

Our Brethren (Widows and Orphans)

Kenya Hands of Hope

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A Newsletter for the People of God
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1Co 14:26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

Our Brethren (Widows and Orphans) Kenya Hands of Hope
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Your fellowship was listed on The Journal's list of churches. We're looking for more donors to help us.

Please publish and/or announce an appeal to your brethren. Kenya Hands of Hope needs on behalf of our many suffering brethren in Kenya, especially our widows and orphans. Our brethren are suffering greatly because of the ongoing drought and increasing government extortion/corruption.

The founder and friend to many brethren (Bill Goff) has been visiting Kenya (at his own expense) since 2006, encouraging hundreds of brethren spiritually and providing for their physical needs. He posts monthly updates going back to 2006, with photos of our brethren and the projects we have accomplished by God's grace with the help of our faithful donors.

Kenya Hands of Hope

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100% of all donations go directly to the widows, orphans and other poor brethren. No administrative fees are deducted.

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Donate via PayPal or check to 5525 Springs Avenue, Myrtle Beach, SC 29577. Email goffb50@aol.com or goffb50@icloud.com. Phone 843-447-0140.

We especially need donations to purchase Bibles, food, soap, mosquito netting, malaria medicine, bedding, used clothing, and building materials for wells, latrines, and shade for our brethren to attend services on Sabbaths and holy days.

Here is a video presentation that Bill gave recently at the Independent Church of God Seventh Day.

Kenya Ministry Update by Bill Goff (YouTube videos)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A1AFWYoLDcs&t=15s>

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"He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord, and He will repay what he has given." (Proverbs 19:17)

"If you help the least of these My brethren, you do it for Me." (Matthew 25:40-45)

"Pure religion...is to visit the widows and the fatherless in their affliction..." (James 1:27)

God's Plan and the False Immortal Soul Doctrine

(Copyright 2023) by Craig Sablich (Charlotte, North Carolina)



"Then the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die.'" —Genesis 3:4

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I once talked with an old college friend about the so-called church fathers, who introduced the Doctrine of the Immortal Soul to the early church. The world’s nominally Christian churches believe that man is born with an immortal soul, which significantly influences other teachings. These churches use the stories of Enoch and Elijah and the Parable of Lazurus and the Rich Man as primary scriptures to support their belief. As far as my friend was concerned, it was a solid truth he could have faith in.

However, this teaching is one of, if not the most, enticing and yet destructive doctrines accepted by worldly Christianity. Based on a flawed interpretation of God’s Word, it is an unreliable foundation, which has caused most Christians to believe in the existence of God without giving them a reason to conduct their lives as He does. As we will see, this doctrine completely contradicts and distorts the clear evidence of the Plan of God for humanity.

Ensuring our understanding of this topic has a solid foundation of truth is imperative.

Man Is Mortal

What does the Bible teach about what happens when a person takes his or her last breath?

God provides us with patterns of truth throughout His Word. We will break down the evidence on this subject into five points.

I Corinthians 15:53-54 reveals a significant step in God’s Plan:

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So, when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.”

The apostle Paul clearly refers to man as mortal, and further, who “must put on immortality.” Mortal humans, by definition, will die, and everlasting life is something that must be added from outside them. Similarly, a baby, born naked, must be clothed afterward.

Paul writes in I Timothy 6:15-16, “. . . He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who *alone has immortality*” (emphasis ours throughout). According to Scripture, only Jesus Christ has immortality among those born human. Billions who have supposed they possessed immortal souls died deceived on this point.

So, the first point is that God created man mortal.

All Humans Will Die a Physical Death

God provided evidence of the truth to Adam and Eve while in the Garden, telling them, “For dust you are, and to dust you shall return” (Genesis 3:19). So, the second point is that each human being will experience physical death. Ecclesiastes 3:19-20 (*English Standard Version*) concurs:

For what happens to the children of man and what happens to the beasts is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and man has no advantage over the beasts, for all is vanity. All go to one place. All are from the dust, and to dust all return.

Psalms 146:4 adds more detail: “His spirit departs; he returns to his earth; in that very day his plans perish.”

God makes it clear that, at death, a human’s physical body decomposes, turning back into dust just like animals’ bodies do. Humanity is of the same natural, material, created order as the beasts of the earth.

The Human Spirit

But what about the psalmist’s phrase, “His spirit departs”? What happens at death to man’s spirit?

God gave human beings a spirit, as Job 32:8 states: “But there is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty gives him understanding.” As mentioned in the verse, this human spirit gives humans understanding or intellect, the power of mind that animals do not have. It is a gift of God that raises humanity above other creatures God made. There is no

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biblical indication that the human spirit contains any kind of life or sentience; it must be combined with a living being to function.

Scripture says this spirit of understanding departs at death. What happens to it then? Ecclesiastes 12:7 provides the answer: “Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.”

So, the third point is that all humans eventually die, returning to the earth, and at death, God takes back the person’s human spirit into safekeeping.

Jesus’ raising of Lazarus provides an illustration that helps us to understand how this works. The apostle John writes in John 11:11-14:

. . . and after that He said to them, “Our friend Lazarus *sleeps*, but I go that I may wake him up.” Then His disciples said, “Lord, if he sleeps he will get well.” However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus said to them plainly, “Lazarus is dead.”

Should not this world’s churches explain why Jesus failed to teach that Lazarus, who had been dead for four days, was already up in heaven? If he possessed an immortal soul, would he not have been in paradise with God? However, Jesus says plainly that Lazarus was dead, not alive in heaven.

Lazarus’ physical resurrection can be tied to events that took place at Christ’s death:

. . . and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints *who had fallen asleep* were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many. (Matthew 27:52-53)

Again, the text does not mention the souls of these *saints*—believers—having been residing in heaven. Instead, the Word of God describes humans who have died as “sleeping,” “slept,” or “fallen asleep” over 19 times. The Scriptures confirm that as a man takes his final breath, he dies in a way reminiscent of one falling asleep. As his life and all his abilities cease to function, his spirit of understanding returns to God.

The *When* of Immortality

The fourth point is that God promises immortality to believers, but it is a gift given at certain times, “each one in his own order” (see I Corinthians 15:23). So, when mortal man puts on immortality, what does it look like? How does it fit into God’s Plan? In Revelation 20:4, John writes:

And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Then, John mentions something interesting in verse 5: “But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.” Up to Christ’s resurrection, the Bible refers to individuals as being raised from the dead only to physical life. However, when a person experiences this “first resurrection,” it is to a spiritual life. This is when God’s saints, His elect firstfruits, put on immortality and incorruptibility, as Paul writes in I Corinthians 15:53-54 (see also I Thessalonians 4:15-17; Matthew 24:29-31; I John 3:2; Zechariah 14:3-5).

But why does He call this event “the *first* resurrection”? Using “first” implies there will be more than one. In John 5:28-29, Jesus says,

Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which *all who are in the graves* will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

Jesus is teaching us that all mankind who have died still lie in their graves. The same “all” will be resurrected from their graves. “Those who have done good,” that is, the righteous, will experience a resurrection to eternal life, but evildoers

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will experience a separate resurrection of condemnation for their lives of sin. This passage points to two unique resurrections.

In Daniel 12:1-2, we find support and more details on this future resurrection:

And at that time your people shall be delivered, every one whose name shall be found written in the book. And many of those who *sleep in the dust of the earth* shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Daniel confirms that there is a second and then a separate third resurrection.

God reveals that at the time of Christ's return, those who have entered into the New Covenant will be raised in the first resurrection. During their lives, opposed by Satan and the ways of this world, they believed the gospel and did the work to put on the image of their Savior, to live as God lives. These are the firstfruits described in Revelation 14:1-5, and John describes their future in Revelation 20:6: "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." At this time, the earth will finally experience a Millennium of peace under the rulership of Christ and His now-immortal saints.

As this period ends, the second resurrection occurs. It is reserved for those who never received an opportunity to hear and understand the gospel of the Kingdom. These are the "rest of the dead" mentioned in Revelation 20:5, the vast majority of humanity. Even those who lived centuries before Christ or lived completely ignorant of God's truth will be allowed to learn the truth of God's Plan for all of mankind. We see a vivid picture of this resurrection in Ezekiel 37, where all Israel is prophesied to be raised to physical life and given access to God's Spirit so they can believe and attain salvation.

John confirms this event in Revelation 20:12:

And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

The dead of humanity will arise to a period of judgment much like God's people are experiencing now but without the influence of Satan and an evil world following base human nature. God will be happy to grant them salvation and eternal life if they live His way of life.

The Third Resurrection

The fifth point is that some will reject immortality. The Bible indicates that there will be people—perhaps even many—who, despite having the truth of God revealed to them at some point in their lives, still choose to go their own way, to live their own selfish lifestyle. Even having a basic understanding of how to live as God lives, they will make the freewill decision to reject God's way of life. They will choose to live under their own system, choosing for themselves what is right or wrong rather than accepting God's will.

God will resurrect such people to a completely different experience than those raised in the second resurrection. Revelation 20:13-15 begins to reveal their fate:

The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

The apostle Paul states explicitly in Romans 6:23, "The wages of sin is death." People who will not repent of their sins will not get an eternal life of torment but a painful, irrevocable death. The consequences of this second death will eliminate all corruption from the Kingdom of God (see II Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1-8). God will not dwell with sin.

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A Gift of God

The Word of God is utterly silent about man having an innate, immortal soul that goes to heaven at death to be with God. In Hebrews 9:27, Paul pens a vital piece of evidence that destroys nominal Christianity’s Doctrine of the Immortal Soul: “And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.” God established this pattern—real death followed by judgment in a resurrection—for us to see He set it to function this way from the beginning.

There is only one place in the Bible that even implies man has an immortal soul, and it is a statement voiced by the adversary, Satan the Devil. Attempting to persuade Eve to eat the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, the serpent says, “You shall not surely die.” The Father of Lies is not a reliable source of truth! His lie completely contradicts the pure truth of God found in the rest of Scripture.

At the end of the same chapter, God slams the door on this whole line of thought:

Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”—therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden . . . (Genesis 3:22-23)

The truth could not be more straightforward. To live forever, human beings must take and eat the fruit of the Tree of Life, the fruit of God’s Holy Spirit. They do not have even the guarantee of eternal life within them until God gives them the gift of His Spirit. As Paul writes in Romans 6:23, “. . . but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” He also writes in Ephesians 1:13-14:

In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise [of eternal life in God’s Kingdom], who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession [the resurrection], to the praise of His glory.

The Example of David

God provides us with clear evidence of His pattern of the cycle of life using His servant, King David. I Kings 2:10 states, “So David rested with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David.” In Paul’s sermon to the Jews in Antioch in Pisidia in Acts 13:36, he gives us a little more detail on David’s death: “For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, *fell asleep*, and was buried with his fathers, and *saw corruption*.”

Peter confirms this in Acts 2:29: “Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.” He goes even further in verse 34, saying, “For David did not ascend into the heavens.” Even David, a man after God’s own heart (I Samuel 13:14), is currently in the grave, his body long ago having decayed, along with all the rest of mankind who have died.

Consider that Peter and others take pains to inform us that God shows no partiality (Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11; Ephesians 6:9; Deuteronomy 10:17; see also Hebrews 11:40). So, what has happened to David happens to all men. But we know that God has planned a future for David: to be king over all resurrected Israel in the time to come (Ezekiel 37:24). In the same way, God has a glorious, joyful future planned for all those who choose to live God’s way of life.

We pray for God to speed that day!

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Have a Great Sabbath!

Don't Fall for the Fake Jesus! (Copyright 2024) by Larry St. Clair (United States)

According to the internet, there are 2.2 billion Christians! Sadly most of them worship a "fake jesus". There is a "fake gospel" too, so I warn you, do not be deceived, it could cost you your SALVATION!

Perhaps you're wondering, "A fake Jesus and a fake gospel, what in the world is he talking about?"

Jesus Himself warned us, notice [Matthew 7:13-15](#).

13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in there at: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. 15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

Drop down to verses [21 to 29](#),

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. 24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: 25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. 28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: 29 For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Now in [Luke 21, verse 8](#) Jesus taught "Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.

Dropping down to [verses 16 & 17](#), And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake."

In [Matthew 24:24](#), Jesus said, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

The Apostle Peter warned us too, notice [2 Peter chapter 1, verses 1 to 10](#).

1 Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: 2 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, 3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; 6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; 7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. 8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. 10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

Now drop down to [verses 16 to 21](#).

16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. 18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. 19 We have also a more

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sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: 20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Continuing in **chapter 2, verses 1 to 3,**

1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. 2 And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. 3 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

The Apostle Paul also recognized the danger, and when preaching to the Corinthian's, he warned them and us, **2 Corinthians 11:2-4.** 2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. 3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. 4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.

Dropping down to **verses 13 to 15.**

13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. 14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.”

So just who is this other “fake jesus”? Could he be the one that did away with God's law and nailed it to the cross? The REAL Jesus said. “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”

(Matt 5:17 & 18)

The REAL Jesus said, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; **(Heb 10:16)** The REAL Jesus was questioned about His Messiahship. Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. **(Matt 12:38-40)**

The REAL Jesus was crucified on a Wednesday evening and rose Sabbath evening, fulfilling a full three days and three nights. The other “fake jesus” was crucified on a Friday night and rose early Sunday morning, being in the grave only one day and two nights, failing to fulfill the sign of true Messiahship.

This “fake gospel” teaches Sunday is a day of worship, the TRUE gospel teaches, “remember the Sabbath to keep it Holy” **(EX 20:8)**

The REAL Jesus said He was “Lord of the Sabbath.” **(Mark 2:27-28)**

The fake gospel observes Christmas and Easter and other worldly holidays. The TRUE gospel teaches us about the “Feasts of the LORD.” Instead of putting up a Christmas tree, **(Jer 10:2-5)** we go and stay in a booth or temporary dwelling and worship the Lord for seven days. Instead of hunting Easter eggs and chocolate bunnies, we wash each other's feet and eat unleavened bread. **(Lev 23) (John 13:12-15) (Matt 26:26-28)**

This fake gospel teaches to worship Mary and the Saints, the TRUE gospel teaches Thou shalt have no other gods before me. **(Ex 20:3)**

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The fake gospel uses crosses, pictures and even statues in worship, the TRUE gospel teaches Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. (Ex 20:4-6)

There are many other things this “fake jesus” and “fake gospel” teach that do not agree with the Holy Bible. Instead, they teach and trust in their traditions. The REAL Jesus often rebuked those that held to their traditions over the laws of God. (Matt 3 & 6) (Mark 7:9 & 13) The Apostle Paul was also quite concerned, notice Colossians 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

I find it odd, the world’s Christians use the same Bible we do, but they don’t follow or believe it. They choose to follow men, those false prophets, and traditions that the REAL Jesus, Paul and the other Apostles warned about.

There is much in this world to draw us away from God and His Son, hold tight to the Word of God, our Holy Bible is the only truth we’ll ever have. Final Scriptures: 1 John 2:15-18

“Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time”.

Who Killed Enoch?

(Copyright 2023) by David Sielaff (Portland, Oregon)

— Can We Know For Sure? (Dr. Ernest Martin, 1977)

The Book of Hebrews said that Enoch died (Hebrews 11:13). Genesis 5:22 shows that Enoch lived only 365 years while most of his contemporaries were living seven, eight, or nine centuries. But Enoch **“was not; for God took him”** (verse 24). He was “taken” before most ordinary people were **“gathered to their fathers.”** His death happened when he was a comparatively “young man.” But how did Enoch die? The Bible seems to have the answer.

The first nine chapters of Genesis are very condensed accounts of the first seventeen centuries of human history. Seth, the righteous man of Adam, is only appointed two verses for the record of his life. Several other important men are given equally terse mention. But one man and the evil line of which he came, is given eight verses — four times that of Seth. That person was named Lamech.¹

This wicked Lamech was the seventh in succession from Adam (Genesis 4:17–18). Righteous Enoch was also the seventh from Adam (Genesis 5:6–8 and Jude verse 14). They were close contemporaries.

Now, what was one of the main sins that Lamech committed? **“I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man [Hebrew: *yeh-led*] to my hurt”** (Genesis 4:23). The Hebrew word **“young man”** does not necessarily mean a very young child or a teenager. In 1 Kings 12:8, 10, and 14 the word referred to men who were approaching middle age. Lamech could well have slain someone who was of similar age.

Lamech’s crime must have been like Cain’s crime because he mentioned that criminal act of his ancestor relative to his own crime. **“If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold”** (Genesis 4:24). Recall that Cain slew his brother — righteous Abel, but he got a sevenfold protection from God against vengeance (Genesis 4:15). This shows that God was merciful to Cain though he did not deserve it.

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And now, some centuries later, a descendant of Cain’s asks for even greater protection. Does this mean that Lamech also killed a righteous man — perhaps one of even more importance?

¹ Later, a different Lamech was fathered by Methuselah. This second Lamech descended from the line of Seth and not Cain. He was the father of Noah (Genesis 5:26-31):

“And Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred eighty and two years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died. Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son: And he called his name Noah, saying,

‘This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which YHWH has cursed.’

And Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred ninety and five years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy and seven years: and he died.”

Remember that Lamech asked for seventy times the protection that God gave Cain for killing Abel. [There is no evidence Lamech received that protection from God. DWS]

Enoch was a very important man. In addition to being righteous, Enoch was also a prophet:

“And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these [evil people], saying ‘Behold, YHWH comes with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment.’”

• Jude verses 14–15

The prophet Enoch was certainly a significant individual. Enoch gave his son Methuselah a prophetic name that meant: **“When he [Methuselah] dies, I will be sent,”** referring to the future Deluge. Methuselah died precisely in the year of the great Flood of Noah. This and other prophecies of Enoch came true!

[For more information about Methuselah, [“Secret Number 54 - Why Methuselah Lived So Long,”](#) from Dr. Ernest Martin’s book: [101 Bible Secrets That Christians Do Not Know](#), free online. DWS]

It could well be that it was wicked Lamech who killed righteous Enoch. All the evidence leads to this possibility. Notice again the coincidences.

- [1]** Lamech and Enoch were both the seventh from Adam.
- [2]** Lamech killed a young man, and Enoch died comparatively young. And,
- [3]** Lamech must have killed an important righteous person because he wanted the protection afforded to Cain who did the same.

But why would Lamech want to kill Enoch? Lamech said he committed the murder **“for wounding me”** [actual Hebrew, Genesis 4:23]. Since Enoch was a preacher of righteousness, he would no doubt have been preaching heavily against the actions of the wicked people of his time — and Lamech was a major descendent of the evil genealogical line.

A confrontation had no doubt taken place between the two, because Lamech was “wounded” and “bruised” by his adversary. Enoch may have tried to put down the evil of Lamech by physical force (like Samuel did with the Amalekites) and in retaliation Lamech could have Enoch martyred in his 365th year of age.

Though the information to prove this is meager in this section of Genesis, and one cannot state with dogmatism that

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this is the answer, yet the solution is compatible with the available evidence.

Dr. Ernest Martin, 1977

For more information about Enoch, read [“Secret Number 83 - Did Enoch and Elijah Die?”](#) in again, [101 Bible Secrets](#), free online.

See David Sielaff’s other articles at:

[Sielaff, David – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](#)

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Here We Go Again {Xmas}

(Copyright 2006) by Wayne Schatzle (West Chester, Ohio)

Maybe I’m just a party pooper. As we brace for another Christmas season, I am still amazed at how people are trained to jump through hoops by the retailers. For me it has been about 30 years since I last celebrated the holiday. I remember well when I first learned about all the pagan trappings that make up the Christmas theme. I resisted not celebrating it, as the core of the celebration was the *supposed* birth of my Savior. I overlooked all the hard evidence that pointed to sun worship but eventually the material was just too much to ignore. After many hours of study and numerous trips to the library, I could not in all good conscience participate in Christmas anymore. Maybe I am just too determined to do what is right in the face of overwhelming evidence. For me I doubt if I will ever celebrate it again, at least with the pagan trappings that God’s people were warned to avoid.

Over the years I have had some interesting discussions with people about why they celebrate Christmas. The most common reason given is that it’s a tradition and they don’t want to break it because of family. Immediately, I thought of Abraham. He was raised in the pagan religion of the day- until God called him out of it. The remarkable thing is that the story just says, God told him to leave- and he just gathered his things and obeyed- not fretting over what his family might say- just left. I think that means something special to God that a man or woman will just obey without a bunch of excuses. Besides, Jesus Himself warned of keeping manmade traditions and turning your back on the truth. The next most frequent excuse is that I couldn’t take it away from my kids. I think that sells our children short. What is the truth worth? Do kids have to be showered with gifts to make them happy?

The Christian groups I have been involved with over the years ignore Christmas and keep the Feast of Tabernacles in the fall of the year and just happens to coincide with a close approximation of the actual birth date of Christ coming in the flesh! Many of the children in those organizations grew up never keeping Christmas, but always observing the feast of Tabernacles- which is a *Biblical based* celebration. Plus, this is a *week-long* celebration full of fun and Christ centered activities. Pagan trappings are kept out of it so there is no guilt involved.

If you enjoy the mad rush and spending frenzy and going into debt to try to buy some happiness. If you think it is a good thing to instill materialistic values in your children; If you enjoy the fight to travel in the midst of winter to get home for the “holidays”; If you don’t want to be bothered with the details of the pagan origins of Christmas and don’t care what God thinks of mixing ancient pagan trappings in worship of Him- then please ignore the small voice of sanity that tells you something is not right and have your party.

But if you are like a growing number of people fed up with being duped into participating in a modern-day orgy and thirst for pure worship like Abraham and the other biblical heros- then get smart and find out the facts of that curious celebration and have the courage to follow God regardless of what others say. The information is out there for those that wish to find it- it’s only a matter of priorities and the courage to make a stand for what is right.

See Wayne Schatzle's other articles at:

[Schatzle, Wayne – The "New" Church of God Messenger \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://church-of-god-bismarck.org)

Spiral Galaxies Indicate A Young Universe

(Copyright 2022) by David Rives (Lewisburg, Tennessee)



The Bible tells us that “the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows His handiwork.”

Astronomy is one of my passions. I love looking through telescopes and seeing the incredible and beautiful things God has made and placed throughout the universe for His glory.

Researchers estimate there are at least 170 billion galaxies in our observable universe. Each of these galaxies are made of billions or trillions of stars. The number of stars in our universe is just mind-blowing.

One type of galaxy, the kind we're going to look at today, is called a spiral galaxy. Our own Milky Way is a spiral galaxy. These galaxies have a dense cluster of stars in the middle and arms that spiral away from that center.

Since the 1930's astronomers have noticed a problem. The outer stars seem to take more time to complete their orbit than the central portion of the galaxy. This means that, after a few rotations, the spiral arms will lose their shape and basically disappear (as the galaxy winds up).

If the universe is billions of years old there shouldn't be any galaxies with a spiral shape left and yet we find them throughout the universe, including our local galaxy group. Could this be an indicator that the universe is not 13.7 billion years old?

Now, to make the problem worse, galaxies that are over 10 billion light years away, and therefore thought to be the youngest galaxies we've observed yet, are virtually identical to galaxies that are close by (the ones thought to be much older)! Why has no stellar evolution occurred over such a long period of time?

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It gets worse! The really visible arms of spiral galaxies contain a lot of blue stars.

Blue stars are bright and hot and thought to burn through their fuel relatively quickly. This begs the question: "if the universe is billions of years old, why are there still blue stars everywhere we look?"

Many ideas have been thrown around, from collapsing gas clouds to dark matter, but the Bible gives us the answer to all three of these problems. The universe is not billions of years old! God created the stars, and everything else about 6 thousand years ago.

We still have spiral galaxies and blue stars because we live in a young universe where we would scientifically expect to still see spirals and blue stars. A young universe that declares the glory of the Creator.

I'm David Rives... Truly the heavens declare the glory of God.

See David Rives other articles at:

[Rives, David – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://church-of-god-bismarck.org)

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Announcements

Announcement from William P. Goff (July 12, 2024)

Greetings Brethren, Shabbat Shalom.

The July 12, 2024, Kenya Update is now posted at:

[KHOFH – Kenya Hands of Hope](#)

Thank You.

Bill Goff

Holy Days 2024

Passover – April 23, 2024 (Observed at Sunset the Evening Before)

Passover/Unleavened Bread – April 23-29, 2024

Pentecost – June 12, 2024

Trumpets - October 3, 2024

Atonement – October 12, 2024

Tabernacles –October 17, 2024, to October 23, 2024

Last Great Day – October 24, 2024