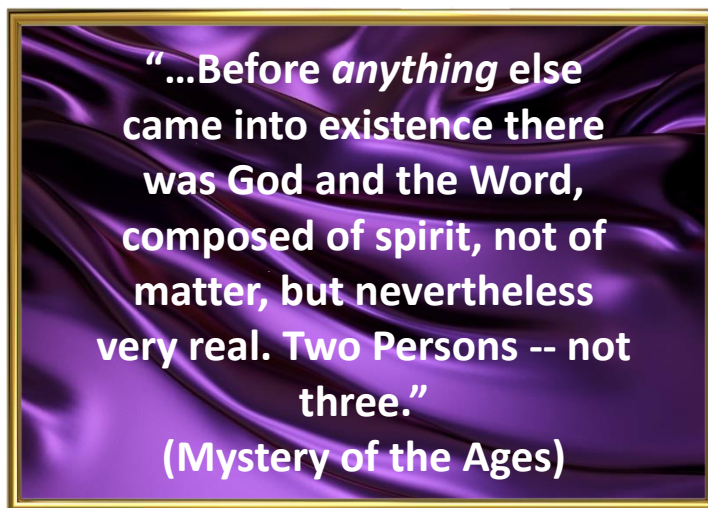
with God in that prehistoric time was another Personage who also was God – one who later was begotten and born as Jesus Christ. ...Before *anything* else came into existence there was God and the Word, composed of spirit, not of matter, but nevertheless very real. Two Persons -- not three.” As we read in John 1:3, “All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.” In other words, all things in the universe were made by the Word. “...God, who created all things through Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 3:9).

God created all things through His spokesman, the Word, Jesus Christ. Jesus IS the Word. God tells Christ what to do. He does it (John 8:28-29). Jesus then speaks, as God’s spokesman, and the Holy Spirit is the POWER that responds and does what Jesus commands. “For He spoke, and it was *done*...” (Psalms 33:9). As we read in Colossians I, beginning in verse 12... “giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. ...He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.” (verses 12, 15-16).

The Bible clearly reveals that God and the Word were two supreme entities who co-existed always, before anything had ever been created, including this earth and the entire universe. God is a creator -- the Word has the same form and shape as God. Perhaps this will make God more real to us when we realize human beings are also in the same form and shape as He is. One day, we will have the opportunity to create as God creates!

WHAT IS GOD’S APPEARANCE

Why is God not real to so many people? In this



“...Before *anything* else came into existence there was God and the Word, composed of spirit, not of matter, but nevertheless very real. Two Persons -- not three.”
(Mystery of the Ages)

chapter of *Mystery of The Ages*, we can discover the most logical of answers to this perplexing question. It is simply because God and the Word were composed of spirit; not matter, nor flesh and blood, like human beings. God is totally invisible to human eyes (Colossians 1:15), and therefore, He does not seem real. The human mind naturally wants to visualize a definite form and shape, and since God is invisible, He simple does not seem real to people. But even though God is composed of spirit and not of visible matter, God nevertheless does have definite form and shape.

In Genesis 1:26, “Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.”” In various parts of the Bible, it is revealed that God has a face: eyes, a nose, mouth and ears. He has hair on his head. It is also revealed that God has arms and legs, hands and fingers, feet, toes, and a body. God has a mind, an incredibly superior mind, and He created mankind with a mind as well; NOT just the brain, as animals also possess, but a higher functioning mind. So, if we know what a man looks like, we know what the form and shape of GOD is, for to reiterate, He made man in His image, after His very likeness.

Since Jesus became human, to dwell among us here on the earth, we know that His

appearance was that of a human man, for he also was the Son of man. He looked so much like other Jewish men of his day that His enemies had to bribe Judas to point Him out and identify Him in a crowd. So now we know God, and Christ, have the same form and shape as a man. We also know they are composed of spirit, not of matter as is man. Spirit is invisible to human eyes, unless manifested by some special process.

GOD'S NATURE AND CHARACTER

Most important of all, however, is what we can discover about God's nature -- His CHARACTER! We cannot know who God is unless we know what His character is! The character of both God the Father and Christ. God the Father and Christ the Son have character composed of spiritual holiness, righteousness, and absolute perfection! That character might be summed up in the one word -- LOVE; and defined as an outflowing, loving concern.

As outlined in the *Mystery of the Ages*, this character is defined as the way of giving, serving, helping, sharing, and not the way of lust and greed, vanity and selfishness, coveting, competition, strife, violence and destruction. God's nature does not include feelings of envy, jealousy, resentment, and bitterness. God's inherent nature is the way of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

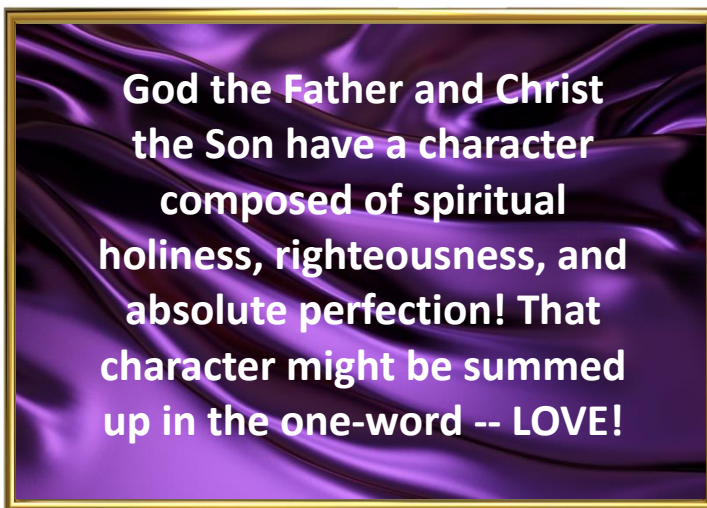
gentleness and self-control radiating outward toward those He has created! Do these sterling attributes of God's character sound familiar? They are listed in the Bible in **Galatians 5:22-23** as the fruit of the Spirit, God's Holy Spirit, which is part and parcel of His divine nature! God and Jesus Christ -- the Word of the Old Testament -- lived the way of their perfect character, the way of outflowing LOVE. When Jesus was baptized, God the Father said, "**This is My beloved Son...**" (**Matthew 3:17**) God LOVED the Word. And the Word LOVED God and obeyed him completely.

Two can't walk together except they be agreed. They were in total agreement and cooperation, always working together in perfect harmony. Also, two can't walk together in continuous peace except one is the leader, or head: the one in control. God the Father, is the leader! Their way of life produced perfect peace, cooperation, happiness, and accomplishment. Their way of life became a law, God's law, as He is the author of right government.

GOD -- THE AUTHOR OF GOVERNMENT

The word "law" is defined as "**a binding custom or practice of a community: a rule of conduct or action prescribed or formally recognized as binding or enforced by a controlling authority**", according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary. Quite a telling definition, isn't it? Just who would that "controlling authority" be? Why, God Himself!

The very existence of the concept of LAW includes enforcement of that law, includes government. Government is simply the administration of the law by one in authority. This necessitates authoritative leadership with one in command. On page 49-50 of *Mystery of The Ages*, Mr. Armstrong wrote: "**The government of God is of necessity government from the top down. It cannot be "government by the consent of the governed."** Its laws originate and are handed



down from God -- never legislated by the people -- never dictated by the governed how the government over them shall rule them. Since they created other conscious, thinking life-beings, this very fact of necessity put the GOVERNMENT of God over all creation, with God supreme Ruler." God's law is spiritual and can be summed up in one simple but all-inclusive word -- love. His law for the guidance of human conduct is subdivided into the 10 Commandments [LOVE toward God and LOVE toward neighbor]. Jesus magnified this law by showing how its principles expand to cover virtually every possible human infraction." Again, I John 5: 3, as well as II John 1:6, define that



God's law can be summed up in one single word, (LOVE). Applied in principle, it is a complete law. There is only one perfect lawmaker, and that is God. Bear in mind the government of God is based on the LAW of God, which is the way of life, of outflowing love, cooperation, and concern for the good of the governed. This law of God produces peace, happiness, and cooperation through obedience.

GOD IS A FAMILY

This chapter of *Mystery of the Ages* would not be complete unless this final, but extremely important, aspect is covered concerning who and what God is, and that subject is that God is a FAMILY! Going to the beginning of the Bible, in **Genesis 1:1**, the opening statement reads, "In the beginning God..." This scripture originally was written by Moses in Hebrew. The Hebrew word for "God" here is Elohim, which is a noun or name, uniplural in form, and the same sort of word as family, church, or group. It defines one family, consisting of two or more

members, or one church composed of many members. One group of several persons. So, it is referring to precisely the same two persons, making up or composing the one God, as we found in **John 1:1** -- the Word and God -- and each of those two persons is GOD.

In other words, God is now a family of persons, composed so far of only the two, who are God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son. But if the Holy Spirit of God dwells in us, and we are led by God's Spirit, then we are begotten sons of God (**Romans 8:14**). To continue, at the time of Christ's return to earth in supreme power and glory to set up the Kingdom of God, restoring the

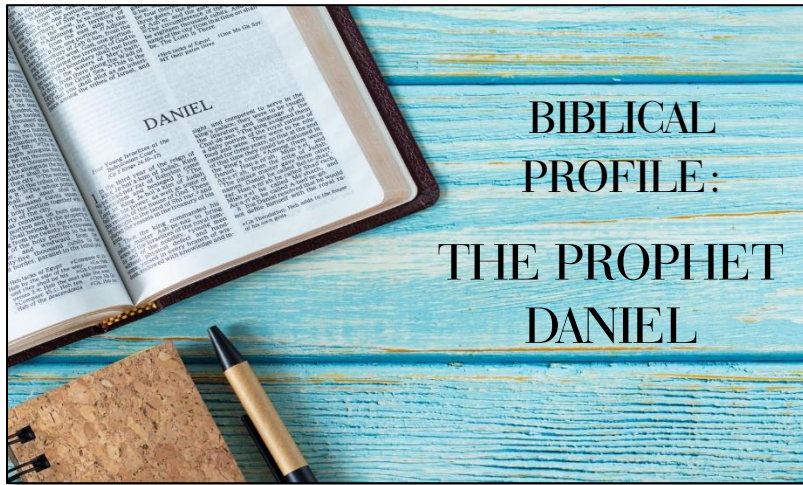
Government of God, all beings filled and led by God's Holy Spirit shall become born as sons of God. The God Family will then rule all nations when His Government is restored!

SUMMARY

To summarize this first chapter of *Mystery of The Ages*, God is a family composed, at present, of two persons (**John 1:1-4**), but with many thousands, already begotten of God's Spirit, soon to be born into that divine family at Christ's return to earth. Jesus Christ, by His resurrection, was born a divine Son of God (**Romans 1:4**), the first so born into the God family (**Romans 8:29**).

Both God and Christ are composed of spirit, formed and shaped as a human is, but with eyes like flames of fire and faces bright as the sun in full strength!

(Continued on page 27)



The book of Daniel holds a prominent place in the Bible, featuring a story of a man known for his unwavering faith, prophetic visions, and steadfast commitment to God.



Daniel displayed genuine self-sacrifice in the face of adversity,

holding on to his beliefs despite the isolation of exile and captivity. His life is detailed in the book of Daniel, which provides a fascinating account of his experiences, trials, and extraordinary interactions with angelic beings, like Gabriel and Michael.

Daniel was a righteous man of princely heritage from Jerusalem who lived about 620–538 B.C. He was carried off to Babylon in 605 B.C. by Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon (an Assyrian) when he was around 16-18 years old and was still living and serving the king's successors with loyalty and ability until the time when Assyria was overthrown by the Medes and Persians. Despite the captivity of the Jews, Daniel enjoyed the highest offices of state at Babylon, but he was always true to God.

The name Daniel means, **“God is my judge.”** Many today consider him to be the most distinguished member of the Jews living outside of Israel in his day, unsurpassed in piety and good deeds, firm in his resolve despite being surrounded by enemies who sought his ruin. He was a prophet of God, renowned for his righteousness and wisdom and his ability to interpret dreams and visions, which were critical for kings to understand divine messages or future events. His interpretations often guided the decisions and policies of the kings of his day, and his steadfastness in his faith helped to shape the moral direction of that leadership, promoting justice, humility, and reverence for God. Daniel was even promoted to high-ranking positions within the government of Babylon.

Historically, the books of the major prophets, including Daniel, feature prophecy from God. Some prophecies recount details concerning the nation of Israel in the short and long term, but the book of Daniel's includes prophecies about the world's end-time through the visions he received. At some point, this book did become part of the Scriptures the Jews passed along to one another, and Daniel had clearly become a recognized prophet by the New Testament period. Jesus refers to **“Daniel the prophet”** in **Matthew 24:15**.

Daniel never compromised his faith, serving in the role God gave him with unparalleled integrity. He never doubted that God could do anything, including saving his friends from a burning furnace, and himself from a den of lions. He regularly prayed to God despite pressure from all around him to conform to a different belief or way of life. In **Daniel 6:10**, we read, **“Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.”** God blessed Daniel by making him not only a leader but a prophet as well. He stands as an example of faith to trust completely in God. Daniel stands as a beacon of faith, resilience, and wisdom, displaying a high level of integrity and genuine devotion to God. His unwavering commitment to God, regardless of the spiritual darkness that surrounded him, should greatly inspire all of God's people. ♦



SOLVING THE ARAB / ISRAELI IMPASSE

Just over a year ago, on October 7, 2023, a totally horrific event occurred that inflamed the relationships in the Middle East all over again. This was the unprecedented, unprovoked sneak attack of Hamas terrorists on Israeli soil that resulted in the deaths and kidnappings of large numbers of innocent people -- men, women, and children -- from more than one nationality, who were just innocently going about their everyday lives. Attending a concert. Spending a morning in their garden, and families getting ready to start their weekend morning.

Geary Whiting

The results of this event have been catastrophic. In Israel, more than 1,200 people were killed, including about 800 civilians, 346 Israel Defense Force (IDF) soldiers and 66 police officers, according

to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Additionally, about 8,700 people have been injured, and about 97 people are still being held hostage a year later. Unbelievably, antisemitism has been on the rise all over



the globe as a result of the Israeli response to this barbarism. Large numbers of Palestinian supporters have held numerous protests in many countries, including students from prestigious colleges here in the United States. There is so much hate in evidence these days, it seems overwhelming! Many citizens ask themselves, **“What on earth is going on here?”**

BEYOND WORDS

Many years ago, I was involved in a program designed to bring Palestinian and Israeli women together. Established by Nitsan Joy Gordon, it was named **“Beyond Words”** to signify that the painful emotions shared in their workshops are often beyond words. The program described that the healing approach is often nonverbal, and that when resolving conflict, something more is needed than speeches, conversations, shouting matches, debates, and even dialogue.

To accomplish these goals they run workshops, trainings and courses for Arab Palestinian and Jewish women, so they can manage and eradicate pain. Their goal is

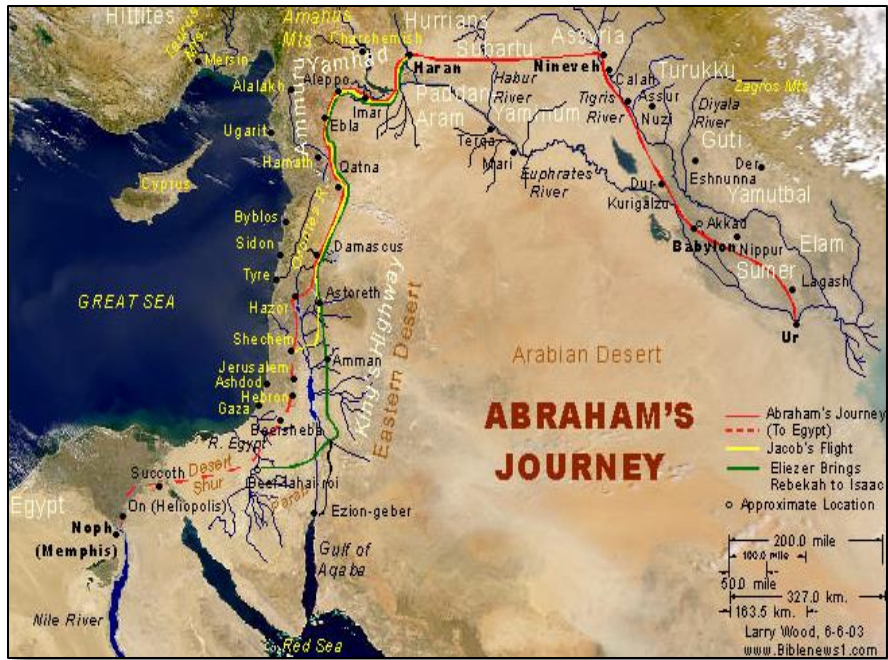
described as, **“A program to rebuild trust, reawaken compassion and enhance the ability courses for Arab Palestinian and Jewish women, so they can connect and transform pain, so it is not transmitted. Their goal is program to rebuild trust, reawaken compassion and enhance the ability of Jews and Arabs, Israelis, and Palestinians to live in harmony and work for peace.”** This was a very good program, a wonderful program. My job was to do bodywork (massage) on every participant. I remember working on a Palestinian lady and she said to me, in a very soft voice, **“Thank you. I so appreciate you!”** And so, looking back, it was one of my fondest memories. It helped me to learn to understand more about the Palestinian people. But still, just who are the Palestinian people? And what does God have to say about this matter?

BACK TO THE BEGINNING

In **Genesis 16**, we find the actual root of the entire problem between the Arab and Israeli peoples. **Genesis 16:3-4** shows us the story of two women involved with one man, which is

NEVER a very good thing. Sarai, later known as Sarah, was the aging wife of an aging Abraham, waiting impatiently for a promise from God for a child of her own. Instead of relying on God to fulfill a promise in His own way and time, Sarai decided to take matters into her own hands. **“Then Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan. So he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress became despised in her eyes...”**

Obviously, this wasn't a good idea! Sarai (Sarah), had not counted on her very human reaction to the results of her meddling and then wanted her maid, Hagar, removed from her sight, which Abraham did. However, God did not forget Hagar. He found her by a spring of water in the wilderness and persuaded her to return to Sarah and Abraham, assuring her that she would have a son who would multiply



PICTURE: PUBLIC DOMAIN

her descendants greatly. **“And the Angel of the LORD said to her: "Behold, you *are* with child, And you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, Because the LORD has heard your affliction. He shall be a wild man; His hand *shall be* against every man, And every man's hand against him. And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren" (Genesis 16:11-12).** This son of Abraham and Hagar would become the beginning of the wild and fierce Arabic nationalities, including the Palestinian people. Understanding their beginnings, the start of their culture, we can see a continuation of those prophetic words God spoke to Hagar millennia ago. A wild, almost uncivilized type of culture, promoting and committing violence against neighboring peoples, with **“his hand ...against every man,”** projecting hate and anger.

JACOB AND ESAU

The Biblical story of the brothers Jacob and Esau, detailed in **Genesis 27**, expands our understanding of the history between the nation of Israel and the Arabic peoples (as listed above). We see, again in a parallel story, how Esau is told that he will receive a lesser blessing than his brother, Jacob, (just as

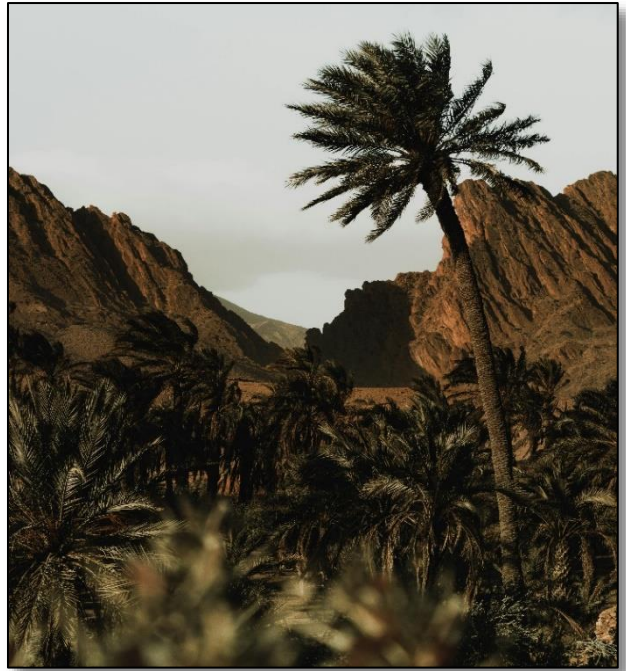


Ishmael received the lesser blessing). **"By your sword you shall live, And you shall serve your brother; And it shall come to pass, when you become restless, That you shall break his yoke from your neck" (Genesis 27:40).**

History tells us that Jacob represented the Jewish people, while Esau came to represent the ancient kingdom of Edom, a branch of Arabic peoples. Being descendants of Abraham, the Edomites (Esau) were related to the Israelites (Jacob), but they did not always act as brothers. The nation of Edom existed before the Israelites left Egypt, and the Lord commanded the Israelites not to attempt to take the land from the Edomites as they passed through, since He had given the land to Esau (**Deuteronomy 2:1-5**).

Moses and the Israelites asked permission to cross through the land of Edom on their journey out of Egypt, but they were refused passage by the Edomite king (**Numbers 20:14–21**). From this point on in the Bible, Edom is mentioned as Israel's enemy, and the two nations fought frequently. Both Saul and David fought against the Edomites, with David conquering them and forcing them into labor (**I Samuel 14:47-48; II Samuel 8:13-14**). During the reign of Jehoram, Edom rebelled against Judah and set up their own independent king.

The Edomites continued to be a problem for the Israelites and even raided Judah after it fell to the Babylonians (**Ezekiel 25:12-14**). Because of Edom's sin in raiding Judah and taking delight in Israel's fall during the Babylonian Captivity, the Lord pronounced judgment on Edom, the descendants of Esau. **"The house of Jacob shall be a fire, And the house of Joseph a flame; But the house of Esau shall be stubble; They shall kindle them and devour them, And no survivor shall remain of the house of Esau," For the LORD has spoken" (Obadiah 1:18).** The book of Obadiah deals specifically with Edom's



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judgment. The Edomites were proud as well as violent (**Obadiah 1:3,10**), and unsympathetic to the destruction of Israel (**verse 11**). God promised a reckoning.

BY THE WATERS OF BABYLON

In our church hymnal, there is a song titled, **"By the Waters of Babylon."** This hymn refers to the period between 607-586 BC in Israel's history, when the Jews were taken captive by King Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon, while the Edomites simply stood by, watched, and basically cheered the Babylonians on to destroy the city of Jerusalem.

This is an important period of biblical history because both the captivity, and exile, of the Jews were fulfillments of Old Testament prophecies. **"By The Waters of Babylon"** describes the feelings of the Jewish people as the Babylonians, who had attacked and captured Jerusalem, marched them to Babylon and captivity. The beginning of the hymn reads, **"By the waters of Babylon, there we wept and there sat down; Hung our harps on the willow trees, Zion, yet we remembered thee!"** This is straight out of

Psalms 137:1-2. The Jewish people of the time were lamenting the destruction of their beloved city of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. God used Babylon as His agent of judgment against Israel for their sins of idolatry and rebellion against Him. There were several different times during this period (607-586 B.C.) when the Jews were taken captive by Babylon. With each successive rebellion against Babylonian rule, Nebuchadnezzar would lead his armies against Judah until they laid siege to Jerusalem for over a year, killing many people and destroying the Jewish temple, taking captive many more thousands of Jews, and leaving Jerusalem in ruins.

Later in **Psalm 137**, we see another reference to the destruction of Israel and Jerusalem. **“Remember, O LORD, against the sons of Edom, the day of Jerusalem, Who said, “Raze it, raze it, To its very foundation!” O daughter of Babylon, who are to be destroyed, Happy the one who repays you as you have served us!” (Psalm 137:7-8).** Eventually, the nation of Edom, descendants of Esau, were destroyed themselves, and the restored nation of Israel would possess their lands (as we read earlier in **Obadiah 1**).

So, you might ask yourself, “Why did God call Edom the **“daughter of Babylon,”** and what is the significance of this reference to the captivity of the Jews by the Babylonian peoples as it pertains to people alive today?” The actual key is to examine the history of the Babylonians in connection with the beginnings of the trouble between the Arab and Israeli peoples.

JUST WHO IS BABYLON

Let’s delve a little more into ancient history so we can understand a bit better the connections between the scriptures, and the ancient people and lands historically detailed in the Bible. Before the emergence of Islam, contact between pre-Jewish Israelites and pre-Muslim Arabs had been common for nearly two centuries. These contacts and interactions formed the earliest relationships between Muslims and Jews and served as the beginning of the social, cultural, religious, and political relations between Muslims and Jews from the 7th century to the present.

The demographic history of the lands of Palestine has been shaped by various historical events and migrations, culminating in the Muslim conquest of the area (known as the Levant), in the 7th century. This started a process of Arab settlements converting to the



Islam religion throughout the Middle East. Many Palestinian villagers today claim ancestral ties to Arab tribes from the Arabian Peninsula, while other Palestinian families, notably in the Hebron region, claim Jewish and Samaritan

ancestry respectively, preserving associated cultural customs and traditions. Of course, all this traces back to the two competing sons of Abraham; Isaac and Ishmael in **Genesis 25**.

As we research these complicated relationships, ancient history reveals that the Babylonian peoples are also said to have occupied the lands in central and southern Mesopotamia, which is now the nation of Iraq, parts of Syria and Iran -- considered to be among the lands of Palestine. Babylon, also known as Chaldea, was established by Assyria.

Isaiah 23:13 reads as, “Behold, the land of the Chaldeans... Assyria founded it for wild beasts of the desert. They set up its towers, They raised up its palaces...” So, Chaldea was Babylon. And Chaldea was established by Assyria, which embraced the country on both sides of the Tigris. Babel, or Babylon, conquered and destroyed Jerusalem, together with Syria and Phoenicia.

The Bible identifies Edom with Babylon. (See **Psalms 137:7-8.**) Here we see that Edom is part of the family of nations that are considered Babylon, and all sacred and

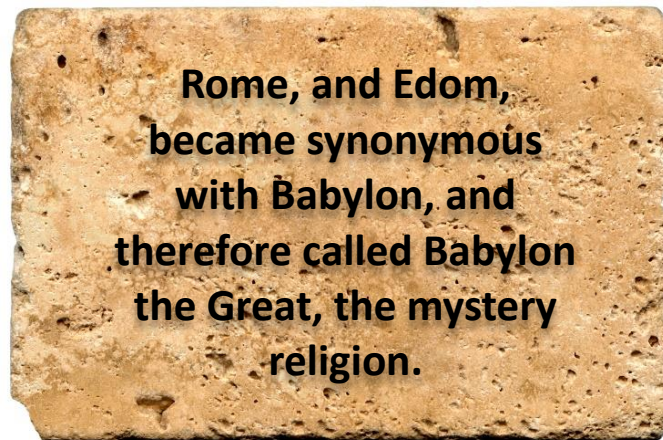
scientific history confirms it. This entire group of nations associated with the Arab and later, the Muslim heritage, (Assyria, Chaldea, Babylon, and Edom), later became the Roman Empire, which was then called Chaldea again, as it

was in the time of Jesus under Tiberius Caesar (**Luke 3:1**). All of these existed in the lands occupied by the Palestinians. So, Rome, and Edom, became synonymous with Babylon, and therefore called Babylon the Great, the mystery religion. What a connection between these historic peoples depicted in the Bible!

JEALOUSY AND HATRED DIRECTLY FROM SATAN

History is complicated, full of relationships that twist and turn and are interwoven together throughout time. For example, the Palestinians claim direct genealogical connections to the ancient Canaanites, who are often portrayed as Arabs. This allows the Palestinians to assert that they had lived in the region for a very long period, predating Israelite settlements, to

undermine Jerusalem's Jewish history and emphasize its Arab identity. The claim of kinship with the Israelites allows the Palestinians to assert a historical claim preceding the biblical promise and possession put forward by the Jews to get something for themselves that belongs to someone else. By tracing the modern-day problem of the antipathy and hatred of the Palestinians and the Israeli peoples all the way back to the root source (Isaac and Ishmael), and again forward through their descendants, we can see the reasons for this hatred, the main one being jealousy. Ishmael was jealous of Isaac. Esau was jealous of Jacob.



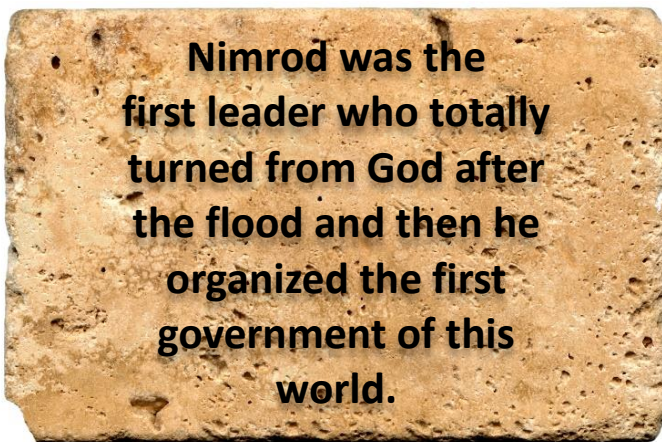
As a result, Edom, the sister nation to Israel, was jealous of and hated Israel more than any other nation. Throughout all of history we see a burning hatred of Edom against Israel. It is for this reason that Edom is frequently presented as

a representation of all the nations that hated the Jews. However, it doesn't end there, because as in many things we know from the Bible, there is both a physical and spiritual duality to this issue. In the Bible, the **physical** Babylon is mentioned from Genesis to Revelation, as it rises from its rebellious beginnings, to become a symbol of Satan's evil world system.

Satan's **spiritually** corrupt governance of this world is in direct rebellion of God's divine Master Plan for mankind, stemming from the hate that Satan is filled with against God and His people. Satan used Nimrod as his chief instrumentality in swaying the world away from God after the great flood. Nimrod was the first leader who totally turned from God after the flood. Then, he organized the first

government of this world -- the city of Babylon -- under the influence of Satan. Later he organized Nineveh and other cities and instituted the system of regimentation, whereby one or a few at the top, by directing their efforts, profit from the sweat and labor of others. It certainly describes our society today. And thus, the Babylonish system of government was started. This Babylonish principle of government, intertwined with economic manipulation, has ruled the world ever since. It has ruled under various forms -- whether called oligarchy, monarchy, dictatorship, democracy, socialism, or communism -- but it's the same old principle under slightly different modes of administration. **"And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH"** (Revelation 17:5).

Regardless of the form of administration, this civilization which holds the entire world in its organized grip today is the same old Babylonian system started at the original Babylon by Nimrod! All in direct defiance of God!



THE ONLY WAY TO SOLVE THIS IMPASSE

So, as we can see, we are in a very confusing and messed up world, and this subject of the conflict between the Palestinian and Israeli peoples is a huge and convoluted subject,

stretching back through centuries of time. It is quite clear that there is only one way this problem is going to be solved, and that is **GOD is going to have to solve it** at the return of Jesus Christ.

We can see how God feels about the whole thing -- these two peoples -- which one He considers to be His people, or nation, and which one he is displeased with. Maybe we can begin to guess how it's going to turn out. **"Thus says the Lord GOD: "Because of what Edom did against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and has greatly offended by avenging itself on them," therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "I will also stretch out My hand against Edom... I will lay My vengeance on Edom by the hand of My people Israel, that they may do in Edom according to My anger and according to My fury; and they shall know My vengeance," says the Lord GOD"** (Ezekiel 25:12-14). Furthermore, we can read in **Jeremiah 25:12**, **"...I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity," says the LORD...**" and continuing in **Jeremiah 51:24**, **"...for all the evil they have done in Zion..."**

In the final synopsis, we should remember that Edom IS Babylon, originally established by Assyria and otherwise known as the Holy Roman Empire, existing within the land of Palestine. But Obadiah describes the prophecy for these nations in a crystal-clear manner. **"The house of Jacob shall be a fire, And the house of Joseph a flame; But the house of Esau shall be stubble; They shall kindle them and devour them, And no survivor shall remain of the house of Esau,"** For the LORD has spoken" (Obadiah 1:18).

Ultimately, all evil will be judged, as symbolized by Babylon's demise in **Revelation 18:21**, **"...the great city of Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore."** ♦



BE SLOW TO ANGER

How profound to realize that there's an anger that's dangerous! However, there is also an anger that is productive and demonstrated in various scriptures of the Bible. This is called "righteous anger," or indignation. Although people who become angry often label their anger as righteous anger, is it really? Do they understand the difference?

Gary Liebold

Have you ever noticed that we live in an angry, divisive society, and not just in the United States but all throughout the world? It seems that some people have a very short fuse. It doesn't take much to make them angry, and on some occasions, that anger becomes dangerous and even leads to violence. In a publication titled, "*The Complete Book of Wise Words and Quotes*," there is a short and concise quote that addresses the subject of anger in a meaningful way. "**Anger is just one letter short of the word DANGER.**"

In the Personal article by Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong in the Church magazine titled, "*The*

Good News of Tomorrow's World," March 1971, he states "...humans are equipped with **EMOTIONS**. And, from babyhood, all humans are actuated by their emotions. Emotions are *feelings* -- disturbances -- departures from a calm state of rational right thinking and acting. Emotion is an *impulse* toward action or expression of feeling, unapproved -- unless taught and controlled otherwise -- by the mind. Among the emotions are such feelings or expressions as fear, anger, resentment, jealousy, hatred, grief, sorrow, surprise, desire, elation, joy.

Emotions have a first-cousin -- our moods. The emotionally immature usually are moody, and

have not learned to control their moods...
...Man was put on earth to develop and attain to something infinitely higher than animal destiny. Man was intended to develop spiritual CHARACTER -- to become like the Supreme GOD. This all comes through the marvelous human MIND. One comes to knowledge of God through the mind. One realizes sin and repents of it *in the mind!* God's Spirit entering is the Spirit of a *sound mind!*

Not only spiritual development, but also emotional maturity is developed through the MIND. It comes by right knowledge, creative thinking, right decisions, the use of will, self-discipline. To rightly direct his actions is man's purpose in life."

Mr. Armstrong lays it out beautifully in this article. To boil this down into a summation, we are to control our emotions and work to develop holy, righteous character -- Godly character -- and emotionally uncontrolled anger is not a part of the equation. We need to learn to control our emotions, especially anger. *Draper's Book of Quotations* includes a quote that we could take to heart, "**The greatest remedy for anger is DELAY.**" In other words, we should be slow to anger! We have a destiny ahead of us if we choose to take it, but we have personal work to do before we can qualify for it and only the few short years in this life in which to do it.

SATAN INFLUENCES EMOTIONAL ANGER

As we can see from the *Lantern* magazine article, "**Satan -- Destroyer of Faith,**" found in the November 2024 issue, Satan is simply a destroyer. He is filled with anger and hatred towards God and His creation -- towards us. He seeks to destroy God's plan, to destroy God's called and chosen people; in short, he plots to

destroy everything God stands for. In **Matthew 13:39**, he is described as our enemy, the ruler of darkness (**Ephesians 6:12**), and a destroyer (**I Corinthians 10:10**). Yes, he is a destroyer -- a destroyer of all things good.

All the hatred and destructive attitudes that Satan possesses stem from his overwhelming anger toward God and His creation. There is NOTHING righteous about HIS anger!
"**Therefore be glad (exult), O heavens and you that dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in fierce anger (fury), because he knows that he has [only] a short time [left]!"** (Revelation 12:12 - Amplified Version).



Satan's main goal is to defeat and destroy God's creation, which includes us. He would like to put mankind under his subjection, which leads to death, and he doesn't object to doing so in a violent way. Satan is a destroyer, and he is a DANGER as well, all because of his anger. To understand more about Satan and who he is (due to his anger and jealousy toward God), it would be good to re-read the entire November 2024 *Lantern* article, "**Satan -- Destroyer of Faith,**" and remember that Satan's wrath, his anger, is about DESTRUCTION!

**GOD'S ANGER IS:
RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION**

What about God? Does He ever get angry, or exhibit wrath? The answer is YES ... God does become angry, but in a totally different way than human beings and most definitely, Satan. God is angry when He sees man's rebellious ways. He's angry with sin, the breaking of His law, and the resulting wickedness and evil.



In **Romans 1:18**, we read, **“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.”** This is because He understands how important the

stakes are for those he's called and is working with now. After all, it's all about man's repentance ... now and in the future. **“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (II Peter 3:9).** God is slow to anger (**Nahum 1:3**). He gives us much leeway, lots of opportunities to see ourselves and self-correct.

God displays righteous anger, called righteous indignation, which is directed toward the action of SIN. God's anger is not focused on an individual person, but toward their actions, towards their sins in disregard to His laws. It has nothing to do with emotions of resentment or jealousy. God (and in like manner, Jesus Christ), is focused on both His people and His master plan for mankind.

Perhaps one of the best examples of righteous anger can be the story of Christ and the money changers in the temple, found in **John 2:13-16**, **“Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the moneychangers doing business. When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!"**

Christ was angry with the sinful actions of the money changers because they defiled the temple, which was God's house of worship. Notice, however, that there is no mention of Christ being angry to the point of being out of control. His righteous anger is made perfectly

clear in **Romans 1:18**. This is the difference between Godly, righteous indignation and sinful, unrighteous anger.

MAN'S ANGER IS:
A RESULT OF EMOTIONAL IMMATURITY

Emotional immaturity is our hidden enemy. It robs our personal relationships of harmony and joy, and is a root cause of conflicts, selfishness and anxieties.



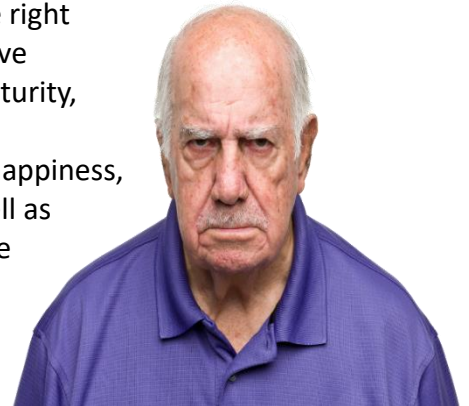
Emotional immaturity is such a great problem for us because Satan the devil, the unseen "**prince of the power of the air**" (**Ephesians 2:2**), constantly broadcasts his way of vanity, jealousy, anger, greed and fear, not in tangible ways such as by words or pictures, but in moods and attitudes. Negative, destructive attitudes such as discouragement, anger, hostility, and aggressive competition can and do turn people away from God's truth and can prevent people from entering God's Kingdom!



Emotional maturity is developed through the mind. Anger, bad temper, and resentment all

must be brought under control with self-discipline and willpower. The Bible shows us that these emotions must be controlled quickly, before they become a haven for the thoughts of Satan. We can keep Satan out of our minds if we are quick to forgive mistakes and refuse to harbor grudges. He is repelled by a mind that is humble, refusing to become discontented or envious. He will never be able to entice and lead away a person who is following God's way of life and is preparing for an eternity of service in God's Kingdom. His best efforts to "**break and enter**" into our minds will fail if we are always striving to look at things the way God does, and willing to bring every thought under control (**II Corinthians 10:5**).

Remember, though, emotional maturity does not mean EMOTIONLESS maturity. The truly emotionally mature control their emotions, and express them to the proper degree, at the right time. If we have emotional maturity, we will feel enthusiasm, happiness, and joy, as well as deep gratitude for blessings, reverence and adoration in the worship of God. We'll sincerely feel compassion toward others, a feeling of true outgoing concern, expressing sympathy and mercy appropriately.



Emotional maturity does not suppress emotions -- it controls and guides them with right knowledge and true wisdom. Emotional maturity develops a true balance of physical, mental, and spiritual growth, blending into the perfect spiritual character which is the very purpose of life and the true human destiny. Being emotionally mature can bring very great, rewarding, and lasting happiness.



WARNING SIGNS OF ANGER

Have any of us ever been emotionally angry at anything, or anyone? What about our neighbor, or our spouse, or even our children? There are so many unbridled emotions that can spur anger in us if we are unaware or caught off guard. Satan is constantly angry, and in his broadcasts to us, he wants to influence us to follow right along with him and let an attitude of anger build and grow within us.

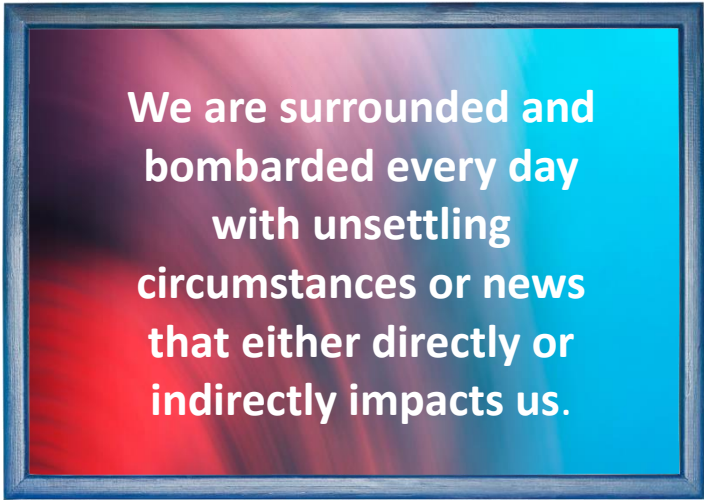
God really wants us to be in tune with Him through His Holy Spirit. That means we must be vigilant to the thoughts and emotions within us and constantly desire to overcome and control them. To do so, we must learn to recognize the WARNING SIGNS of anger first. There are many warning signs that our anger is getting close to being out of control. Some of these signs are outwardly visible while others might be more subtle, yet still corrosive.

Obvious, easily discernable signs of anger include raising our voice, snapping at others around us, the use of sarcasm or mocking of other people, slamming doors, or throwing items. No one could ever miss any of this behavior! But the quieter, more subtle signs of anger are no less unacceptable in God's eyes, as they still evidence a core root of emotional immaturity within us. These signs include

staring or glaring at someone, interrupting others impatiently, or just becoming quiet or withdrawing from contact with another person. Although some of these warning signs of anger might seem like they exhibit emotional control, they do not correct the underlying problem within us -- unrighteous or even undeserved anger.

Anger can be like a ticking time bomb -- we never know when it will manifest itself in us. Some people outwardly explode while others hold their anger in and virtually implode. Either way, unchecked anger is toxic in so many ways. **Galatians 5:22-26** holds the keys for us in all our emotional struggles, including our battle with anger and all its subsidiaries. **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law." (Verses 22-23).** Continuing in **verses 25 and 26**, we read, **"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another [either with or by inciting anger], envying one another."** We must ask for and use God's gift of the Holy Spirit every day of our lives as we strive to remove unwanted flaws (including unrighteous anger and all its offspring), in our character and replace them with higher, loftier ones like the ones listed above in **Galatians 5**.





We are surrounded and
bombarded every day
with unsettling
circumstances or news
that either directly or
indirectly impacts us.

HOW TO CONQUER AND CONTROL ANGER

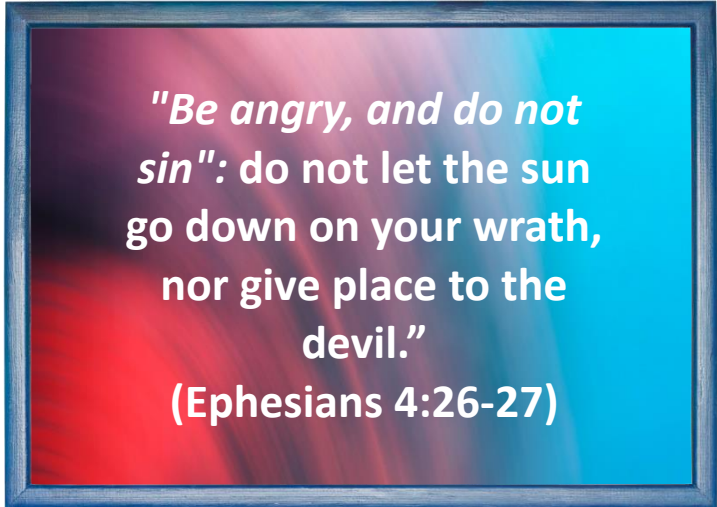
A Christian cannot expect to always live under peaceful circumstances, for the world itself is not a peaceful place in which to dwell. We are surrounded and bombarded every day with unsettling circumstances or news that either directly or indirectly impacts us.

One glaring example is the evidence of division and disharmony that has affected the United States of America over the last few years with the advent of the intense hatred toward President Donald Trump and anyone who supports him, even resulting in assassination attempts on his life. Another example of a world event that negatively impacted us all was the Covid-19 pandemic and the way it was handled. Disinformation, authoritarian edits, and frankly, fear, drove neighbors, friends, and families apart. Anger and hostility were at its peak during that time and have never really subsided.

However, as a Christian, although we will sometimes find ourselves involved in conditions which are not at all peaceable, we need to be at peace with man and God, not feeling or showing anger or malice toward others around us, even those who are angry at us. **Matthew 5:5** shows us, "**Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth.**" A person who is meek is one who is "**humbly patient or submissive,** as

under provocation from others" (*The American College Dictionary*). This type of person will not be provoked to anger but will be patient and longsuffering. "**Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God**" (**Matthew 5:9**). Remember that "**A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger**" (**Proverbs 15:1**). Someone whose words are charged with hate, and anger may find their feelings of hostility deflated by an unexpected calm and modest reply, not anticipating that their cutting remarks could be answered in a soothing, healing manner.

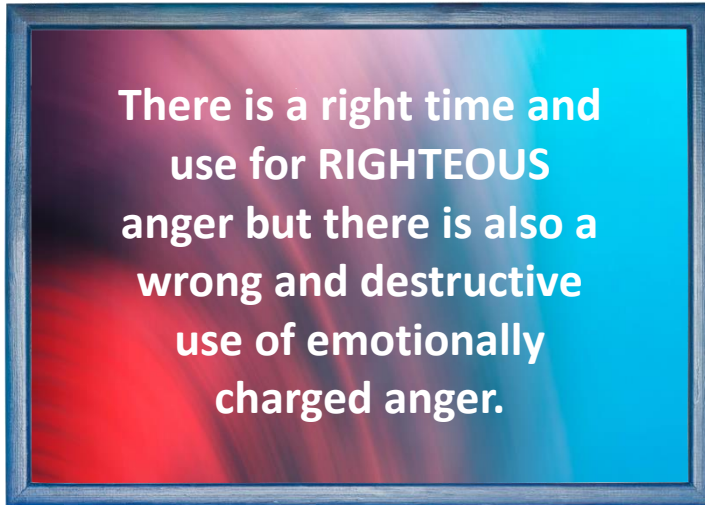
There are many examples in the Bible of God's admonition toward us to avoid or control anger that rises within ourselves. The God-given wisdom of James contains one such scripture to bear in mind, "...**let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God**" (**James 1:19-20 - KJV**). Always endeavor to keep a cool head! Whatever it is that is challenging, remember that it, too, will pass. What we DON'T say or do may prove even more important in the long run than what we might say or do.



*"Be angry, and do not
sin": do not let the sun
go down on your wrath,
nor give place to the
devil."*
(Ephesians 4:26-27)

Another specific admonition from God that we can take to heart to aid in our battle against angry thoughts and feelings is in **Ephesians 4:26-27**. God specifically instructs us... "**Don't**

get so angry that you sin. Don't go to bed angry and don't give the devil a chance" (Contemporary English Version). The Bible admonishes us to never go to bed angry. This is excellent advice, to be taken literally.



We shouldn't go to bed smoldering with pent-up rage over things that have happened during the day. If that anger is directed against a member of your family, resolve the problem before retiring. If it is a friend, a quick text or phone call might help. This is not just a little platitude that Paul put in the book of **Ephesians** to fill up space. It is good advice and should be followed.

There is a right time and use for RIGHTEOUS anger but there is also a wrong and destructive use of emotionally charged anger. God warns us not to let the sun go down on our anger -- not to keep anger bottled up inside or carry grudges or let it build into hatred -- until it eats away at us and begins to tear us up. Uncontrolled and unresolved emotions, which are evidence of spiritual and emotional immaturity, will prove disastrous. **"An angry man stirs up strife, And a furious man abounds in transgression" (Proverbs 29:22).**

We should be praying to God for protection from any evil feelings, moods and thoughts, and broadcasts from Satan. God gives us invisible

armor to don while we fight against the invisible Satan and his wiles. **"...be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints --" (Ephesians 6:10-18).**

God offers here to give us His help to stand against Satan. Are we taking Him up on it? An angry mind, full of hurt, hostility, resentment and plans for revenge, opens the door for Satan. He is like a vulture, is constantly watching our minds, looking for a way to get in. Anger and resentment are sentiments he understands. If we give him a chance, he will work on those feelings to try to destroy us through them. Let's take Ephesians to heart and put on that armor of God to protect ourselves and to be slow to anger!

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE

Finally, Mr. Armstrong writes an inspiring message to us in his *Personal* article in the March 1971 *Tomorrow's World*. **"Jesus Christ is our example. Can you comprehend what extreme deep feeling Jesus experienced when**

(Continued on page 27)

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

(PART ONE)



We must use God's Holy

Spirit -- not just have it! We may THINK about using the power of God's Spirit to overcome personal sins, yet neglect applying it. Repentance, leading to the death of our selfish ways and totally yielding to God, is the only way for God to dwell in us through His Spirit, which will produce spiritual fruit (Galatians 5:22-25).

Gary Liebold

Repentance is the key that unlocks the tree of life and all its wonderful fruits. Repentance means change, to turn around and go the other way. But to change, we must have a totally conquered and yielded mind. Selfish desires must be completely removed, for selfishness is the number one destroyer of personal happiness. The apostle Paul repented and totally yielded his life to God, putting aside his carnal mind with all its ego and selfish ways. In **Galatians 2:20**, he wrote: **"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me..."**

We must totally remove our selfishness for God to dwell in us through the Holy Spirit. We should do as the apostle Peter commanded in **Acts 2:38...** **"Repent, and let everyone of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."**

Our repentance of self and selfish desires must be a continual process. Sometimes we look at repentance as a state rather than a process, but the repentance of self requires a minute by minute, second by second, vigilance of our thoughts. We must bring every thought under the microscope, so to speak, and if it's selfish or breaks God's law, it must be removed (**II Corinthians 10:5**).

By bringing a corresponding outgoing, lawful thought into our minds, we push out the unwanted, undesirable thoughts. In other words, we need to repent, yield to God, then get ourselves out of the way, and the tree of life will flourish in us through the power of God's Spirit, producing the fruits of the Spirit. So now, let's look at the fruits of the Spirit that will sweeten our lives. There are nine of these fruits, and they are listed for us in **Galatians 5:22-23**.

In the first part of this article, we will examine the first five fruits of God's Holy Spirit.

LOVE

The first fruit of the Spirit, as mentioned in **Galatians 5**, is love. Love could be considered as more of a vine than a fruit -- it is the conduit, the life-giving nourishment -- through which all the fruits are given. What, exactly, is the love that the Bible speaks of here in **Galatians 5:22**? Love here does not refer to a feeling or emotion, nor is it the way that someone or something makes us feel, either. Godly love is giving. It is a conscious, willful commitment to give to others without expecting anything in return, even if we may think another person or persons is undeserving. The word "Love" as translated from the original Greek is, "**Agape**," meaning GOD'S Love.

This kind of love is spiritual and godly! It inspires a truly repentant, Spirit-filled person to give of themselves unconditionally. This kind of love comes only from God, and He gives it to US to give to our fellow man through the power of His Spirit (**Romans 5:5**). For example, Jesus told the selfish Pharisees, "**You shall love your neighbor as yourself**" (**Matthew 19:19**). Jesus knew the only way they could understand love was if He referred to the self.

Left to our own devices, we will love only ourselves. We won't even love our families the way God defines love, except in a human, sentimental way. But with God dwelling in us through His Holy Spirit, we will be able to truly love our mate, our children or other family members, as well as exhibiting care and

concern for our neighbors, and pass on to them the luscious fruits of the Spirit -- UNSELFISHLY! Only with God in us through His Holy Spirit can we really give the truest, purest love to our loved ones and others around us. God's love!

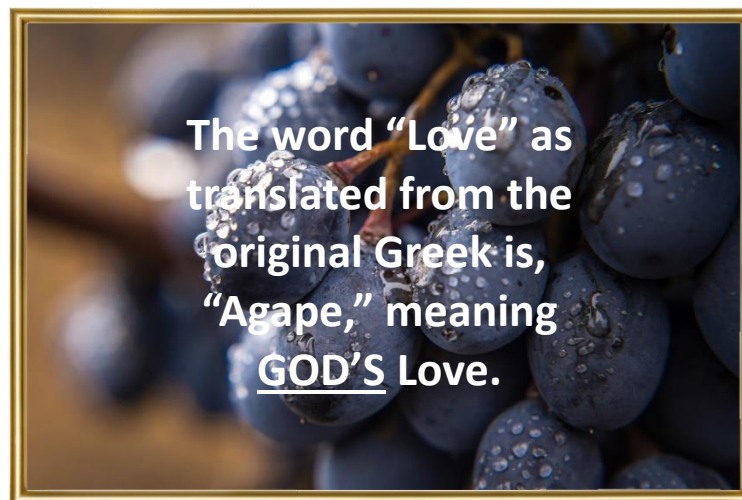
When we display the fruits of the Spirit to others, we are to be a representation of the tree of life in our lives. A tree gives its fruit for others to eat and enjoy. The life of God's tree of love is the water or sap that flows through its branches. The Holy Spirit flows through the tree of life, producing fruit. The fruit of the Spirit, flowing from us through the power of the Holy Spirit, is for others to enjoy. As wise King Solomon said, "**The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life...**" (**Proverbs 11 :30**).

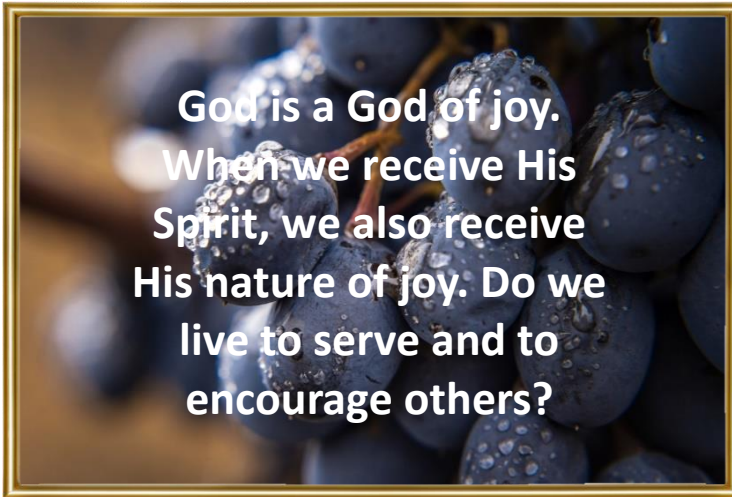
JOY

Joy is the happy fruit! This fruit sweetens the entire flavor of our lives, for joy is a positive, exhilarating attitude of happiness despite circumstances, present even in the face of problems. This takes the consistent power of

the Holy Spirit, not fickle emotion. Selfishly, our minds automatically become irritable and negative when things do not go our way. Our relationships, whether friends or family, could then receive the bitter fruit of sadness instead of the sweet

fruit of joy and then turn sour. The moment we sense our minds turning negative we need to cast those thoughts out of our minds. Then we should ask God to inspire us with a positive attitude in the face of the problem. Joy is highly contagious. We should let our outgoing joy radiate and spread that joy to others!





Isaiah wrote: **“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come into mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, and her people a joy. I will rejoice in Jerusalem, And joy in My people; The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, Nor the voice of crying” (Isaiah 65:17-19).**

Can we see how many times God speaks of joy and of rejoicing in these few verses as He describes the world tomorrow, a world totally different from ours, where all people can have a converted mind and attitude? As a member of God's Church, we have received **“...the spirit of sonship...”** We are heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ! This knowledge should really fill our minds with great joy. Imagine! The whole creation is waiting eagerly for us to become spirit-born sons of God. We are spiritual members of God's Family in the making, and we have His nature, His Spirit, His joy -- right here and right now. We must radiate joy!

PEACE

Closely related to joy is peace. Peace with God, peace with ourselves, and peace with men. Peace is the miracle fruit that produces harmony. When we give others the fruit of peace, our relationships become calm, happy,

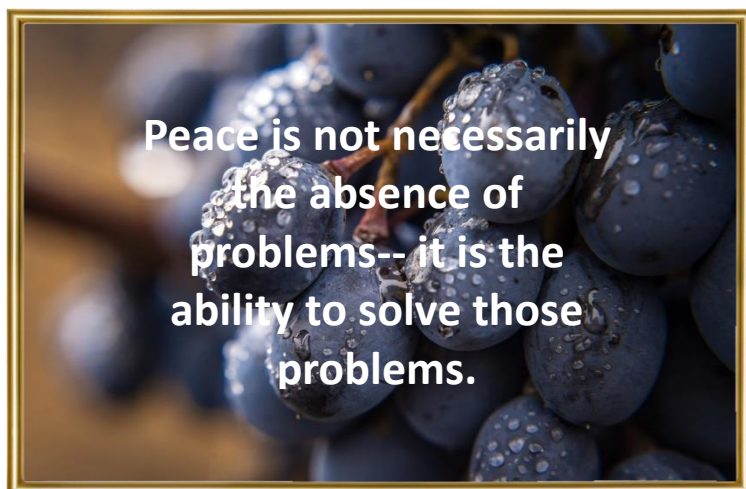
We must realize that love itself cannot be full unless working hand in hand with joy! True love is giving, and Christ said that **“It is more blessed to give (joyfully, we might add) than to receive” (Acts 20:35).** God is a God of joy. When we receive His Spirit, we also receive His nature of joy. Do we live to serve and to encourage others? Do we allow the fruit of the Spirit of God shine constantly in our lives, in all our activities, so that others might see it and glorify God? If so, then Paul's exhortation of joy will have an echo in our hearts: **“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, Rejoice!” (Philippians 4:4).**

Joy is also the by-product of faith; if we trust God, if we know that all things work together for our good because we love Him and are called according to His purpose, then we can't help but be joyful, truly happy and confident in all circumstances. **“Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you. And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.” (John 16:22-24).** When praises are continuously on our lips and in our hearts, we cannot be sorrowful. It is not possible.



and cooperative. Peace is not necessarily the absence of problems -- it is the ability to solve those problems. We are not peaceful naturally. Paul said we do not even know the way to peace on our own (**Romans 3: 17**). But if we ask God for His Holy Spirit, ask Him to show us how unpeaceful we really are, He will show us how looking to **“have it our way”** encourages conflict. We can then see how we have upset the peace so many times by wanting to GET rather than GIVE, and that we need to repent and turn things around. World leaders give speeches about peace and often quote extensively from the prophet Isaiah concerning the world's need to, **“...beat their swords into plowshares...”** (**Isaiah 2:4**). However, they avoid mentioning Isaiah's vital conclusion... **“The way of peace they have not known...”** (**Isaiah 59:8**)!

let that peace that **“surpasses all understanding...”** (**Philippians 4:7**) fill our lives. We cannot change much of the world now, but we can change our own lives, and this area of peace is something our individual lives, our marriages, and our children can greatly benefit from. True peace comes from God's Holy Spirit and from no other source! The law of God, magnified and rightly kept in spirit as well as in letter, is designed to bring peace. If we include peace in our lives as one of the fruits of God's Spirit, then someday soon, we'll be able to show the entire world how to be at peace when we rule with Jesus Christ, the **“Prince of Peace.”** World peace will come through development of God's spiritual fruits. If we practice and live the way of peace now, when Jesus Christ returns, we can spread it all over the world!



Nearly 6,000 years of human history have proven Isaiah's observation to be true. People want and need peace. We sing about it, talk about it, hold summit conferences and proclaim it, yet we never seem to permanently find it. Why? Is peace that hard to find? The answer is yes! Not only is it hard to find, but it is also impossible for man to find because this world has cut itself off from the only source of true, lasting peace. But if we yield to God's peaceful Spirit by turning God's inspired thoughts of peace into action, as we see in **Romans 12:21**, then we can **“...overcome evil with good,”** and

LONGSUFFERING

Longsuffering is the fruit that never spoils. Here is one fruit we can never give enough of, and it lasts a long, long time. This delectable and rewarding fruit is also called patience and is extremely necessary for the development of our physical and spiritual relationships.

Patience is perhaps one of the most difficult fruits of God's Holy Spirit to incorporate into our daily, physical lives, a virtue that seems to be in short supply these days. This is the age of quick response, instant gratification, and self-centeredness, with everyone focusing on their own personal wants and needs. Reports about incidents of road rage abound, where drivers become impatient with their fellow commuters and commit hostile acts of retribution against them. News reports often detail selfish, angry shoppers in stores at holiday sales events, fighting with each other, impatient to snag that long desired item they've wanted to buy, and not willing to wait until a later time or higher price to purchase it. Even family members can easily get short-tempered with one another, especially when

one fails to meet the other's needs, when and how they want them to. Suddenly, our inner fuse sizzles and we explode, or we are disgruntled and dissatisfied, and all our patience goes out the window.

A converted person's deep realization of their own need of God's generous pardon should trigger the forgiving attitude, the meekness and conciliatory feelings that are the cure to the spiritual diseases of hardheartedness and vindictiveness. Notice this wonderful advice from the apostle James, containing some of the most beautiful words in any language: **“But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits...”** (James 3:14-18 - KJV).

KINDNESS

Kindness, the act of being kind, describes the delicate nature of our next fruit with its content so soft and tender. What, exactly, is kindness? It is a delicate sensitivity to the needs of others around us, and then, after sensing the need, kindness fulfills the need with loving care. Oh, how others in the world need God's kindness and concern from us! And while kindness exhibits delicate characteristics, do not let that softness fool, either. Careful, considerate, kindness will make our family, friends, and neighbors feel secure and strong in our presence.

All of God's true servants should exhibit qualities of consideration and kindness toward others, showing genuine interest in people, for kindness is an attitude of the mind with a positive attitude and a caring spirit. God's Holy Spirit! In addition to expressing love for others in our daily interactions with them, we can also



express love through acts of kindness and help to others. Those of the world who come into close personal contact with true Christians can recognize that they are different from other people! It may have been hard to analyze why God's people are so wonderfully different, why they have such admirable and rare traits. But a true servant of God stands out like an oasis in the desert, considered to be different, **“...a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people...”** (1 Peter 2:9).

Are we such an individual? We should be and can be! Even though our friends and relatives may disagree entirely with our spiritual beliefs, they should recognize that there is something about us different and better than all the others. That difference is caused by the Holy Spirit of God within us, and the expression of the fruits of God's Holy Spirit, including those that we've read about so far **“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, KINDNESS”** (Galatians 5:22).

In the second part of this article, which will be published in the May issue of the *Lantern* magazine, we will look at the final four fruits of God's Holy Spirit, which are goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. We need all nine of these fruits to exist and flourish in our lives today as we continue to develop the character of God in preparation for our future roles in God's soon coming Kingdom! ♦

Be Slow to Anger...

(Continued from page 21)

He looked out over the city of Jerusalem, whose deceived, erring, wrong-doing people He loved, and cried out: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matt. 23:37). Here was emotion expressed. But it was an intelligent, honest expression of feeling -- not unthinking, unguided sensual impulse. It was filled with deep meaning.

Of course, Jesus had the divine power; He could have gathered the people of Jerusalem to Him by force! But if had He brought them to Him by force, His whole purpose of building character by free moral agency and choice would have been defeated. So, He instructed that the people should make their own decisions. These people rejected truth, happiness, salvation and ETERNAL LIFE and chose curses, suffering and death.

Should we ever feel deeply about anything? Yes, there are things we should feel deeply about. JESUS DID!



Just before the murdering mob came to lead Jesus to trial and death, He went apart from His disciples and prayed. **“And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly, Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground” (Luke 22:44).**

If we do learn to live by every word of God -- by God’s INSTRUCTION BOOK -- we will learn to guide emotions intelligently -- but we shall not suppress them, neither let them run rampant and uncontrolled where they ought not. ◆

Mystery of the Ages...

(Continued from page 6)

God is Creator of all that exists. Both God and the Word (who became Christ) have existed eternally, before all else. From them emanates the Spirit of God, by which God is omnipresent and omniscient. God the Father is the divine Father of the God Family, into which truly converted Christians shall be born.

In the next issue of The *Lantern* magazine, we will continue with a summary of the second

chapter within the book that describes the second mystery of the Bible: **“The Mystery of Angels and Evil Spirits,”** which we have touched upon in the November 2024 issue of this magazine. Once again, please remember that these articles are not meant to take the place of reading *Mystery of The Ages* on our own, but to serve as a summary, or overview, of each chapter concerning the mysteries of the Bible and to encourage us to read, or re-read, the book and study it on our own. ◆

BIBLE STUDY

KEEPING GOD'S COMMANDMENTS

During His ministry, Jesus Christ taught obedience to God as He preached the GOOD NEWS of the coming government of God on this earth. Repeatedly, God's Word emphasizes repentance from sin, which is defined as the breaking of God's great spiritual law (I John 3:4).

Repentance is the first step toward salvation, one of the conditions to receiving God's forgiveness of our sins. **"Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all" (Ecclesiastes 12:13).**

1) All ten of God's Commandments are listed for us in the Bible. **Exodus 20:3-17** and **Deuteronomy 5:7-21** are two of the main places where we can find them all listed. Also, in **Exodus 34:28; Deuteronomy 4:13 and 10:4**, we can see that there are exactly ten commandments that He has laid out for us.

2) Historically, the leading men of God's people have kept the commandments. In addition to Moses, both Abraham and David were commandment keepers. They had great respect for God's law. (**Psalm 119:97-100, 105; Romans 4:16**).

3) Jesus Christ Himself obeyed the Ten Commandments (**John 15: 10**), and He taught others to obey them. (**Matthew 19:17-19**). Christ knew that God's law would bring peace, fulfillment and joy to any individual or nation who would choose to obey it. Jesus did not come to do away with the Ten Commandments but to teach mankind how to live by God's laws. The Bible also shows that the very Church Jesus built would be keeping and teaching obedience to the Ten Commandments.

4) God's law is holy, just and good (**Romans 7: 12**). The person who keeps God's

law is at peace with God and with his neighbor. God gave His law to make man happy and to lead him into the peaceful, full, abundant life and eventually, into eternal life.

5) Christ explained the Ten Laws of God in **Matthew 22:35-40**. He basically summarized the very nature and character of God, reflected in His law, as love (**I John 4:16**). The Ten Commandments are a guide to teach us how to love. The first four commandments show us how to love God, while the last six of the Ten Commandments show us how to love our neighbor -- all fellow human beings.

6) We cannot earn salvation by keeping either the Ten Commandments or any other law of God (**Romans 6:23**), because eternal life is clearly a gift from God, and a gift is not something earned. But, neither can you receive eternal life as a lawbreaker (**I John 3: 4**). God desires that His Spirit-begotten children follow Him in the spirit and the fullness of His law.

Obedience to the Ten Commandments helps us to grow more like God in love, until we are finally born into God's spiritual Family at the resurrection. We are to strive to keep the Ten Commandments with all our might, and with God's help through His Holy Spirit. The time is coming soon when the whole world will come to understand and appreciate what an incredible blessing the law of God really is (**Isaiah 2:2-3**). ♦

Excerpts From the Desk of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong...

For each continuing issue of our magazine, we will post various EXCERPTS from Mr. Armstrong's past writings, sermons, and Bible studies.

The Good News of Tomorrow's World
Personal from Herbert W. Armstrong
March 1971



EMOTIONAL MATURITY

DO YOU feel *deeply* about things or circumstances that are *moving* or important? Did you ever check your emotional responses to know whether you have attained emotional maturity and stability?

...what about *spiritual* development? The average person, the world around, automatically accepts the established religion of his parents and his country. WHY are most Chinese Buddhists or Confucianists? Why do most people of India follow the Hindu religion? Why do most of the Japanese embrace Shintoism or Buddhism? Why do most Arab peoples follow the Moslem religion; most Jews follow Judaism; most Italians, Spaniards, and Frenchmen -- as well as South Americans - embrace Roman Catholicism; a majority of northern Europeans, Britons and Americans call themselves Protestant Christians? How many give any real thought to *why* they believe the religious ideas they hold sacred?

Do these run-of-the-mill hundreds of millions of people ever give serious thought to *spiritual growth*? Yet no person attains true maturity unless he attains spiritual maturity, as well as physical growth.

But fewer still ever give so much as a passing thought to the need for *emotional* development.

Just what do we *mean* - EMOTIONAL MATURITY? Few know the meaning of the term. Do *YOU*? Yet it is one of the real secrets of human happiness.

...One author defines it this way: development from a state of *taking* to a state of *giving and sharing*. There's also a spiritual principle involved -- development from natural impulses and responses of human nature to the principle of loving one's neighbor as himself.

...Man was put on earth to develop and attain to something infinitely higher than animal destiny. **Man was intended to develop spiritual CHARACTER -- to become like the Supreme GOD.** This all comes through the marvelous human MIND. One comes to knowledge of God through the mind. One realizes sin and repents of it *in the mind!* God's Spirit entering is the Spirit of a *sound mind!* Not only spiritual development, but also emotional maturity is developed through the MIND. It comes by right knowledge, creative thinking, right decisions, the use of will, self-discipline. To rightly direct his actions is man's purpose in life.

...Emotional maturity develops hand-in-hand with physical, mental and spiritual growth -- the four blending, finally, into the perfect spiritual character which is the true human destiny and the very purpose of life.

(Emphasis above, by editor of *The Lantern* magazine)



COMING ARTICLES



II Peter 1:19

◆ Mary Worship – Wrong, or Right?

In many religions throughout the world, over many centuries, the subject of worshipping the mother of a designated deity can be found woven through various religions. On top of these very real pagan mother worship examples, certain modern-day religions continue in the same vein by including the mother of Jesus Christ, Mary, in worship services. Mary Worship, is it wrong, or right?

◆ Fruit of the Spirit (Part 2)

There are a total of nine fruits of the Spirit listed in **Galatians 5:22-23**, the first five of which; love, joy, peace, longsuffering (patience), and kindness have been covered at length in the first part of this article. So now, let's look at the final five fruits of the Spirit that will sweeten our lives -- goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

◆ Bible Study – Pentecost

God has a Master Plan for mankind that He reminds us of with seven annual Holy Days. God established His festivals in conjunction with the two annual agricultural harvests in the land of Palestine, and He used these harvests as a pattern for the two spiritual "harvests" of His Great Master Plan. The first harvest is the relatively smaller spring grain harvest following the winter rains, and it began on the day of the "wave-sheaf" offering, ending just before the Feast of Firstfruits, or Day of Pentecost. This is the third step in God's Master Plan.