

Spreading the Good News of the Coming Kingdom of God

July 2008

Unshakeable Kingdom



**How to be Filled
With the Spirit of God**

Unshakeable Kingdom

VOL 2, NO. 3

JULY 2008

ABOUT THIS ISSUE:

GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT AND THE LOVE OF GOD



Two of the most talked about topics among religious circles are also two of the most misunderstood. Yet when understood correctly the two subjects are inseparably tied together. In this issue, we examine what the love of God really is . . . and how God's Holy Spirit is an integral part of it.



HOLY SPIRIT 2

GOD'S LOVE 4



GOD'S MASTERPIECE

God is in the process of molding and shaping a wonderful masterpiece. You might be surprised by what it is!

7



THE UNITED STATES AND BRITAIN IN PROPHECY

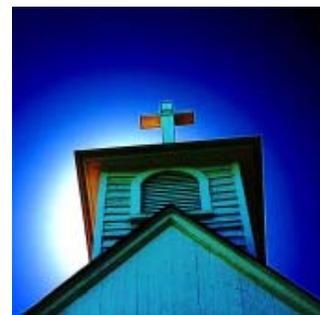
Back in 1945, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong wrote a book which has become a valuable tool for understanding Bible prophecy. In this issue we continue serially reprinting this exciting book which reveals who the United States and Britain really are...and the important role they will play in end-time events.

9

THE MARK OF THE BEAST

Could you be involved in it without realizing it?

12



PERSPECTIVE:

From the Pastor True Repentance..... 1
World Scene (Coming in Future Issues)

FEATURES:

Q&A 13
Letters to the Editor (Coming in Future Issues)

UNSHAKEABLE KINGDOM (ISSN pending) is published quarterly by the Wholeworld Church of God, P.O. Box 594, Goodlettsville, TN 37070-0594. Copyright © 2008 Wholeworld Church of God. All rights reserved. Second-class postage paid at Goodlettsville.

U.S. Postmaster: Send address changes to WHOLEWORLD CHURCH OF GOD, P.O. Box 594, Goodlettsville, TN 37070-0594. Please notify us immediately of any change in your address. Note: The publishers assume no responsibility for return of unsolicited materials.

For your FREE SUBSCRIPTION in the continental U.S.A., Alaska and Hawaii, call toll free 1-866-572-7330.

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

FROM THE PASTOR...

May the Force Be With You

One of the most popular series of science fiction movies of all time pits two forces against each other—one good and the other evil. The allusion is to some power over and above the physical ability of mankind. Mankind has always desired a source of power beyond and outside what each can do physically. People crave an additional force that would magnify power and permit control over actions and destiny.

One of mankind's most powerful psychological needs is to be able to control their lives. In this chaotic world, it seems as if many things happen that are far beyond our control. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we did have some extra force which could empower us to control our destiny? There exists such a force, yet mankind in general is ignorant of that force and how to possess it.

The word of God opens up our understanding on how "the Force" can be with us. Christ said to His disciples after His resurrection that they would be given power far beyond human ability. In Acts 1:8 Christ said, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you." That power is the power of the universe far beyond any that man can imagine. It *is* the power to control your own destiny.

Yes, you can receive a power so great that it will enable you to conquer death and live forever in the Kingdom of God. "Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (Rev. 20:6).

It is the power that comes to one from God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ to make you



one of the very children of God with the power of the universe at your fingertips.

"Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). The question is how can you receive this power from God? It is not a long, complicated process that takes great physical effort on your part. It takes a change of mind about the way you live today to a new way of thinking and living. It takes finding out what God wants from you and how you can follow His way and His lifestyle. It takes a simple understanding of what the future holds for you and how you can attain that future. It takes learning the way of God, a brief understanding of the good news of the Kingdom that is to come, a change of mind on your part and a change of direction in your life.

Peter said it best in Acts 2:38-39: "Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one 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. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.'"

You act and God provides the power to do His will. May the Force be with you!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ronald W. Laughland".

Ronald W. Laughland
Pastor



How to be Filled With the Spirit of God

The Bible often makes mention of the Spirit of God. But few know the truth about what it is. Fewer still know how to obtain it. Just what exactly IS the Spirit of God, anyway? And how is it important to our salvation?

By Ronald W. Laughland

Do you know what is the identifying factor of a true Christian?

The startling truth is that few know what a Christian is.

Millions may profess to be Christians, but unless God's Holy Spirit, given as His gift by grace, is at the moment dwelling in them, they are not Christians.

A person is a Christian in God's sight only while God's Holy Spirit is dwelling in him or her. Not before! Not after! So a truly converted person has received, and currently has, God's Holy Spirit dwelling within him.

The Spirit of God

When does one really become a Christian? It is when he receives God's Holy Spirit. "But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His" (Rom. 8:9).

If he or she has Christ's Spirit, he or she is Christ's—a Christian! The very Life of God has entered into, impregnated, him. He or she has been begotten as a child of God.

The Christian life is a life of spiritual training for a position in God's kingdom, when we shall be changed from mortal to immortal. At that time we shall be no longer flesh and blood humans, but composed of spirit, with eternal life inherent.

You see, the receiving of God's Spirit is God's gift. That is what God does; it comes by grace, as a gift. We can't earn it.

In fact, all through the New Testament it is made plain that we shall be rewarded according to our works. Not saved by works we have done.

Receiving God's Spirit

As mentioned earlier, a Christian—a truly converted person—is one who has received, and in

whose mind dwells the Holy Spirit of God. But how does one receive that Spirit of God?

On the day the Church of God was started, the Apostle Peter said, "Repent, and be baptized . . . in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). Repent of what? Of sin! And what is sin? It is defined in I John 3:4: "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness."

What law? The law that the carnal mind, hostile to God, is not subject to—the Law of God. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7).

This indicates that if the carnal mind is hostile to God's Law, then the spirit mind is subject to God's Law. We read in Acts 5:32, ". . . so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him."

These are the two conditions to

receiving God's gift of the Holy Spirit: Repentance and Faith.

Being baptized is the outward manifestation of the inner faith in Christ.

Repentance and faith

Repentance is not merely being sorry for something one has done. It is real repentance of what one is and has been—of his whole past attitude and life apart from God. It is a total change of mind and heart and direction of life. It is a change to a new way of life. It is a turning from the self-centered way of vanity, selfishness, greed; hostility to authority, envy, jealousy and unconcern for the good and welfare of others to the God-centered way of obedience, submission to authority, love toward God more than love of self and of love and concern for other humans equal to self-concern.

LOVE is the fulfilling of God's Law (Rom 13:10). But God's Law is a spiritual law (Rom 7:14), and can be fulfilled only through the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5). The Holy Spirit will open one's mind to understand God's instruction on how to live, but it will not force one to live God's way; it will not pull or push one.

Each Christian must take his own initiative, though God's Spirit will give him help, faith and power. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God" (Rom. 8:14).

The two above-mentioned conditions to becoming a Christian—repentance and faith—we ourselves must perform. But these do not make us Christians . . . they do not convert us. It is what GOD does—giving His

Holy Spirit by His grace as His free gift—that converts us.

Our repentance and faith do not earn the receiving of God's Spirit. God does not give us His Spirit because we repent and believe. He gives His Spirit because He wants to give it. He wants us to have His Spirit as His gift before we repent. He merely requires repentance and faith as conditions.

Yet no one can, of himself, say:



"Oh now, I see—I must repent. All right, I hereby repent." One does not just decide casually, as a matter of routine, to repent. Why? Jesus Christ said that none can come to Him, except the Spirit of the Father draw him. God grants repentance as a gift (Rom 2:4). God calls one, and convicts the mind and conscience by His Spirit, working on the mind externally.

Usually a real struggle goes on within. The person has been shaken to know he has done wrong—that he is wrong—he has sinned—he is a sinner! He is brought to real repentance, not only for what he has done, but for what he now sees that he is.

It is not easy. The self never wants to die. To repent is to make an unconditional surrender to God and to obey His Law! Yet the indi-

vidual, himself, must make the decision.

If he does repent—surrender to God and, in faith, accept Jesus Christ as his personal Savior—then upon performance of these two conditions, God promises to put within him the gift of the Holy Spirit. This is the very life of God, spirit life. It imparts to them the very divine nature!

This new convert has not received the full measure of God's Spirit which Christ had; he or she is only a spiritual babe in Christ. He must now grow spiritually, just as a newly conceived embryo in its mother's womb must grow physically large enough to be born as a human.

This new convert has now repented in his mind, from the depths of his heart. He means it, too! In all sincerity, in his mind and heart, he has turned around to go the other way, to live a different life. He has been converted; he is now a Christian and has received God's Holy Spirit. He really wants to do what is right and to obey God; to live God's way.

The true Christian has been reconciled to God through Christ. And, having God's Spirit, he enjoys actual fellowship with the Father and the Son, Jesus Christ.

No human being is strong enough to do this by him or herself! He or she must seek, and in faith receive, the help and power of God.

Now that you know this, you must make a decision that is personal and between you and God. May you choose the way that brings happiness and eventually a position in the Kingdom of God that is soon coming. □

How Can You Receive The Love of God?

By Tony L. Styer

Jesus Christ instructed that we should show love toward others. Many believe that the law was nailed to the cross, to be replaced by this new law of love. But how does one attain this Godly love? Is it simply an emotion that can be worked up at will? The answer may come as a surprise!

We see it all around us, in virtually every aspect of our lives: Young couples holding hands, music assuring us that all we need is love, and poetry assuring us that love is the answer to everything.

Billboards on the highways, advertisements on television, and internet ads all offer various ways of finding love . . . while churchgoers and church billboards tell us, through various platitudes, that we need to obtain the love of God.

And yet, with all this talk of love, we live in a world that seems more filled with hatred every day.

Just what exactly IS love anyway? Is there more than one type of love?

If so, which is the best . . . and where does it come from?

Three types of love

In the original texts of the Bible, there are many different words that are translated “love”, each having a different meaning or context. Of these, there are three words from the original Greek text that are used most often: *eros*, *philia*, and *agape*.

Almost everyone has experienced the first two types of love. *Eros* can be best understood as the feelings we have when we are infatuated or sexually attracted to another person. Our English word “erotic” is derived from this word.

Philia means “brotherly love”. It is the kind of caring that a person has toward a good friend or a family member. A good way to remember this definition is from the city of Philadelphia, which refers to itself as “the city of brotherly love”.

But the third type of love is on a higher plane than the others. It is a kind of love that most human beings will live their entire physical lives without ever experiencing.

This God-plane type of love is not found naturally in human beings. Yet it is this Godly, or *agape*, love that is the most to be desired.

Mr. Herbert Armstrong often referred to this type of love as “true outgoing concern.” It means put-

ting the welfare of another above the welfare of oneself . . . a concept that goes directly against basic human instinct.

Perhaps the closest analogy in the human experience that could compare to this *agape* type of love would be the love a mother has for a newborn baby. The baby is totally dependent upon the mother, and the mother will do anything to make sure the child's needs are met—often making tremendous sacrifices to do so.

Now imagine having that same type of love toward everyone. Not just toward your child, your mate, or your friends, but even toward total strangers or toward someone who is doing you harm! It is simply not within us to naturally exhibit that type of love.

And yet, although it is not possible for us to generate this *agape* love from within ourselves, God does make it available to us.

So how does one obtain the love of God? The answer may surprise you.

Bible definition of love

Many modern-day churchgoers believe that the love of God is an emotion...something that can be worked up within oneself in order to show love toward others.

An oft-quoted and commonly misunderstood scripture is the last three words of I John 4:8...“God is love”. A widespread teaching is that of a soft-spoken Jesus, who came to this earth to do away with the Ten Commandments in exchange for having love toward others.

It may come as a shock, then, to read the Bible's definition of Godly love. We can find it in Romans

13:10: “Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore *love is the fulfillment of the law.*”

In other words, when we fulfill or obey God's law—the Ten Commandments—we are showing Godly love.

The laws of God are there for a purpose. They were designed to teach human beings how to show outgoing concern to others. In fact, they sum up the very character of



God—the essence of what God is!

God really IS love, as mentioned earlier in I John 4:8. Love can be defined as being the essence of what God *is*. His character is perfect, and that character reflects total outgoing concern for others. His concern is for the well-being of every single human being on this earth. His entire nature consists of this outgoing concern.

God gave us the Ten Commandments as a definition of how we can show love . . . both to God and to others. They reflect the way God thinks and acts . . . always show-

ing regard for what is best for others.

When we obey The Ten Commandments, we are exhibiting the traits that make up God's character. We are, on the surface at least, showing love for God and for our fellow man.

The problem is, simply obeying a set of written commands might *reflect* the love that God has built into them . . . but it doesn't place this love inside our hearts. We can do the deeds that imitate God's love, but the love of God is still not a part of us.

There's still a very important ingredient missing!

Christ's true purpose for coming

With this true understanding . . . that the Ten Commandments summarize the very character of God . . . one begins to realize how truly ludicrous the idea that Jesus Christ came to do away with the Law really is. To do away with the Law of God would be to do away with God's character—with everything God consists of!

God's law defines who and what God is. Would God have sent His son to “do away” with the very substance of Himself?

To say that Christ came to replace the law of God with “love” . . . when love itself is defined as the fulfilling of that same law . . . makes no sense at all.

Jesus Christ Himself made it very clear that His purpose here was not to do away with the law. He told us, “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass

away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled” (Matt. 5:17-18).

Jesus then went on in the next verses to explain how the law was to become a *part* of us. He cited specific Commandments and explained that they were to be magnified; that we would no longer be following just the letter of God’s law, but the intent.

Christ did, indeed, come to bring love. However, that love is not something as simple as a feeling of “doing good toward others”. It is the Godly, *agape* love that instills the commandments of God into our hearts. It builds within us Godly character, the desire to obey God’s commandments, and out-flowing concern for others.

But by ourselves we are humanly incapable of showing this Godly *agape* type of love. So how do the laws of God become written on our hearts to make this kind of love possible?

Another Helper

Many misunderstand Christ’s real purpose in living a life of perfection, and then paying the penalty for our sins by being crucified. Up until then, our sins had cut us off from access to God (Isa. 59:2). By His sacrifice, Jesus Christ paid the penalty for our sins and opened the door for us to have direct access to God the Father.

It also allowed something else that we could not have accessed previously: God’s Holy Spirit.

Christ told His disciples that after he was gone, He would pray to the Father, and God would send “another Helper” . . . one that most in the world could not re-

ceive, but one that was already dwelling *with* them . . . and would soon dwell *within* them (John 14:16-17). This helper—the Holy Spirit—was sent after Christ’s death on the Day of Pentecost in 31 A.D. (Acts 2:1-18).

With God’s Holy Spirit, we actually have the mind of God working within us.

God’s Holy Spirit is not a helper in the form of a person, but consists of the power of God, dwelling within those who have it.

This Holy Spirit is only given to those whom God calls and who answer that calling: to repent—to turn away from our own way of life and commit to God’s way—and to be baptized into the Family of God (Acts 2:38).

Written on our hearts

Once a person has received the Spirit of God, he actually has God residing within him, helping him to be mindful of God’s laws and God’s will.

When we have God’s Holy Spirit, we literally have the mind of God working inside of us. His character—His love—is directly available to us. We are able to comprehend Godly things. We are able, in a small way, to love God’s laws and to live as God lives.

Over time—as we pray, fast, study, meditate and live God’s way of life—God’s Spirit will grow within us. We will become more and more like-minded with God. God’s laws become written on our hearts (Heb. 8:10).

In other words, we come to *love*

the law of God and to *want* to live according to that law, rather than just adhering to it because it is commanded.

And that love of God’s laws—that desire to obey God—is the love of God within us. By loving and obeying God’s laws, we are actually showing love toward God, whose character those laws reflect.

By ourselves, the love of God is unattainable. It is only by having God dwell within us, through His Holy Spirit, that God’s love can become a part of our character.

So how can we have the love of God? Romans 5 tells us that “the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts *by the Holy Spirit*” (verse 5). Only by receiving God’s Holy Spirit, through repentance and baptism, are we able to begin experiencing the love of God within us.

And that is only the starting point. Once we have received the Holy Spirit, we begin a lifelong process of striving to push our selfish human nature out of the way and to allow the love of God—His true outgoing concern—to rule our lives. It is a process of continual growth and overcoming.

And one day, when Christ returns to this earth, we will experience the fullness of God’s love as we shed our physical bodies and are made entirely like-minded with God . . . as spirit beings, joined in marriage with Jesus Christ and ruling side by side with Him through eternity. □

(For more information about your incredible future, request our free booklet “Why Were You Born?”)

God's Masterpiece

By Loni B. Styer

Each of us has something about ourselves that we wish was different. Maybe you are shy but wish you could be outgoing. You may not be athletic, artistic or good with people. Perhaps there's some other trait that you wish you had that everyone else seems to be blessed with.

Did you ever consider that God made you the way you are for a reason? You are His piece of art. He is molding you as a potter molds a vase or pot. And He will continue to mold you and shape you until you become perfect in His eyes. After years of chipping pieces off and smoothing the rough edges, the finished product will be a masterpiece made by God's own hands.

You might wonder just how God shapes and molds someone. That's a question worth looking into.

We are being carefully crafted by God to develop His character. Galatians 5:22 shows the traits of this Godly character: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control."

When God begins working with you, He begins to open your eyes and mind to His way of life. He causes things to happen to wake you up so you can see where you might be going wrong and to show how you need to change. This molding and shap-

ing process takes the rest of your natural life.

God actually hand picks those whom He wants to be working with. John 6:44 says: "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him."

He has only chosen to train a small group of people at this



time. He is not trying to save the whole world now. So if He has chosen you, there is a reason. You're a very special person in His eyes and are sanctified—set apart—above the rest. To be called by God is something we should never take lightly.

Once you are called, the next step is repentance leading to baptism . . . to put your life into God's hands and yield yourself to him. At this point, God's Holy Spirit, the power and mind of God, enters into you to help develop Godly character.

You are not suddenly perfect at baptism. Perfection is a process. This was a total disappointment for me when I was first baptized.

I thought everything would be easier with God's Holy Spirit within me to help me. But in actuality, God made sure there was always a challenge for me so I was constantly growing in some way. With each new challenge, I also learned to put more trust in Him and to ask Him for help and guidance. It's good to look at each new test or trial as an opportunity to learn something new and to grow with each challenge that comes our way.

We all are made a bit different from the next person. No matter what skills and talents we were born with or have been blessed to learn, we are still expected to be growing in character. We are to take what God has given us and work with it and perfect it.

However, there are some things about ourselves that we cannot change—such as if you're blind or have a learning disability. These things we must learn to accept in order to have good mental and emotional health and to be a happy person. We must think of the many blessings God has given us. We must have an attitude of gratitude and be content. Paul states in Phil. 4:11, ". . . for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content."

To reach this point of maturity is a great accomplishment . . . when done in balance. Being content is not the same as being lazy or unmotivated. Paul didn't

mean that you should not try to better your life if you have opportunities to do so.

If you are having trouble being content in any facet of life, remember Phil. 4:19: "And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Another encouraging scripture is Heb. 13:5, "Let your conduct be without covetousness, and be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'

We build character from the situations we find ourselves in. People who have had to learn to grow out of shyness can easily recognize other shy people and they truly understand and have compassion for them. When you go through a death in the family, have a deformed family member, etc., it gives you added empathy and understanding of others going through the same circumstances. Because of the compassion this develops in your character, God will be able to use you to help many others in the future.

Whatever hardships and trials we go through, God has a way of turning those trials around to benefit us . . . often in ways we may not understand at the time. Romans 8:28 reads, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God . . ."

Remember the story of Job, where Satan was allowed to cause



events to happen that were not good in themselves. But our God is so merciful and powerful, He turned those bad things into something beneficial for Job . . . and He'll do that for us as well.

At times, you might feel unhappy with yourself, or feel ugly and depressed. But if your personality is cheerful, fun and humorous, most people don't seem to notice the flaws you might see

in yourself. We seem to judge ourselves pretty unfairly at times.

On the other hand, if you let those feelings of depression and ugliness linger, they will take root to develop into bitterness. This works against the Godly character we hope to develop. Our moods affect our body language, and what is in our heart our mouth speaks (Matt. 12:34).

It is wise to seek God's help when you find yourself closing in like this. God wants you to show love toward yourself and toward others. He wants us to have an abundant life. He has set His laws in motion for our happiness.

Ask your Creator to work with you, to shape and mold you into the person that He can use for His glory. We are on this earth to be learning and growing in character. That means sometimes we need to be corrected and set straight.

We are being developed into a true masterpiece, in the very image and character of God! Let's put our whole heart into working toward that glorious day. □

The booklets below contain more information on related subjects covered in this issue, and are offered FREE by the Sabbath-keeping churches of God. Please check the ones you desire and mail to the address below:

- "Why Do You Observe Sunday?"** The Bible teaches the observance of the Sabbath! Which day did Christ and the Apostles observe? How did the day become changed from the seventh to the first day of the week?
- "What do you Mean...SALVATION?"** - Do you realize not one in a hundred knows what it is—how to get it—when you receive it? Don't be too sure you do!
- "Why Were You BORN?"** - Do you really know why you were born? Do you realize God has a purpose being worked out?

**Wholeworld Church of God
P.O. Box 594
Goodlettsville, TN 37070-0594**



The United States & Britain in Prophecy

Chapter 3—Jeremiah’s Strange Commission

By Herbert W. Armstrong

We continue this month with the third installment of this eye-opening and important booklet, as it was first published in 1945.

When the house of Israel was driven into Assyrian captivity, 721-718 B.C., the Kingdom of Judah had not yet sinned as a nation. Before Judah’s apostasy, God had said, through Hosea, “Though thou, ISRAEL, play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend . . .” (Hos. 4:15).

But later “her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also,” and God finally said, “The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah” (Jer. 3:8,11). And so, more than 130 years after Israel’s captivity, the time came when God drove out the Jewish Nation, too, in national captivity and slavery. They were taken as

slaves to *Babylon*—not to Assyria, where ISRAEL had been taken.

For this purpose God raised up a very special prophet, whose real calling and commission few indeed understand. This prophet was Jeremiah. He was one of the three men, only, who were sanctified before they were born. The other two were John and Baptist and Jesus Christ (see Jer. 1:5).

Jeremiah, when first given his vital calling and commission, was a young lad. Some evidence indicates he was seventeen years of age. By the time his commission was completed, he was an aged, white-haired patriarch. The commission is recorded in Jeremiah

1:10: “See,” God says to Jeremiah, “I have this day set thee over the nations and over kingdoms, *to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, TO BUILD, AND TO PLANT.*”

There it is! Jeremiah was set over NATIONS—more than one kingdom. He was a Jewish lad, living in Judah. He was set a prophet over Judah—but not Judah *alone*. Over the NATIONS—Judah and Israel. He was set over them to do two things: to tear down something, and then to build and plant something.

Jeremiah was used of God as a prophet to warn Judah of their sins, and of the coming invasion and captivity at the hands of Nebuchad-

nezzer of Babylon unless they repented. He was used as a go-between, a mediary, between the kings of Judah and Nebuchadnezzar the Chaldean king. It is well known that Jeremiah was used in destroying the kingdom of Judah.

But—note it in your Bible!—he also was commissioned to PLANT and to BUILD! To build and to plant what? Why, naturally, that which he was used in “rooting out” of Judah—the THRONE OF DAVID. He was set over THE KINGDOMS—the Kingdom of Israel as well as Judah. He was used in “rooting out” that throne from Judah. Then what was Jeremiah commissioned to do in ISRAEL? Ah! Note it! The *second* half of his strange and—little understood commission—to PLANT AND TO BUILD!

So far as the world knows, the last king to sit on that throne of David was Zedekiah of Judah. He was thrown down off the throne and rooted out of Judah in the year 585 B.C.—nearly 600 years before Christ!

What, then! Did God forget His covenant with David? Did the throne CEASE? True, the KINGDOM—the GOVERNMENT of Judah ceased, as had the kingdom of Israel more than 130 years before!

But see what *else* Jeremiah was commissioned to do—to PLANT AND TO BUILD! To plant and to build, then, of necessity, among the house of Israel, now supposing herself to be GENTILE! Therefore the identity and location of the replanting *must remain hidden to the world until this time of the END* in which we live!

Judah taken captive to Babylon

The life and work of Jeremiah is

a most fascinating story. The first chapters of the book of Jeremiah are devoted to his ministry, warning of the impending captivity of Judah. Then God caused their captivity.

It is generally known that



Babylon took Judah in three different stages. The first siege was in 604 B.C., a date about two years later than has been commonly reckoned, but a date now firmly established. The land did not *completely* pass into the hands of these Gentile Babylonians, however, until a full time-cycle of 19 years later, or 585 B.C.

You can read the part played by Jeremiah in this captivity in the book of Jeremiah.

But now notice an interesting fact. The last and final king recorded either in Bible or secular history as having sat on the throne of David was King Zedekiah of Judah (II Kings 25:18). When the Chaldean armies besieged Jerusalem, the city was broken up, the palace and temple destroyed. ALL the sons of King Zedekiah were killed before his eyes, that there would be no man to carry on his dynasty. King Zedekiah's eyes were put out and he was bound in chains and carried to Babylon where he died. You will read of this captivity in II Kings 25, II Chronicles 36, Jeremiah 39, and Jeremiah 52.

And now the *first* part of

Jeremiah's mysterious commission is accomplished! So far as the world could see, or has seen since, the dynasty of David had ENDED! No king remained on the throne. Judah's last king was dead; all his sons were dead.

Jeremiah's mysterious movements

But how about the *SECOND* part of Jeremiah's important commission? Was God able to keep His covenant with David?

Jeremiah was among these captives, yet he must remain free to carry out the second part of his commission. So, “the captain of the guard took Jeremiah, and said unto him . . . behold, I loose thee this day from the chains which were upon thine hand. If it seems good unto thee to come with me into Babylon, come; and I will look well unto thee: but if it seems ill unto thee to come with me into Babylon, forbear: behold, all the land is before thee: whither it seemeth good and convenient for thee to go, thither go. So the captain of the guard gave him victuals and a reward, and let him go” (Jer. 40:2-5).

Jeremiah was left absolutely free to perform the second half of his commission. Where did he go? We come now to an amazing, fascinating, thrilling part of the book of Jeremiah, which has been almost entirely overlooked.

“Then went Jeremiah unto Gedeliah . . . to Mizpah; and dwelt with him among the people that were left in the land” (v. 6).

Now this Gedeliah had been made governor over a remnant of Judah in the land by the king of Babylon, and since Jerusalem was destroyed,

he had made Mizpah his headquarters. But the king of Ammon plotted with a Jew named Ishmael to assassinate Gedeliah. The plot was executed; the governor, and part of the Jewish people were slain. Jeremiah was among the survivors.

“Then Ishmael carried away captive all the residue of the people that were in Mizpah, *even the king’s daughters*, and all the people that remained in Mizpah, whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard (from Babylon) had committed to Gedeliah...and carried them away captive, and departed to go over to the Ammonites” (Jer. 41:10).

Ah! Did you catch it? Read that passage again. Among them were *the king’s daughters!* Daughters of Zedekiah, king of Judah, and of David’s dynasty!

King Zedekiah had died in prison in Babylon (Jer. 52:11). All his sons had been killed. All possible heirs to Zedekiah’s throne had been *killed—except the king’s daughters!* Now we see why Jeremiah went to Mizpah!

Jeremiah, with royal seed for replanting, escapes

Soon a man named Johanan replaced Ishmael as leader. And in fear of reprisals from Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldean army, they appealed to the prophet, “and said unto Jeremiah and prophet, Let, we beseech thee, our supplication be accepted before thee, and pray for us unto the Lord thy God . . . that the Lord thy God may show us the way wherein we may walk” (Jer. 42:2-3).

The word of the Lord came to

Jeremiah, and He told them not to fear, that He would protect and deliver them. But the people wanted to flee to Egypt. This, the

Jeremiah was commissioned not only to pull down and destroy, but also to plant and build the throne of David.

Lord warned them not to do. If they did, the sword of Nebuchadnezzar—which they feared—would overtake them there, and they would die (Jer. 42:7-16).

But, as people usually do, they rejected God’s warning. “Thou speakest falsely,” Johanan answered Jeremiah (Jer. 43:2-3).

And so Johanan “took all the remnant of Judah . . . even men, and women, and children, *and the king’s daughters . . . and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah* (Jeremiah’s scribe, or secretary). So they came into the land of Egypt” (Jer. 43:5-7).

On reaching Egypt, God warned them again through Jeremiah that they should die there by the sword and famine, and “none shall return



but such as shall escape” (Jer. 44:14).

Yes, a *few* in this company are under divine protection. A divine mission is to be performed. They shall ESCAPE! The Lord continues:

“Yet a small number that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah” (Jer. 44:28).

Baruch was Jeremiah’s constant companion and secretary. It is important to note here God’s promise of protection to him: “Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, unto thee, O Baruch . . . Behold, that which I have built I will break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land . . . but thy life will I give until thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest” (Jer. 45: 2-5). Baruch’s life, like Jeremiah’s, was under divine protection!

Jeremiah, Baruch, and the royal seed for replanting and rebuilding David’s throne, all under divine protection, were to escape, and return to the land of Judah!

Now let Isaiah complete this prophecy: “For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion: the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this. And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall AGAIN TAKE ROOT DOWNWARD, AND BEAR FRUIT UPWARD” (Isa. 37:32,31).

This remnant with Jeremiah—at least one of the king’s daughters—shall *take root downward!* That is, BE REPLANTED!

And then *bear fruit upward!* Be BUILT!

Has God failed in His solemn covenant to keep alive David’s throne? Where was this planting and building? Can we find it in God’s Word? We can! The place and the people among whom the throne was re-established are clearly identified! □



The Mark of the Beast



Could you be receiving it without even realizing it?

By Ronald W. Laughland

Many scholars and everyday students of the Bible are well aware of the term “Mark of the Beast.” Many who call themselves Christians have probably never heard the term and are unaware of what it is and what it means. Some are familiar because of movies produced over the past years with of the designator 666, which is associated with someone who is under the influence of Satan and doing his evil will in our world.

But are these depictions in the movies really accurate? The only way to find out is to look at the Word of God where these general statements came from.

A study of the Bible shows that actually the name of the Beast, the *number* of the name of the Beast, and the Mark of the Beast have been something that goes far back into history.

The scriptures show that the mark of the Beast will produce a loss of life for all eternity, a thought which produces fear in the hearts of those who study these passages. In Revelation 19:20 it proclaims that any who worship the Beast will be thrown into the Lake of

Fire. That is something that no Christian wants.

Revelation 11:7 introduces a Beast that arises out of the bottomless pit, explaining what and who it is. But further inspection shows that this Beast is something that is first introduced into the Bible in Daniel, where we see a Beast rising out of the Great Sea (the Mediterranean Sea). Daniel finds this awesome Beast hard to describe (Dan. 7:2-7). Studying this passage we see that it is identical to the Beast of Revelation 13:1-2.

Scholars have known for years that the Beast of Daniel 7 and the statue of Daniel 2 are two descriptions of the same world-ruling system. When studied alongside Daniel 8, it indicates that the system started with the nation of Babylon. This nation was destroyed and taken over by the nations of the Medes and the Persians. They in turn fell to the nation of the Greco-Macedonian Empire which fell in 33 A.D. to the Roman Empire.

In Daniel 7:24-27 we see that coming out of this Roman system would be a companion; a religious figure who would change times

and laws. And as we see in Revelation 17:1-18, there is a woman, a harlot, riding the Beast. (In Bible prophecy a woman represents a church and a harlot would represent a false church) The woman would control this Beast and cause the Beast to do what she wants.

What does this have to do with the Mark of the Beast? To recap, the Beast is the Roman Empire that is controlled by the Roman Church during the ages when it was called the Holy Roman Empire.

What times and laws did this Empire change? There was great controversy during the first four centuries of the Christian era concerning the Sabbath vs. Sunday conflict.

Throughout history many have been tortured and put to death over this serious question. If the day we assemble is not important, why has it been such a controversial issue to theologians and preachers? If there is an all-powerful God, then by what authority do Christians observe Sunday if God has already commanded us to keep a different day? Who decreed Sunday worship and made it so?

A true investigation of history

Questions and Answers

Q Are we headed for a time of worldwide catastrophes? Is this what Jesus meant when he said, ‘All these are the beginning of sorrows’? Is the worst yet to come?

A The answer is an emphatic “YES”! Bible prophecy speaks of a time of worsening worldwide national conditions affecting all nations, but specifically singling out the

peoples of the English-speaking world.

God, through the prophet Ezekiel, forewarned that fully two thirds of our people were to perish by warfare, catastrophic weather calamities, famines and resultant disease epidemics. Read Ezekiel 5:12.

Most Bible prophecy is dual. Although ancient Israel suffered many of these same calamities, they had already gone into captivity hundreds of

years before Ezekiel’s time.

Ezekiel 5:12 is for us today. The horrible penalties for disobedience listed in Lev. 26 and Deut. 28—as well as the first chapter of Joel—not only were inflicted upon ancient Israel, but are prophetic for the near future.

These punishments are to fall on our peoples around the world today—barring a much-needed national repentance. □

Beast (Cont. from page 12)

will reveal that the change from Sabbath to Sunday worship was decreed by the Roman Emperor Constantine, not by the true Church.

Quotes from historical sources prove who changed Sabbath to Sunday. Let me quote now from The Council of Laodicea in Phrygia Pacatiana 364 A.D.

Canon XXIX stated, “Christians must not Judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day, rather honouring the Lord’s Day; and, if they can, resting then as Christians. But if any shall be found to be Judaizers, let them be anathema from Christ.”

Now we are getting to the crux of the matter. The Sabbath day is the day God set aside as a mark or sign to identify His people. Exodus 31:13-17 says, “Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: ‘Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am

the LORD who sanctifies you.

(14) “You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people.

(15) “Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.

(16) “Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.

(17) “It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.”

The Sabbath of God was created at creation. It is the mark of a Christian.

Jesus Christ is the Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2:27-28). In He-

brews 4:9 it says that there is a requirement to keep the Sabbath for God’s people: “There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God” (New American Standard translation). The New King James mistranslates it because the translators did not keep the Sabbath—they changed the text to fit their own doctrines.

If the mark of God for God’s people is the Sabbath, then what is the Mark of the Beast? It seems obvious that it is keeping the day of Sun worship, which is Sunday. Could you be keeping the wrong day, not even knowing that you are taking the Mark of the Beast?

Now, you must ask yourself “Who do you believe?” God created mankind, and He sent along His instruction book to show us how we must conduct our lives. Do you follow man, or God’s Word—the Bible? □

For more information on this topic, please contact us at the toll free number on the inside cover.

Coming Next Issue...



The Family...

*...Why is it so important
to God?*



Young Women...

*...Are you setting a
good example?*



The Feast of Tabernacles...

*...Looking forward to
a fantastic future!*



Don't miss our radio broadcast, "The Unshakeable Kingdom of God", aired weekly in the Nashville area on WNAH, 1360 AM, 8 am Saturdays

For those outside this area, the broadcast may be heard Saturday mornings on www.wnah.com at 8 am Central Time, or at any time on our website at www.wwcg.org/html/broadcasts.html.

Our new Online Interactive Bible Studies are held at 7:00 pm CST every other Wednesday. Check our online calendar at wwcg.org/cgi-bin/calendar.pl for an updated schedule.