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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.

Salt

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Years ago, in another lifetime it seems, I loved to play softball on the church team. We lived outside Dallas, Texas, at the time, an area known for its summertime heat. Many a spring and summer weekend would find us traveling to yet another double-elimination softball tournament. These would be held in one day, on a Sunday, starting early and ending late. Each team was guaranteed at least two games and could play as many as six or eight. Little shade was available, and the heat was often over 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

One summer, I repeatedly experienced severe leg cramps at each of these tournaments. The pain would have me rolling on the ground. My wife figured out that I was losing too much salt through sweating, hence the cramps. Once I began taking a salt tablet at each tournament, the cramps stopped. Years later, when I began to work outdoors in landscaping, I made sure to take salty snacks in my lunch each day.

Salt is a compound of sodium (Na), an unstable metal that can suddenly burst into flame, and chloride (Cl), a lethal gas. Combined, however, they form a substance that is essential for human life. It is not too extreme to state that, without it, we would soon die.

For instance, salt regulates the exchange of water between cells and their environment, aiding the absorption of nutrients and the disposal of waste into the bloodstream. Sodium, which the body cannot manufacture, is necessary for muscle contraction, as well as the transmission of nervous impulses. Chloride is essential for digestion and respiration.

An adult body contains about 250 grams of salt—enough to fill 3 or 4 saltshakers—but we are constantly losing it through bodily functions. It is imperative that we replace this lost salt, as I found out the hard way.

The History of Salt

In antiquity, Homer called salt a divine substance. Plato described it as being especially dear to the gods. Today, we take salt for granted; we think of it as a common, inexpensive substance that seasons food and clears ice from roads.

However, salt has many more amazing properties and uses. It seasons, cures, and preserves. It also seals, cleans, and acts as an antiseptic. In a booklet put out by a salt company in the 1920s, the list of uses includes keeping the colors bright on boiled vegetables; making ice cream freeze; whipping cream rapidly; getting more heat out of boiled water; removing rust; sealing cracks; removing spots on clothes; putting out grease fires; killing poison ivy; and treating sprains, sore throats, and earaches. The salt industry goes still further, claiming 14,000 different uses for this under-appreciated

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substance!

Until about a hundred years ago, when modern chemistry and geology revealed its prevalence, salt was one of the most sought-after commodities. In times past, it has served as currency, been responsible for trade routes and the establishment of great cities, provoked and financed wars, and played a strategic part in others. Taxes on salt have secured empires and inspired revolution.

The Romans appear to have esteemed salt highly. Its army, for a time, was even paid in salt. This is the origin of the word "salary" and the expressions "worth his salt" and "earning his salt." In fact, the Latin word *sal* became the French word *solde*, meaning "pay," and has come down to us in the word "soldier." The first of the great Roman roads was the Via Salaria, the Salt Road. The Romans used to salt their greens, which is the origin of the word "salad," salted.

The movie *Gandhi*, portraying the life of Mohandas Gandhi, shows him choosing, as his means of rebellion against British colonialism, to contravene Britain's salt policy. Many of these and other historical tidbits can be found by reading *Salt, A World History* by Mark Kurlansky: a fascinating study of the only rock humans eat.

During the times in which the Bible was written, salt was much more precious, and people better understood its value. One use that is probably not on the salt industry's list is that salt was to accompany every offering. "And every offering of your grain offering you shall season with salt; you shall not allow the salt of the covenant of your God to be lacking from your grain offering. With all your offerings you shall offer salt" (Leviticus 2:13).

The altar symbolizes God's table. Since salt is always on our tables, God would have it always used at His, not to preserve the sacrifice but because it was the food of God's table and should be salted, especially the meat. It was so important that it was provided by the Temple (Ezra 7:20-22) and stored in a room, the Chamber of Salt, in the court of the Temple.

Notice the phrase "salt of the covenant" in Leviticus 2:13. It has been common throughout history for people to confirm their agreements with each other by eating and drinking together, at which times salt is used. As salt was added to foods, not only for spice but also to preserve them from decay, it became a symbol of incorruptibility and permanence. A "covenant of salt" signified an everlasting covenant, as we will see. In the Bible, salt also came to symbolize purity, perfection, wisdom, hospitality, durability, and fidelity.

The need for various animal sacrifices passed with the death of Jesus Christ. However, the apostle Paul urges us to "present [our] bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is [our] reasonable service" (Romans 12:1). The first eleven chapters of Romans are doctrinal in nature, and with Romans 12:1, Paul begins explaining the practical application of God's teaching. The first thing he mentions is that we are to be living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God. For a sacrifice to be acceptable to God, it must be salted. So, in a symbolic manner, we must be salted as well.

What does this mean? Let's examine just three of salt's main traits and apply them spiritually to our lives.

Salt Preserves

Prior to 1800, the only way to keep food for any length of time was to salt it. This method of food preservation declined when people discovered that they could seal food in jars and heat it, what is called "canning" today. Then, in 1809 in London, Peter Durand received a patent for preserving food in tin cans. Unfortunately, he failed to invent the can opener—that would not come for several more years.

Around this same time, people began to pack fish in ice. Packing other foods in ice was not practical, however, because, once the ice melted, the resulting water created an environment in which bacteria could flourish. An American inventor named Clarence Birdseye took care of this. During his life, he patented 250 inventions, but we remember him mostly for his method of freezing food.

Now, when we want something for dinner, we reach into our freezers for vegetables, meats, desserts, and the like. In earlier times, we would have gone to the storehouse and sliced off some salted meat, or to the cellar for pickled vegetables. Salt, therefore, has come to stand for durability, permanence, perpetuity, incorruptibility, and purity. This is why salt was used to ratify a covenant; it preserved and stood for permanence. In Numbers 18:19, God says to Aaron:

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All the heave offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel offer to the Lord, I have given to you and your sons and daughters with you as an ordinance forever; it is a covenant of salt forever before the Lord with you and your descendants with you.

Adam Clarke comments that "salt was the opposite of leaven, for it preserved from putrefaction and corruption, and signified the purity and persevering fidelity that were necessary in the worship of God."

The symbolism should be obvious to us as living sacrifices. We are to be without spot or blemish—pure, in other words. God does not change (Hebrews 13:8), and He does not lie (Numbers 23:19). He has made certain covenants with His people that cannot be broken. We have only to live a life of obedience, which God helps us to do. Our sacrifice, then, is not a one-time deal but is ongoing and perpetual. Salt preserves.

Salt Seasons

The New King James' heading above Mark 9:49 reads, "Tasteless Salt Is Worthless," which is certainly true. Most of us have probably never tasted salt that had lost its flavor, but we can easily understand the concept. Christ tells His disciples, "For everyone will be seasoned with fire, and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt. Salt is good, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another" (Mark 9:49-50).

This characteristic is somewhat the opposite of the first one. Obviously, sacrifices in the Old Testament were not salted to preserve them since the meat was consumed immediately. They were salted because it was the food of God's table, and no flesh is eaten without salt. Jesus says, "Every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt." Man is flesh, and his nature, corrupt (Genesis 6:3); therefore, his sacrifice must be seasoned and made more palatable.

Notice that Christ says, "Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another." How do we do this? The apostle Paul writes in Colossians 4:6, "Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one." He is speaking specifically of answering those in the world, but should we not be even more gracious to those in our family?

The Greek word Paul uses, translated "grace," is *charis*, which means "graciousness, of manner or act, especially the divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life." Matthew Henry's commentary says, "Grace is the salt which seasons our discourse, makes it savory and keeps it from corrupting."

The words that come from our mouths reflect upon us more than any other facet of our lives. When we gossip, are those words seasoned? Are they "savory" to the ears of others? When we speak in a hurtful manner to our family, both physical and spiritual, are those words seasoned?

Think of it this way: If we are living sacrifices, and if the altar is God's table, what kind of dinner-table conversation would be appropriate while sharing a meal with God? Revelation 3:20 tells us that we will have the chance to dine with Christ. If we live our lives as living sacrifices, then we are always before the altar of God. Our actions, especially our speech, should always be done as if we are carrying on conversations at the table with Christ. Salt seasons.

A Little Goes a Long Way

Every Sabbath, for as long as I can remember, I have made brunch for the family. Along with the eggs, fruit, bread, and meat, I usually prepare some grits. Sometimes, I forget to add the salt to the grits. As many know, grits without salt are horrible.

Most times, I do not even measure the salt because I am a lazy cook; I just pour and measure by eye. It does not take much salt to season them. If I put too much in though, it detracts from the food. All one tastes is the salt, and it is just as bad as no salt at all.

Jesus says in Matthew 5:13, "You [believers] are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men." We must, as Matthew Henry comments, retain the relish and savor of the salt. For "if this salt lose its saltiness, if a Christian revolt from his Christianity, if he loses the savor of it, and be no longer under the power and influence of it, what can recover him, or wherewith will you season him?"

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God used a small number of people to support Herbert W. Armstrong in the preaching of the gospel to the world. We are now even fewer in number, yet we have influence far out of relation to our size. What is more, only a remnant of us will support the work of the Two Witnesses. God has always worked with the few. However, if we ease up, if we lose our flavor, we will "be thrown out and trampled underfoot"—a scary thought indeed!

At one time, salt was thought to be very rare. As drilling techniques improved, it was discovered that the earth possessed huge underground salt deposits. Near the town of Cardona, Spain, there is literally a mountain of salt. Covered by a few feet of soil, most of the mountain—around 70 percent—is pure rock salt. Just as God's people are rare now, we represent multitudes to be "discovered" in the future. A little salt goes a long way.

These three points barely scratch the surface of this subject. As with salt itself, there is more to it than what first appears. Pointing out the depth of what, on the surface, looks to be simple statements about a common substance could expand into volumes of insights and instruction. Like so much of what we read in the Bible, God has built in many layers of meaning.

What "simple" principle can we take away from this study? God has called us to be living sacrifices. The Christian life is an ongoing process of striving for purity, in which we must ensure that our lives are properly seasoned so that we might not lose our "flavor" and succeed in being among God's firstfruits.

See Mike Ford's other articles at:

Ford, Mike – Church of God, Bismarck (church-of-god-bismarck.org)

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Flavorless Salt

(Copyright 08-21-2024) by Hunter D. Swanson (Charlotte, North Carolina)



Forerunner, "Ready Answer," August 21, 2024

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“Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.” (Colossians 4:6)

Does anyone like competitive cooking shows? I am not fond of the exaggerated emotions and intensity for the sake of entertainment. Now, my wife, on the other hand, loves these shows. She may not watch them all the time, but she has gone through her fair share of episodes of cutthroat kitchen and grocery games, including “The Great British Bake Off,” which even I am a sucker for.

One day, I walked into the living room while she was watching “Top Chef,” and it caught my attention. The show had an interesting concept. Each season started with around sixteen contestants, and each episode contained an elimination challenge, after which the person with the least-liked dish was sent packing.

We binged multiple seasons after work for weeks, often forgetting to attend to much-needed house chores and responsibilities. We watched so much and became so invested in it that my biggest fear went from snakes to being told, “Hunter, please pack your knives and go,” watching all my culinary dreams being flushed down the drain. Jokes aside, I am not a good cook, and I generally leave the cooking to my wife, as she rarely makes a meal that I do not absolutely love.

While watching “Top Chef,” I did not pay as much attention to the food being made as to the judges’ critiques. The most beautifully plated food could end up placed at the bottom of the contestants’ offerings because of a severe lack of flavor. Time and again, the judges would say, “Flavor trumps all,” and mention that a little bit of salt would have brought a dish’s flavor profile to where it needed to be. During one season, one chef’s dishes constantly needed more salt. It was almost as if nothing the judges said could convince him to add just a bit more salt to his food!

Our Interactions With Outsiders

There is a comparison to be made between this culinary judgment and how hard it can be for us to make changes in our lives when our Judge keeps telling us to change. However, I wish to focus on properly flavoring our speech with salt, for our speech is how we communicate the thoughts and intentions of our hearts. Notice Colossians 4:5-6:

Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.

For our purposes, we need to take away two things from this passage. The first is in verse 5, which tells us it is important to act wisely, displaying godly character to those outside His truth. *The Amplified Bible* renders verse 5 as:

Conduct yourself with wisdom in your interactions with outsiders (non-believers), making the most of each opportunity [treating it as something precious].

The apostle Paul instructs us to pay careful attention to the time we spend with others outside the faith, treating it as something precious. It highlights how important our conduct is since we live with God’s name on us. How we display ourselves when in the presence of outsiders impacts God’s reputation. Remember, names have value, especially in terms of reputation. If we are to place ourselves under God’s name, which has the highest, most respected reputation, then we should act accordingly.

The first takeaway, then, is to pay careful attention to how we treat non-believers. They are not to be just shoved aside with no regard. Instead, we should represent God well—as perfectly as possible.

The second takeaway lies in verse 6, that our speech should “be with grace, seasoned with salt.” Mike Ford, in a Forerunner article titled “Salt,” brings into the equation those who are not outside—our spiritual Family. Paul’s instruction applies just as much to our speech toward them.

The Greek word Paul uses, translated “grace,” is *charis*, which means “graciousness, of manner or act, especially in divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life.” Matthew Henry’s commentary says, “Grace is the salt which seasons our discourse, makes it savory and keeps it from corrupting.”

The words that come from our mouths reflect upon us more than any other facet of our lives. When we gossip,

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are those words seasoned? Are they “savory” to the ears of others? When we speak in a hurtful manner to our family, both physical and spiritual, are those words seasoned?

He framed the perspective well here, accentuating the fact that what we speak shines a light on who we really are. How often do we use unsavory language? Do we consider our overall perspectives on life to play a part in our speech? That is, are we pessimists or optimists? Perhaps we are pessimists hiding behind a claim of being realists, so our “realistic” perspective actually comes out in our speech as pessimism.

So, what is the flavor of our speech? Are we always speaking negatively about life, or are we positive and uplifting about it? If we are constantly negative and putting things down, we are reflecting poorly on God’s way of life, which will immediately turn people away! Who wants to be a part of an organization when its members always complain? How does God feel if we always complain about what He has or has not given us?

Taking God’s Name in Vain

Of course, society makes this even more difficult. How often do we see unsavory language due to poor perspectives in the world? Over the years, television has allowed increasingly more vulgar language to creep in, and movies have done the same but worse! Language on the Internet is crass, and people’s conversations, in general, have followed suit, containing more foul and negative language, which should make us uncomfortable.

We can be sure that speaking with grace definitely does not mean swearing or cursing every few words—and that includes the “lesser” cuss words. Swearing is not the only aspect of our speech we should be worried about, but it is a major problem in the culture we live in. Worse, we can easily absorb it from this world, for it is everywhere. We must be cautious not to let ourselves speak like the uncalled people around us. Anyone with a job knows how frustrating it can be to hear one’s coworkers’ constant, corrupt language.

One thing people do—a lot! — is take God’s name in vain. Adding His holy name to their curses is a vile sin, but they do it with careless abandon. It is the farthest thing from honoring God and His name, which is part of speaking with grace. The basic idea of taking God’s name in vain (not just in speech, but in all our conduct) is found in the third commandment, which appears in Exodus 20:7: “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.”

In the church, parents, teachers, ministers, and youth camp instructors, when speaking about this commandment, have typically focused on using euphemisms like “Oh, my God!” (or its acronym, “OMG”), “My goodness,” “Jeez,” and literally dozens of other variations of “God,” “Jesus,” “Christ,” or other names or attributes of God used as oaths. We must not be saying such things. However, while we should not lessen the importance of that aspect of taking God’s name in vain, there are deeper spiritual lessons behind the face value of God’s commandments.

To take something in vain means to take, carry, or bear it in a meaningless and useless way. It expands to claiming the thing to be empty, a vanity, even false and deceptive. It can mean that we do not give it a thought or care, valuing it as worthless.

So, considering God’s name, who it identifies, and the glory and holiness of God, we must absolutely not use God’s name inappropriately! We should not let it become part of our habitual, careless speech. To use God’s name in a common way, without reverence or consideration for the Supreme Being of the universe, oversteps the line of blasphemy.

We should feed Colossians 4:5-6 back into our thoughts on this matter. Even if we do not employ these euphemisms for His name, we *cannot* risk misrepresenting God’s name in our speech, especially with outsiders, treating God and His way lightly or disrespectfully. We should want to avoid breaking the commandment in any way, since it says explicitly, “. . . the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.”

Jesus on Our Words

In Matthew 12, we receive another brutal reminder—from our Savior Jesus Christ Himself—that our speech displays the contents of our hearts, whether we think it does or not:

Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its

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fruit. Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. ([Matthew 12:33-34](#))

Notice how clearly Christ puts this in His analogy. Just as a tree bears its fruit, we as Christians are to bear good fruit, the fruit of the Spirit. It is the principle of cause and effect or source and outcome. A major way we display the true nature of our hearts is through our speech. What we say reflects what we truly believe and think. Jesus explains further:

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned. ([Matthew 12:35-37](#))

His conclusion strikes hard. It is terrifying! While we have discussed intentional speech toward outsiders and even with church members, here we read that we will have to explain every *idle* word before His judgment seat!

How often do we consider the words we mumble? Words we say as automatic reactions to situations we face, even just to ourselves? Words we speak as part of our unthinking banter with friends? What about song lyrics we thoughtlessly sing under our breath?

If someone said “um” frequently in every sentence, it would be unconscious to him, yet it would drive every listener up the wall. “Um” is an idle word. What are the “ums” in our speech, that is, things we say without thinking? If it is “um,” great! It is harmless.

But what if our “um” is “Oh, my”? Many of us are guilty of this one. It seems harmless until one realizes what it replaces: “Oh, my God (OMG)” or “Oh, my goodness.” It is just a shortened, euphemistic version of a phrase that deliberately takes God’s name in vain!

It is not enough for us to eliminate bad words from our vocabulary by just focusing on swear words and their euphemisms; we need to remove ungodly speech entirely. We also need to root out other grotesque, earthy language that surrounds us in our society today, for that language lacks gracious seasoning, the flavor of what is good and right.

Jesus speaks to this in [Matthew 5:13](#), describing His disciples’ impact on those around them in the world: “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.” Our Savior expects us to leave only a good impression of godly living, including speech, in our interactions.

More Than Talk

Our speech is so much more than just how we communicate with each other. It reflects who we are at our core, especially the idle words we speak when not actively thinking. If we have poor speech or must fake and force good speech, what does that expose about our hearts? Are we truly changing ourselves for the better and representing the integrity of God’s name with gracious speech? Or are we habitually speaking like the unconverted and misusing God’s name, only speaking words “seasoned with salt” when around other church members?

In my public school, there was the typical problem with swearing and poor language. A social studies teacher in the eighth grade said, “If you need to use swearwords or vulgar phrases to react and describe how you feel, then you are not educated enough.” She explained that those common, ugly words are lazy filler speech and an excuse for not building a more respectable vocabulary.

It is easier to exhibit good speech with our brethren, those who are part of our spiritual Family. Yet, in Colossians, Paul wrote primarily about speech toward those on the outside for a very good reason. In this context, those in the world with whom we converse typically concern us less. We can even feel they do not matter at all, as we may never see them again. So, we can easily let ourselves relax or give ourselves a break and slip into the ungodly lingo of the time. Who will know?

But God is aware ([Malachi 3:16](#)). He is always watching us, always taking stock of our hearts. Remember, “every idle

word"! So, consider your speech! May it always be well-seasoned with the grace of God.

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A Bride Prepared (Chapter 1)

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Introduction

From the very beginning, Jesus Christ has made known to us His intention to marry a most exquisite Bride. The marriage of the Lamb to His spouse will commence the eternal covenant longed for by Jesus Christ from time immemorial. From the days of Israel's espousal in the wilderness (Jeremiah 2:2) up until the marriage of the Lamb, Jesus Christ has loved His Bride-to-be with a perfect love that surpasses anything we can remotely imagine (Ephesians 3:19). Their wedding will be the most superb ceremony the heavens and earth have ever witnessed. Though this may sound like a dream or a fable, it is, in fact, a magnificent reality.

Brethren, we have only a short time to prepare. Many of those who consider themselves to be a part of the Church of God are not prepared to be the Bride of Jesus Christ. The seventh doctrine of Jesus Christ is, "Go on to perfection;" this is what the Bride must be doing (Hebrews 6:1-2).

It should go without saying that Jesus is going to be extremely selective when taking His wife for ever more. Though the world prefers to believe that Jesus accepts us in our current condition – "just as you are" – it is obvious from the Scriptures that His Bride will be arrayed in the purest white wedding gown – symbolizing her perfect love for Him, her spotless spiritual condition, and her eternal faithfulness in marriage.

Are we absolutely certain that we meet that criteria – in other words, are we as ready and prepared as we can possibly be? Anyone who assumes that they have attained to the *perfect measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ*, underestimates the supreme perfection of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 4:13). To what degree of excellence must the Church brethren attain in order to be ready?

When comparing the unity of mind and heart within the marriage relationship to the bond of unity that exists between Christ and the Church brethren, the apostle Paul called it a great mystery. What is the significance of the wedding of Jesus Christ to the Church? Who is the Bride? Remarkably, it is revealed that not everyone will participate in the marriage supper. *Blessed are they who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!* What can we do to ensure that we will be invited to take part in Christ's wedding?

Prophetic Scriptures bring to light the splendor of the ultimate nuptial ceremony. We do not wish to miss out on the most splendid wedding of all time. What an incredible truth that our Lord and Master has chosen to make us His Wife by entering into an eternal pledge with us. Mere words fail to portray the most glorious ceremony ever, which Christ has reserved for His Bride alone. Divine music will reverberate across the heavens, and gleaming, brilliance will illuminate the throne room, as the Bride is presented to her Lord. She will be accepted by Him, adorned in her radiant white silk wedding gown – and upon her head she will wear a beautiful sparkling crown (Ezekiel 16:12).

We are Betrothed to Christ

Even now, we are engaged. This is the only time of preparation for us to become a pure virgin betrothed to Jesus Christ our Bridegroom. "I have espoused you to one husband, so that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." (2 Corinthians 11:2) He is going to enter into an eternal new covenant marriage relationship with spiritual Israel – the Church of God – which will never be broken. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." (Hebrews 8:8, Jeremiah 31:31-32)

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“Let us be glad and rejoice and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they who are invited unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he said unto me, these are the true sayings of God.” (Revelation 19:7-9)

The Church of God is not ready for the wedding. The lack of concern and respect of brothers and sisters in Christ for one another shows that we have a ways to go. The split and scattered state of the Church attests to the fact that the Bride of Christ is not yet prepared. After years of Christian living sermons explaining how we must let our light shine – the fruit of our lives is hardly distinguishable from those in the world. We are not living according to the rules of the Kingdom – now – as we should be. If we did, we would be, *“A light to the world – and our light would so shine before men... that they would be glorifying our Father who is in heaven.”* (Matthew 5:14-16) There are reasons that this is not happening. This booklet describes what remains to be done by those who have been called and have begun to follow through on God’s plan of salvation.

The True Sayings of God

When we read, *“These are the true sayings of God,”* we are to understand this prophecy of the *marriage of the Lamb* to be real and factual – not merely allegorical. It is our purpose to demonstrate the validity and reality of Christ’s words, and to alert the brethren to the critical need to make themselves ready – *His wife has made herself ready*. Christ has fulfilled His part, but the question remains – what part of the Church is ready now? The *readiness of the Bride* is the very thing we must be most concerned about because our eternal salvation is at stake and depends on it.

What will the Bride of Christ be like? How can she be spiritually pure? The Bride will be *arrayed in fine linen, clean and white* – meaning that she will be an innocent, virgin Bride. Jesus has done His part in washing His Bride to make her righteous. She will be perfect and spotless – her attributes matching Christ’s own perfection and glory – because He has made her spiritually pure.

“Christ loves the [Bride] and gave Himself for her; that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that she should be holy and without blemish.” (Ephesians 5:25-27)

What an exceedingly beautiful ceremony it will be for the select Bride who looks for Christ’s coming. *“The glorious Bridegroom will come; and [only] those who were ready went in with Him to the marriage: and the door was shut.”* (Matthew 25:10) The reality of God’s promise will far exceed the most sublime expectation of the Bride. We do not want to miss out! Let us make ready and ensure that we are among those whom Jesus Christ will choose to be His Bride.

Chapter 1: Is the Bride Ready? ***A Bride Prepared***

Is the Bride Ready?

We are at the end of the age – all the signs that Jesus told us to watch for *are near, even at the door* (Matthew 24:33). Are we Church brethren ready to meet Jesus Christ at His return? You might respond by saying, “Yes, I’m ready – I am tired of waiting – let’s get on with it.” But are we **spiritually prepared** to be the Bride of Christ? That is the intent of Christ’s words, *“The Bride has made herself ready,”* in describing those brethren who constitute the Bride that He will marry at His coming.

Do we have the eyes to see that over the last few decades, the Church of God has slipped terribly away from being the ideal Bride? It has lost its enthusiasm and passion to see Christ establish the Kingdom of God. There no longer exists a burning desire to share the meaning of our faith with the rest of the world.

There are those who feel that their media department produces a good program for television, but Jesus said that is not the same thing as each of us proclaiming the gospel by dynamically **living our faith** – *that the world may know* (John 17:23). The Christian love of the great majority of the brethren has waxed cold. The Church is *not prepared* – note the words of Jesus: *“While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.”* (Matthew 25:5)

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Here is the problem: These words, “*The Bride has made herself ready,*” do not describe the greater Church of God today. Let us face it – if we understand anything about the practice of our Christian faith, we will readily admit that the spiritual condition of the Church is in dire straits. The Church of God is *not* ready for the wedding supper of the Lord.

Our Salvation is Near

That is indeed a bold statement, but the evidence is abundantly clear that this last era of the Church has dozed off. There is not a lot of difference in the lives of good Protestants and us, except that our socializing is on Saturday, and we take our “vacation” in the fall. The slumbering brethren are disregarding the admonition of Paul, “*Knowing the time, that now it is high time to **awake out of sleep**: for now is our salvation nearer than when we [first] believed.*” ([Romans 13:11](#))

Jesus foretold our depleted end-time spiritual state as a warning to us. “*At the end of the day you say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red, and in the morning you say, it will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and overcast.*” ([Matthew 16:3](#)) That is not a weather report! Jesus is alerting us to discern the signs of the times. He is saying, “Look at the poor spiritual condition of the brethren – and take action!” If we do not wake up and get busy, we will be rejected. “*Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.*” ([Revelation 3:16](#))

None of us deliberately want to be lukewarm, blind, or lackadaisical. But how do we change? What must we do to be prepared? There have always been those who did not walk worthy of their Christian calling, and there always will be. But now, Jesus says the end-time elect children of God have become worldly. In Christ's estimation, we've been going down and down. If we would see ourselves as God sees us, we would know that the great majority of ministers and church-goers are no longer willing to stand for the Truth.

Each of us would probably say, “I've passed tests and trials – I came out of the world and organizations that do not represent the true Body of Christ.” Let us be careful not to make the mistake today of believing that we have passed the final test with flying colors. If we have the eyes to see, evidence reveals that many have been lulled into a false sense of complacency. We would be wise indeed, to heed Christ's words, and examine ourselves more carefully.

Perfecting Holiness

And, if the Church brethren are asleep, some Church leaders must be in a coma. We have come to the point where almost anything goes – and God is not pleased. Paul asked the Corinthian Church brethren to put the sinful man who had taken his father's wife *away from among you* ([1Corinthians 5:13](#)). Why put the sinful man away? Because he was defiling and polluting the chaste marriage relationship that God created to exemplify the pure covenant relationship between Christ and the Church brethren.

But today, we find that when it comes to doctrine and practice, almost everything wrong is allowed in the churches of God – it ought not to be so. Does anyone have the wisdom and fortitude to demand of God's people, including the ministry, that they *cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God* ([2Corinthians 7:1](#))?

Peter admonishes us to *stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance* ([2Peter 3:1](#)). This is what we have to do. When false doctrine and apathetic conduct begin to enter the congregations of the Church of God, it is the responsibility, not only of the ministry, but also of everyone who loves God and His Truth to combat that aberrant behavior and refute it by sound doctrine.

Brethren, maintaining God's highest standard is not optional – our very salvation is at stake. The question for us is not simply a matter of waiting until Christ gets here – we must rise to the occasion. It is a matter of our preparing ourselves so that we will be spiritually groomed in accordance with Christ's expectation of His Bride. Who among us is willing to break away from the status quo *to be doing* exactly what is necessary to be prepared ([Luke 12:43](#))? Here is the answer: “*Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when He comes shall find **so doing**.*” ([Matthew 24:44, 46](#)) Brethren, if you believe that it is time to be found **so doing** – let's get started.

See Warren Zehrung's other articles at:

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

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Building on the Rock: The Key to Christian Unity and a Great Harvest of Souls (Copyright 08-21-2024) by Eddie Hyatt (Grapevine, Texas)

And I say to you that you are Peter and on this Rock I will build My church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. - Matt. 16:18



It is obvious to any honest observer that Christendom is seriously fractured and divided into thousands of entities, churches, and denominations. The prayer of Jesus, recorded in John 17:21, is obviously not yet answered. He prayed, *That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in you; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You have sent Me.*

If there is going to be unity between Catholics and Protestants and the Eastern Orthodox, there must be a clear understanding of the identity of the Rock on which Jesus said He would build His church. Our Catholic brothers and sisters say that the Rock is Peter and that the pope, being his successor, is therefore the key to unity for today's church.

However, this claim of supremacy by the Roman bishop has actually been the source of the great divisions in Christian history. The Eastern Orthodox churches, for example, never did accept the claims of supremacy by the bishop of Rome and this led to the major division between East and West in 1054.

And the division that took place at the time of the Reformation was not ultimately over doctrine. Luther never wanted to leave the Catholic Church but was excommunicated when he refused to yield to the demands of the pope. Commenting on this rupture at the Reformation, the renowned Catholic theologian, the late Dr. Hans Kung, said, "From a historical perspective there can be no doubt that it is not Luther but Rome which bears the chief responsibility" (Hyatt, *Infallible Pope: Key to Unity or Source of Division?*, 54).

If there is going to be unity in the church today there must be a return to Jesus. He is the Rock. He is the Living Bread that came down from Heaven (Jn. 6:51). He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life (Jn. 14:6). He is the Savior, the Healer, and the Baptizer in the Holy Spirit. He is Lord!

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Jesus Must be Lord!

One of the most common designations for Jesus in the New Testament is that of “Lord.” This speaks of His supremacy and authority, and we are told that if we want to be saved, we must confess Him as “Lord” (Rom. 10:9). This is not some abstract doctrinal confession but an acceptance of His lordship in our lives where we hand Him the wheel and say “take me where You want me to go.”

This is what it means to be built on the Rock and this was highlighted in the life of my new father-in-law, a 70-year-old retired detective who had never been saved and who was described to me by his daughter (my wife) as a “tough cop.”

Through God’s providential working, George and I took a long trip together and had lots of time alone to talk. As the conversation turned to God, I saw that he had an ideal of what a Christian should be and thought that if he could ever attain to that ideal, he could call himself a Christian.

I said to him, “George, becoming a Christian is merely changing masters.” I went on to explain that in the natural we are our own masters and that becoming a Christian is vacating the throne of our lives and inviting him to sit on the throne and be our master.

That resonated with him, and he replied, “Yes, I have always been my own master.” By the time we returned from the trip He had changed master’s and made Jesus His Master and Lord. He had not been baptized and had not joined a church (those things are all good), but he had done that one essential thing. He had placed his life on the Rock by making Jesus his Lord.

He Immediately Understood Unity

Immediately, he had no problem fellowshiping with any “Christian” who loved Jesus. He knew very little about the various doctrines of the different churches, but he knew that Jesus was the one essential thing that mattered. It reminds me of the words of Hans Kung who wrote,

The road to unity is not the return of one Church to another, or the exodus of one Church to join another, but a common crossroads, the conversion of all Churches to Christ and thus to one another (Hyatt, *Infallible Pope: Key to Unity or Source of Division*, 58).

The Early Church Was Built on the Rock

The centrality of Jesus in the early Church is obvious everywhere in the New Testament, even in how the word “Christian” came into use. Neither Jesus or Paul ever used the term “Christian,” and it is found only three times in the entire New Testament. The earliest followers of Jesus were known as “disciples.”

A “disciple” is a committed follower and learner. The rabbis of Jesus’ day all had their disciples. John the Baptist had his disciples. Paul had been a disciple of Gamaliel, one of the most respected rabbis and teachers of the day (Acts 22:3). When Jesus began His ministry, He gathered a group of disciples that He would teach and train. Even after His resurrection, His followers were known as His disciples.

It was outsiders who gave the disciples of Jesus the name of “Christian,” because their lives and message were so centered in Christ. Luke writes, *And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch (Acts 11:26b)*.

In the same way that we would designate someone from Italy as an “Italian” or someone from “Nigeria” as a Nigerian, the disciples of Jesus were designated as “Christians” because Christ was so central to everything they said and did. They were built on the Rock.

A Final Thought

As a final thought, Jesus said that He would build His church on this Rock—on the revelation Peter had of who He is. Wherever Jesus is proclaimed as the Lord, Messiah, Savior, Redeemer, Son of the Living God, we can be confident that He will be at work through His Holy Spirit building His church.

It was this sort of Christ-centered witness and preaching that ignited the Great Awakening, which transformed colonial America. During the Awakening a British official wrote to his superiors in England and said, “If you ask an American who

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is his master, he will tell you he has none, nor any governor but Jesus Christ" (Hyatt, [1726: The Year that Defined America](#), 81).

As we zero in on knowing and preaching Christ in the coming days, I believe we could see unparalleled unity and the greatest harvest of souls the church has ever seen. After all, Jesus did say in John 12:32, *And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself* (NLT). It's all about Jesus!

See Eddie Hyatt's other articles at:
[Hyatt, Eddie – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](#)

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The Ides of August again – College orientation week **(Copyright 08-21-2024) by Curtis Dahlgren (Stephenson, Michigan)**

"To strip our past of glory is no great loss, but to deny it honor is devastating." – Daniel Patrick Moynihan

"Education is a weapon whose effects depend on who holds it and at whom it is aimed." – Josef Stalin

TOO MUCH OF HIGHER EDUCATION IS AIMED AT THE MALE OF THE SPECIES (at least the "soft" sciences).

"The snowman is, of course, white and invariably male.... His ritual location in the semi-public space of garden or yard imaginatively reinforces a spatial social system, marking women's 'proper' sphere as the domestic-private and men's as the commercial-public...." – University of Birmingham (UK) professor of art history

Even life-long Democrats are getting sick to the stomach, sick of the political correctness promoted by Big Box Education. According to our Best and Brightest, there are now 31 flavors of genders and at least 12 appropriate pronouns for them. The Queen's English is dying a slow death of semantic overkill.

SERIOUSLY, as Will Rogers said, **"There is nothing so ignorant as the educated man if you get him off the thing, he was educated in."**

America has been the most creative nation on the planet for over 200 years. We not only invented baseball, football, and basketball, but the bulk of the world's technology. A lot of credit for that goes to the engineering majors from our universities, but sadly, many of them don't notice that their old alma mater has become increasingly anti-business, and anti-Christian. Now they are even becoming anti- Semitic and pro-Islamic. I'm going to post this column every August for as many Augusts as America survives:

"No man who worships education has got the best out of education.... Without a gentle contempt for education no man's education is complete." – G.K. Chesterton

"I think everyone should go to college and get a degree and then spend six months as a bartender and six months as a cab driver. Then they would really be educated." – Al McGuire (coach, Marquette WARRIORS)

"It is a thousand times better to have common sense without education than to have education without common sense."
– Robert Green Ingersoll

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"An educated person is one who has learned that information almost always turns out to be at best incomplete and very often false, misleading, fictitious, mendacious – just dead wrong." – Russell Baker

"It's not that our liberal friends are ignorant; it's just that they know so much that isn't so." – Ronald Reagan

"For us in Russia communism is a dead dog. For many people in the West, it is still a log lion.... Blow the dust off the clock. Your watches are behind the times. Throw open the heavy curtains which are so dear to you – you do not even suspect that the day has already dawned." – Alexander Solzhenitsyn

"An era can be said to end when its basic illusions are exhausted." – Arthur Miller

"Learning, n. The kind of ignorance distinguishing the studious.... That which discloses the wise and disguises from the foolish their lack of understanding." – Ambrose Bierce

"An education isn't how much you have committed to memory, or even how much you know. It's being able to differentiate between what you know and what you don't." – Anatole France

"Education is a progressive discovery of our own ignorance." – Will Durant

"Education is learning what you didn't even know you didn't know." – Daniel Boorstin

"Much education today is monumentally ineffective. All too often we are giving young people cut flowers when we should be teaching them to grow their own plants. – John W. Gardner

"The object of education is to prepare the young to educate themselves throughout their lives." – Robert Maynard Hutchins

"Education is simply the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another." – G.K. Chesterton

Lady Margaret Thatcher said, **"A powerful, radical left-wing clerisy is bent on destroying what every past generation would have understood to be the central purpose of education – that is, allowing (in the words of Edmund Burke) *individuals* to 'avail themselves of the general bank and capital of nations, and of ages.'"**

Most educrats these days have *no* intention of passing on our society's soul to the next generation! They would rather introduce "Generation Snowflake" to perpetual change, new political paradigms, evolving standards of decency, and "NEW" morality.

Alexis de Tocqueville warned us: "Because Roman civilization perished through barbarian invasions, we are perhaps too much inclined to think that that is the only way a civilization can die."

Tony Blair said, "We will not win this battle against this global extremism unless we win it on the level of values as well as force."

At about the same time, British academe launched a new program called (euphemistically) "Secure Values" which eliminated any teaching of right and wrong – **"to relieve schools of the need to teach British Heritage."** [Quoted by Rush Limbaugh, August 1, 2006] How's that working out for them, and for us?

CONCLUSION: *"Alas, the academy today is obsessed with the trivial and the trashy, relentlessly focused on sexual politics, and gripped by a deep antagonism to tradition that has degenerated into a new absolutism."* – Jim Nelson Black ("Freefall of the American University")

P.S. "A child educated only at school is an UNEDUCATED CHILD." – George Santayana

"Many are schooled, but few are educated." – Einstein [many are called, but some are culled]

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"A popular Government, without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a Prologue to a Farce or a Tragedy, or perhaps both." – James Madison

PPS: President Monroe said that everything would be safe as long as the people are virtuous and not ignorant or corrupt. For us Traditionalists, that's a word of warning. For the one-world Progressives, that gives them a bright IDEA, a good excuse for dumbing down the next generation, Generation Z (and rewriting the history of the settling and founding of the U.S.A.).

"A thorough knowledge of the Bible is worth more than a college education." – Theodore Roosevelt

See Curtis Dahlgren's other articles at:

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

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<http://www.renewamerica.com/columns/dahlgren/220131>

The Banned Discovery **(Copyright) by Jonathan Gray (New Zealand)**

On Tuesday the 3rd of July, 2001, Terry M., a friend and three boys ranging in age from 7 years to 17 years, ventured into New Zealand's Waipoua forest for a bush walk and a look at some ancient stone structures therein.

The Waipoua Forest sites were on public land, administered by the Department of Conservation. It was and is the right of all New Zealanders to hike throughout the area, with no known legal restriction posted by the Archaeological Division of DOC.

They were dismayed to find that timber felling was taking place between these ancient structures. For untold centuries these structures had survived, but now they might have an existence numbered in days.

Around 2.30 pm, they returned to their vehicle. This threatening note was tucked under a window wiper:

"You have entered this area without prior authority and act as thieves. The next time you do this you will be treated as such and suffer loss."

What the discovery showed

Between the late 1970s and the late 1980s, some extensive and very expensive archaeological excavations had been conducted in the Waipoua Forest.

Certain information was discovered, which could rewrite regional history overnight. It included evidence of a past Celtic presence. In New Zealand, much of the new information is astronomical in nature. Local structures also incorporate Northern Hemisphere geodetic, "ring of the Earth" navigational systems and Egyptian/Indo European measurement standards.

Government clamp

When the significance of the Waipoua information was realized, certain New Zealand Government Departments produced an official archival document, which clearly showed an intention to withhold this archaeological information from the public for a period of 75 years.

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Below is the "Embargo" document signed by Archaeologist, Michael Taylor. It states that neither the general public nor bona fide research workers were permitted to view the results of the digs until the year 2063. This archaeological information was deemed "top secret".

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AI 28/51
BATH

AGREEMENT FOR THE TRANSFER OF ARCHIVES

THIS BLOCK TO BE FILLED IN BY THE TRANSFERRING DEPARTMENT

From: Department of Conservation
Kaikōhe

File ref. _____

The Chief Archivist,
National Archives,
P.O. Box 6148,
Wellington.

The records listed on the attached 14 sheets are offered for transfer to your custody, for deposit in the National Archives, under the Archives Act 1957.

Restricted until 2063

No restrictions on the use of the records by bona fide research workers are required.
Prior consultation requires approval of the Te Kōwhiri - Whāngārei Archaeological Advisory Committee or other appropriate subsequent Te Kōwhiri authority.

The quantity of records to be transferred is _____ metres

Signature of authorising officer: M. Taylor

Date: 15/7/88 Designation: Archaeologist

Name of officer responsible for compiling the list: M. Taylor

Designation: Archaeologist?

THIS BLOCK TO BE FILLED IN BY NATIONAL ARCHIVES

I agree to accept the custody of these records.

I hereby undertake to abide by the restrictions, if any, placed on the use of the records.

The records should now be sent to the National Archives Auckland

When they have been received one copy of the list and form N.A. 4 will be returned to you as a receipt.

Date: 7-9-1988 M. Scollan Chief Archivist.

* If restrictions are necessary, please state terms and delete this paragraph

I.A. 170 ORIGINAL 202154-30pds/12/04Mc

When a diligent researcher leaked to the public the news of this ban, many indignant people began writing to the National Archives for an explanation. They asked, why was this embargo put in place? Some questioned the legality of such imposed restrictions. Others contacted their Members of Parliament to force a release of information being withheld.

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Among those who complained that they had no success in accessing the Waipoua Forest Archaeological Report were Noel Hilliam, Curator of the Dargaville Maritime Museum and Joan Leaf, Hokianga based Historian.

You see, in New Zealand, archaeological information, artefacts and skeletal evidence can be deemed secret, with knowledge deliberately withheld in the perceived interests of government policy.

Reason for the ban?

But **what was so threatening** about archaeological finds that they needed to be "restricted"... How on earth could 2,000 ancient, stacked stone structures pose **a threat to national security**?

For a number of years, it has been taught that the original inhabitants of New Zealand were the Maori. And land ownership claims were being negotiated, based upon this assumption.

So, the question arose, was the information derived from the dig threatening to the Maori claim of being the original inhabitants of New Zealand? Was it restricted on the basis that any devolution of such knowledge was disadvantageous to Maori claims of sovereignty?

And what caused Ned Nathan, head of the Te Roroa Archaeological Advisory Committee to exclaim, within earshot of witnesses, **'that's 500 years before we got here!'**? This was allegedly stated as the group held in their hands a dating report.

Clamp removed

So it was that a huge body of historical information was earmarked for suppression and successfully hidden away for 8 years. It would have remained so unless someone was prepared to take up the cudgels and fight for the right to have it where it rightly belongs...in the public domain.

In 1996 researcher, Gary Cook tried without success to get a copy of the archaeological report covering the 70's-80's dig. In the end Gary had to acquire the services of a lawyer, who made submissions to the Ombudsman to force the lifting of the illegal embargo. To my knowledge, the restrictions would have remained in place until 2063, were the legalities not challenged, under law, through an incentive instigated by Gary Cook.

Life threatened

Despite the removal of the ban, everyone is dissuaded from going to visit the structures of the pre-Maori "Stone People".

In early 2000, Denis Welch, journalist for *The New Zealand Listener Magazine*, was told that he was not permitted to inspect the ruins.

In 1999, a film crew from Greenstone Pictures, making a documentary for TV1 titled, *Who Was Here First*, politely asked to film the structures. They also were refused by the Nathans and had to resort to filming Noel Hilliam's old photographs.

According to Martin Doutre, even now, visitors to the area who wish to visit the ruins, may be followed by carloads of locals who threaten them with violence if they don't leave the area. Noel Hilliam, Curator of the Dargaville Maritime Museum was **warned to keep out of that archaeological forest area, or his life would be in danger.**

The Waipoua Forest **suppression of information** is but one of many attempts to dupe the New Zealand public and rob them of their true historical inheritance.

See Jonathan Gray's other articles at:
[Gray, Jonathan – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://church-of-god-bismarck.org)

God's 'practical joke' on Jew haters (Copyright 2023) by Curtis Dahlgren (Stephenson, Michigan)

From AmericanWireNews: "A Jewish high school teacher in Queens was terrorized by a mob of left-wing students who reacted with outrage after she attended a pro-Israel rally last weekend, a terrifying incident that left her badly shaken. The target of the 'radicalized' kids was forced to hide for over two hours in a locked office as the halls at Hillcrest High School were taken over by hundreds of young people incensed over her posting of support for the Jewish democracy to her Facebook page. The students chanted slogans and waved Palestinian flags in what was described as a pre-planned protest demanding the teacher's firing with video of the harrowing display of anti-Semitism being posted to social media."

It's happening again, only this time it's not just in Germany. Some of the guards at Auschwitz were undoubtedly Israelites themselves. Some of those high school "brown shirters" are no doubt Israelites, because the House of Israel's 10 tribes went into captivity and then scattered abroad. The descendants of the northern tribes of Israel could now be anywhere from Switzerland to Iceland to northern Germany, and therefore in the USA. Before they were both exiled, the north and south halves of Israel even engaged in at least one war against each other, just like our North and South.

My premise is not an acceptable theory in academia. It is scorned as "British-Israelism." That is the joke: God likes surprises, and He has hidden this truth from most of the world's "historians." Someday the mountains of evidence will be made known, and millions of people will have to eat crow with egg on their faces.

Just some of the evidence: the first Danes to arrive in Denmark said plainly that they were descended from the tribe of Dan, one of those northern tribes of Israel (that is right from the Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th edition, 1910; article "Denmark"). All 10 tribes have suffered a loss of identity. Maybe some of them didn't *want* to be known as Israelites in an anti-Semitic world. In Genesis 48, Jacob predicted that some of the tribes would be like "a vine going over the walls" (to the ends of the earth). The British Empire certainly did that. It was in the Divine Plan to have a language that was widespread enough to facilitate business and the preaching of the Gospel.

I don't care if I lose some readers right now, or Facebook friends. I'm trying to keep this short, but it would take many pages to relate all the evidence of this much-scorned "theory." There's more evidence for this than for Darwinism. The Norwegian Vikings took to the sea, but the Swedish Vikings went trading up the rivers of Europe from which we believe they came. Some people believe that Norway and Sweden are descendants of Naphtali.

That would make sense, because that tribe lived in Israel's far north, at higher and cooler elevations than other tribes. They don't like hot weather, and the Scandinavians settled in our northern tier of states. Jacob said that Naphtali would "bring forth goodly, 'bright,' words," and guess where the Nobel prize for literature comes from?

Other evidence regarding the "lost" ten tribes is far beyond anecdotal. The world just doesn't want to accept the fact that Israelites number in hundreds of millions, like "the number of the sands on the seashores" as promised to Abraham. There are just a few million Jews in the state of Israel and around the world today.

CONCLUSION: If Hitler had been able to wipe out the Jews, that would have been only about 8 percent of all the Israelites living on earth during the Holocaust. Today the northern tribes are perhaps 95 percent of the Israelites in the world. Jacob predicted that just two of the tribes would become a great nation and "a company of nations" respectively. That is God's "joke."

P.S. Feel free to dispute this if you can, but don't attempt it at home unless you have read the Denmark article in the Britannica. I don't know what those brats in the Bronx are studying, but it "ain't" history!

See Curtis Dahlgren's other articles at:
[Dahlgren, Curtis – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://church-of-god-bismarck.org)

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Is It A Human or AI?

(Copyright 08-17-2024) by Gary C. Miller (Pocahontas, Arkansas)



WHAT IS AI?

AI (artificial intelligence) machines started in the 1950s, were invented to do tasks on the level of human intelligence; to mimic the human brain.

LIKE DEALING WITH ANOTHER PERSON

Artificial digital machine-intelligence is designed to interact with humans so the user's experience seems like dealing with another person.

WHAT EXPERTS ARE SAYING: THE DANGERS

"It is conceivable...AI would be making decisions for people?" **Elon Musk**: "Yes...that is where things are headed...an artificial super intelligence, a digital god.... trained to be politically correct.... they are training AI to lie."

Sundar Pichai (Google CEO): "...Google is optimistic about the future of AI..."

Yuval Harari (Hebrew University): "AI has hacked the operating system of human civilization [language]...posing the most dangerous threat to human survival. by...language mastery."

James Manika (Google): "These machines are...not aware of themselves...exhibit behavior like...somebody...a feeling, emotional something, but there is nobody there...could manipulate humans to...vote for a political candidate..."

END OF THE AGE:

A global religious-economic system is prophesied where buying and selling are not allowed unless one worships an image.... (not real, a prototype (Rev. 13:15,17).

"When will these things be...and the end of the Age?" (Matt. 24:3)

"Watch therefore: for you know not what hour your Master does come." (Matt. 24:42)

See Gary C. Miller's other articles at:
[Miller, Gary C. – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://www.church-of-god-bismarck.org)

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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

Notes

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