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(Lancaster, South Carolina)

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**Publisher:** Church of God, Bismarck, Darwin & Laura Lee, **Editor:** Laura Lee, **Assistant Editor:** Darwin Lee We do not necessarily agree with all contributors, or their works submitted and printed in this newsletter. It is up to you to get out your Bible and see whether these things are true. Iron sharpens Iron

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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.

## Commentary:

We are moving the commentary to this space, starting with this issue. This is being done to help us save a little time during the week. If I write the commentary at the beginning of the week then I don't feel so rushed at the end of the week as I did last week.

Our goal recently has been to print articles as they come in. Unfortunately, items are coming in at breakneck speed and of the new items we have to print right now, it will be almost four weeks before they are all printed. I know, some of them are short, but if we didn't have the short items to balance out the long ones, the newsletter would get to be more pages than we could handle in a week.

There are a few things everyone can do to help us out. If you have a prayer request or something that is time sensitive, please mark it “urgent” in the subject line so we look at it right away. That way we will read at least part of it when it comes in and decide if it is something that has to be sent out right away or if it needs to go into the next newsletter. Otherwise, all the new items are going into an email folder and not read until the time we are going to print them.

We are great believers in the fact that everyone has something to say and what everyone has to say is important. So eventually we want to print all of the new stuff coming in, if at all possible. We are trying to mingle into that some of the older items also.

Please pray for our brethren in Kenya, Israel and all around the world. Even though some of us have peace right now, others do not. Pray for Donald Trump and His Family, that they may be safe during these trying times.

Again, we are grateful to all the people who contribute to this newsletter.

Hope you all have a happy Sabbath,  
(Written by Laura)

## **The Final Harvest**

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For some reason, cemeteries fascinated my father. Quite frequently, when I was a young boy, after church on warm summer Sundays, he would take the family on a tour through Allegheny Cemetery, about two miles from the Methodist church we attended. It was an old-style cemetery with many large, sometimes ostentatious granite and marble mausoleums, statues, and pillars. The cemetery was well maintained, with shady hardwood trees, great stone and steel gates arching over the entrances, hilly terrain, winding paved drives, ponds for fish, and displays of flowers to give joyous color to what otherwise might be a depressing place.

Many people important to the Pittsburgh area and even some of national prominence are buried there. It is the final resting place for many more nobody knew except their families. Now, my father and mother are buried there, along with his parents and most of his brothers and sisters.

I do not recall ever questioning why we went there. Rather, I remember enjoying it because it was a place of mystery with a touch of reverence and beauty. I think I know now, though, why my dad liked to go there.

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For the most part, my dad was gentle, soft-spoken, thoughtful, and kind. I think he was also a romantic who liked to go to the cemetery and wonder about, dream about, or imagine the kind of lives those tombstones represented. He must have wondered where they were and what they were doing. Were they alive—in heaven or [hell](#)? Were they aware of him?

He never received any answers to those questions. By the time he died, his attitude toward [God](#) was ambivalent at best and bitter at worst. He told me once that if there were a God, he would never bow down and pray to One who would let such suffering occur on earth.

Even though he had seen a lot of hypocrisy from the religious among his brothers and sisters and was generally turned off by religion, he never seemed to hold it against me that I became a minister. In fact, he paid me a high compliment after he heard me give a sermon about a year before he died. He told me that while I was speaking, he was so wrapped up in listening to the message that he entirely forgot his son was speaking.

My dad was similar to most who have ever lived, especially those who have lived in a Western nation where Christianity is the dominant religion. He was confused by what he thought were conflicting realities. To him, what God is doing was an unfathomable mystery.

The "Christian" world understands little about the nature of God's purpose. Even though my father's family was more than nominally involved in evangelical Protestant religious pursuits, they provided no satisfying answers to his searching questions about the intensity of suffering and why it even existed. They only answered that the cause was [sin](#). Most assuredly, they could not provide even one iota of truth about those who died without accepting [Jesus Christ](#) as Savior.

#### **Rivers of Living Water**

But the Bible does not leave us without a clear insight into both their present and future state. [John 7:37-39](#) provides a scriptural platform on which we can expound an exciting and beautiful doctrine of a [merciful](#) God.

On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, which those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Giving meat in due season ([II Timothy 4:2](#)), Jesus preached about the meaning of the upcoming Eighth Day, and His subject was the Holy Spirit. Why? There is no doubt that some understood the meaning of the day because His audience had just witnessed the conclusion of a ceremony that involved water. God never commanded them to keep this ceremony, but nonetheless, it contained a measure of true symbolism.

Each day during the [Feast of Tabernacles](#), a priest drew an urn of water from the pool of Siloam and carried it through the Water Gate while the people recited [Isaiah 12:3](#): "Therefore with [joy](#) you will draw water from the wells of salvation." Once inside the city, they paraded the urn of water to the altar accompanied by a choir singing Psalms 113-118. To conclude the ritual, the priest poured the water on the altar as an offering to God.

However, on the last day, the great day of the Feast, they marched seven times around the altar before pouring the water. What does pouring water upon an altar have to do with salvation? How many understood the symbolism that day when Jesus spoke concerning the Holy Spirit? Had the symbolism become obscured in people's minds by the passage of time? Jesus' comment should have revitalized their understanding of this wonderful truth.

[Psalm 118:19-29](#) is part of what the choir was singing as the procession approached and circled the altar:

Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go through them, and I will praise the LORD. This is the gate of the LORD, through which the righteous shall enter. I will praise You, for You have answered me and have become my salvation. The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day the LORD has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD. . . . God is the LORD, and He has given us light; bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar. You are

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my God, and I will praise You. . . . Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.

This psalm exalts the theme of the Eighth Day. It depicts the time when the whole world will go through the gates of righteousness, recognizing Christ as Savior, rejoicing in those God sends to teach them, and praising God for His mercy in giving them salvation. Though not directly stated in these verses, the only reason mankind will respond like this is because God will pour out His Holy Spirit on all of humanity!

### **Are the Unsaved Dead "Lost"?**

The Eighth Day has special meaning to those who understand. It answers perplexing questions about the great masses of humanity who are living or have died without knowledge of God's way or a true understanding of Jesus Christ, the only "name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" ([Acts 4:12](#)). In my many decades as a minister, I have yet to talk with anyone from another church who knows the fate of these "lost" people.

Are millions lost because they never heard the name of Christ? What about infants who died? What about the billions enslaved under the dreadful yoke of atheistic communism? They did not choose to be born in a godless society. Are the doors forever shut on those born in a nation dominated by Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, or Islam? Most professing Christians think so.

It almost seems as though Paul agrees with them when he writes:

Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in [the world](#). ([Ephesians 2:11-12](#))

What a depressing status! If these verses stood alone, these "aliens" and "strangers" would indeed live their lives in vain. Without a future opportunity for salvation, they would be lost forever.

Could we call God merciful if He consigned people to hopelessness merely because of an accident of birth? Would He be fair to condemn those who never heard? God can do anything He wants. It is, after all, His creation. In verse 13, though, there is a slight crack in the door of hope: "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ." Everyone has stood in the Gentile's position of being far from salvation. We have all had to be brought near by the blood of Jesus Christ. Could the only difference between us and them be a matter of timing?

Imagine the multiple billions who have lived through childhood unloved, uneducated, and unhealthy in body and spirit. They may have endured miserable marriages and reared and lost children to disease, war, and natural disaster. Others may have spent seemingly pointless lives growing old, neglected, and disrespected as fodder for the next disaster.

The heaven and hell doctrines of this world's Christianity may make for interesting reading, but they render God's judgments and resurrections superfluous. They diminish the great and merciful God's creative power in these areas as finished and past, not ongoing and future.

### **God's Attitude**

In [1 Timothy 2:1](#), 3-4, 6, Paul gives us insight into God's attitude toward all mankind:

Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for *all men*. . . . For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires *all men* to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth . . . who gave Himself a ransom for *all*, to be testified in due time. (Emphasis ours.)

In four brief verses, God states three times that He has planned for the salvation of all. Since He desires to save all men, they must all be given an opportunity for it. It is obvious from human experience that very few have ever heard [the gospel](#) or come to the knowledge of the truth.

Verse 6 also says that Christ is a ransom for all, which will be testified or witnessed in due time. The way Paul wrote this shows that this testifying is still future. In other words, many had not heard of Christ's ransom for sin, and the apostle

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indicates that he expected many then living and many yet unborn would also die without hearing of it. But it would be witnessed to all in due time because Jesus Christ is the only name under heaven by which men can be saved.

II [Peter 3:8-9](#) reinforces this:

But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is [longsuffering](#) toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to [repentance](#).

God's plan, humanly speaking, covers a long time. Like Paul, Peter clearly says God does not desire anyone to perish. Other scriptures indicate that some will, but it is not God's will that they do so.

The critical factor in these verses is repentance. How can a person repent if he does not know the truth, if he does not know God's purpose, what he should repent of, why he should repent, or by what means his sins are forgiven? The overwhelming majority of people who have ever lived on Earth fit into this category! These things remain untestified to them.

I [Corinthians 15:21-23](#) adds another important revelation to this mystery:

For since by man came death, by Man also came the [resurrection of the dead](#). For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the [firstfruit](#), afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.

Simply put, God is proceeding according to a plan. All die, but that same *all* will also be made alive, resurrected in a particular order according to His plan. Verse 26 reads, "The last enemy that will be destroyed is death"—it has not yet been destroyed! This means that God's plan is still continuing, and in due time, the opportunity for salvation will come to all, even though God must resurrect many to that opportunity. Most churches exclude most of this world from salvation because they are not part of their group. Why do people scoff when we point out that God will give all mankind the chance to conform to His image?

### **Krisis**

Jesus explains in [John 5:25-29](#) that there is more than one resurrection:

Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. 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.

To understand the resurrections, it is important to discern the meaning of the word *krisis*, variously translated as "judgment" or "condemnation" (verses 22, 27, 29-30). According to *The Complete Word Study Dictionary* by Spiros Zodhiates, *krisis* generally means "separation," "decision," "division," "turn of affairs," and "judgment." The *Companion Bible* defines it as "a separating, a judgment, especially of judicial proceedings." Notice that it does *not necessarily* indicate the end of an affair.

An obvious similarity exists between the Greek *krisis* and the English "crisis." Crisis means "a turning point for better or worse" in the progress of an affair or a series of events. It is not necessarily the end but a critical juncture, and the affair or situation continues. In this sense, *krisis* indicates a turn of affairs, a turning point, in a person's life. It may be the end, but then again, it may be a time when his life takes a considerable turn for the better! For the first time, maybe God has revealed Himself and His purpose to him so he may be judged.

In the biblical sense, judgment can imply a period during which a process is ongoing. The decision, or sentence, comes at the end of the judgment. I [Peter 4:17](#) shows this pattern in relation to the church. "For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?"

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Here, the word "judgment" is translated from Greek *krima*. According to Zodhiates, this word derives from the same root as *krisis*, but in this case, it indicates the act of judging, that is, a process including the final decision or sentence. The Bible uses this word only about future reward and punishment.

Again, we have indications of an active process, not merely a final decision. The active process includes both what the Judge is doing (observing, evaluating; [Psalm 11:4](#)) and what the judged are doing. A judgment cannot be made without both aspects. In [I Peter 4:17](#), God is judging "the house of God" and "those who do not obey the gospel" within the framework of how they live their lives.

Peter writes, "The time has come for judgment to begin," implying that judgment did not officially start until Christ founded the church. Now that it has begun, all mankind will eventually be included in God's judgment. The pattern for judgment is, therefore, being established in the church.

When we see the overall picture of God's purpose, we can better understand what occurs in a Christian's life. God calls and grants repentance. We are baptized, receive the Holy Spirit, and are put into the church, where we begin to grow in the grace and the knowledge of Jesus Christ until we come to the measure of the stature of His fullness. During this period of sanctification, God puts us through trials, and we overcome, producing the fruits of His Spirit. Sanctification prepares us for God's Kingdom and determines our reward.

Paul helps us understand this in [Romans 5:1-5](#):

Therefore, having been justified by [faith](#), we have [peace](#) with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the [love](#) of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which was given to us.

All of this requires time. It is not God's purpose merely to save us but to bring us to His image so that we will be prepared for His Kingdom. Our God is a Creator. He is reproducing Himself in us. Like a wise parent, He is judging, evaluating what is best for our development, and then putting us through the next step in that ongoing process until we inherit His Kingdom. This is a true understanding of a significant portion of the doctrine of eternal judgment ([Hebrews 6:2](#)).

### **God's Spirit and the Last Great Day**

[Romans 5:5](#) says, "The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit." Thus, we did not have the love of God until we had His Spirit. Without God's Spirit, we could not possibly keep His commandments, for love is "keep[ing] His commandments" ([I John 5:3](#)). If we cannot keep His commandments, God cannot create His character in us, and He will not allow us to enter His Kingdom. Therefore, anyone not having His Spirit will not be there.

At this point, we can return to the symbolism of the water-pouring ceremony in Jesus' time. Paul writes in [II Corinthians 5:10](#), "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." If one does not have the Holy Spirit because God has never offered him the opportunity, he can only receive the death penalty. Why? Because he has no way of even coming close to keeping the commandments, especially in terms of truly loving God (compare [Romans 8:7](#)).

[I Corinthians 2:11-12](#) adds:

For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

Christians have been separated, made distinct, from the world. As a result, we have also been brought under judgment because receiving the Holy Spirit enables us to know the things of God that have been withheld from the world.

[Ephesians 3:3-5](#) confirms this:

. . . how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I wrote before in a few words, by which, when

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you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets . . .

At the foundation of this world, mankind was cut off from access to God and His Spirit. The water ceremony pictures a future time when mankind's [contact with God](#) is restored, and he will receive the Holy Spirit. Then, God will also judge him on the same basis as those privileged to have His Spirit now.

### **Humanity's Blindness Removed**

[Romans 11:25](#), 32 provide a basis for God's judgments concerning salvation for those who have not yet received His Spirit.

For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that hardening [*blindness*, KJV] in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. . . . For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.

This applies not only to Israel but to all of mankind. Thus, when man was cut off from God through Adam and Eve's sins, he did not possess the most essential tool needed to equip him for his part in God's purpose. So God mercifully judged him based on his ignorance of or blindness toward God.

And mankind is still blinded. "But their minds were hardened [*blinded*, KJV]. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the [Old Testament](#), because the veil is taken away in Christ. But even to this day, when [Moses](#) is read, a veil lies on their heart" ([II Corinthians 3:14-15](#)). Mankind is still held in bondage to human nature, [Satan](#), and sin. Until God chooses to reveal Himself, the veil—the ignorance and blindness toward and enmity against God—remains.

It will not remain forever, though. God says in [Romans 11:26](#), "And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: 'The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.'" Many other scriptures state God desires to save all mankind, not just Israelites. Given the circumstances that have already occurred and the criteria that must be met under the judgment process, the only way God can save humanity is through a future resurrection.

### **The Second Resurrection**

This will indeed occur!

And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. . . . And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the [first resurrection](#). 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. ([Revelation 20:4-6](#))

A first resurrection suggests at least a second. Verse 5 clearly says the second occurs one thousand years after the first. That verse 6 states that death has no power over those in the first resurrection strongly indicates that death *will* have power over those in the second. The second resurrection, therefore, must be a resurrection to physical life. Verse 6 also repeats from verse 4 that those in the first resurrection will reign with Christ. This means that His government is established, functioning, and executing judgment, among other things.

The events foretold in [Revelation 20:7-10](#) occur at the end of the thousand years. Verses 11-12 occur immediately afterward and describe the second resurrection alluded to in verse 5.

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great standing before God, and the 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 apostle John saw people rising from the dead and experiencing the same judgment we do now. For the first time, they are called of God, granted repentance, given His Holy Spirit, and gain access to Him. They, too, must overcome



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and grow into the [image of God](#) so that they might be prepared to live and reign in God's Kingdom. Like us, God judges them against the things written in His Word. He also opens the Book of Life so new names can be entered. All these things do not happen instantly but over a period deemed sufficient by God to prepare them for His Kingdom.

[Ezekiel 37:12-14](#) reveals what lies ahead for Israel, God's Old Covenant people:

Therefore prophesy and say to them, "Thus says the Lord GOD: 'Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves. I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken it and performed it,' says the LORD."

Except for a few, the ancient Israelites never really knew the true God or had His Spirit. Ezekiel 37 describes in greater detail those things shown generally in [Revelation 20:12](#).

God has not overlooked the Gentiles. In [Matthew 12:41-42](#), Jesus confirms that they will rise in the same judgment, and therefore at the same time, as the Israelites:

The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the [wisdom](#) of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here.

Notice that Jesus calls it *the* judgment.

The Scriptures, without doubt, show a universal resurrection of all who have lived and died without ever having what God considers an opportunity for salvation. This resurrection will occur one thousand years after the first, and those resurrected will be given the time to both repent and come to know God.

They must come to know Him because Jesus says in [John 17:3](#), "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." Eternal life is more than just an endless life. It is an interminable life *living as God lives*. It takes time and overcoming for us—and them—to learn to live like God lives. When we live as He does is when we come to know Him.

I cannot be sure what my father thought when he visited the Allegheny Cemetery, but I am sure he knew neither the true God nor His Son, Jesus Christ. His time is yet ahead, and I, for one, want to be there to greet him.

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**See John W. Ritenbaugh's other articles at:**

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**Your Thoughts and Actions Can Impact Future Generations**  
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Christians have heard of or read the Scriptures dealing with curses upon third and fourth generations:

"...Visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."

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(Ex. 34:7. Also Num. 4:18; Deut. 5:9.)

Like many other Scriptures, these may be multi-layered containing both overt and hidden meanings. Duality is imbedded within the Word of God, and it behoves us to take notice of the Scriptures and not constrain ourselves to a limited interpretation.

The basic thesis of this article is that it appears that we can pass on our character, attitude and health, let alone physical attributes, to one’s offspring via one’s behaviours and eating habits —there appears to be a generational impact resulting from our experiences, actions and thoughts.

### **Revelations From Science**

Rahel Wells attempts to understand this from a theological, rather than genetic, perspective:

“One of the more challenging aspects of the covenant curses [of Deuteronomy 28] is that some curses seem to put the consequences on the children when it was their parents’ fault for sinning. For instance, the wounds that God causes carry on to their offspring in Deut. 28:59. However, **this might also be an example of epigenetics, or that the children partake in the sins of their parents**, not so much that God is punishing the innocent children for sins they did not commit (cf. Exod 34:7; Joshua 7). God makes clear in many other places in Scripture that he does not blame the children for the sins of their parents and vice versa (cf. Ezekiel 18; 33).” (“Christ in the Covenant Curses? Deuteronomy 28 and the Gospel,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, Vol. 32, Nos. 1-2, 2021, p. 43 [emphasis mine].)

Many would have already been aware that this is likely, and importantly a modern study has confirmed what Christians have long suspected:

“Eat poorly, and your body will remember — and possibly pass the consequences onto your kids. In the past several years, mounting evidence has shown that sperm can take note of a father’s lifestyle decisions, and transfer this baggage to offspring. Today, in two complementary studies, scientists tell us how.” (Katherine Wu, “Dad’s Pass on More than Genetics in their Sperm,” *SmithsonianMag.com*, 26 July 2018).

You can read the rest of the article online, along with many others representing comparative arguments. But what is being demonstrated is that the Scripture is true and accurate, thousands of years before its time. The Scriptures appear to be gelling with the laws of behavioural genetics that researchers have discovered.

According to these researchers, the laws of behavioural genetics are as follows:

1. Human conduct is inherited.
2. The genetic effect outweighs the influence of growing up in the same family.
3. The impacts of genes on families do not explain a large amount of the diversity in complex human behavioral traits.
4. There are numerous genetic variants linked to a typical human behavioral attribute, but these variants only make up a very small portion of the total behavioral diversity.
5. All phenotypic interactions (i.e., observable traits) are mediated or confused by genetics to some extent.

Referring to point 1, it is now proven that identical twins grown up apart will be comparable in every conceivable way. In general, genetic similarity predicts behavioural and other phenotypic similarities across all human relationships, regardless of environmental circumstances. That is, identical twins are more similar than fraternal twins or complete siblings, who are more similar than half-siblings, who are more similar than first cousins, and so on indefinitely.

The question is, after creation, were human behaviours that imprinted on future generations part of the way human conduct was generated and continued? Is this how national traits were developed?

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“The phenomenon has long been known in psychology: traumatic experiences can induce behavioural disorders that are passed down from one generation to the next. **It is only recently that scientists have begun to understand the physiological processes underlying hereditary trauma.** ‘There are diseases such as bipolar disorder, that run in families but can’t be traced back to a particular gene,’ explains Isabelle Mansuy, professor at ETH Zurich and the University of Zurich...

“Mansuy and her team have succeeded in identifying a key component of these processes: short RNA molecules...” (“[Hereditary trauma: Inheritance of traumas and how they may be mediated](#),” [ScienceDaily.com](#), 13 April 2014” [emphasis mine].)

Take for example a study undertaken at the University of Cambridge which revealed that a father’s life experiences, including food consumption, drugs, exposure to toxic products, and stress, can significantly impact the development and health of his children and grandchildren. (McGill University, “[Environmental memories transmitted from a father to his grandchildren](#),” [Science Daily](#), 8 Oct. 2015).

“This has turned the traditional belief that life is about nature versus nurture on its head. What this really means is that nature (our genes) is intimately intertwined with nurture (our environment), **and these epigenetic changes have deep roots in the choices of our grandparents, and in those of their grandparents.** The emergence of epigenetics has provided us with two gifts. One is a forewarning that the way we live today does have significant consequences for our children, our grandchildren, and beyond. And the second gift is one of empowerment. Regardless of what took place two generations before us, we still have tremendous power to modify our own gene expression with every thought, every mouthful, and every physical movement we choose to engage in. Our genes are waiting for direction from us. My advice? Go for the apple.” (Pamela Peeke, “[You Are What Your Grandparent’s Ate](#),” [Maria’s Farm Country Kitchen](#), 14 Nov 2013 [emphasis mine].)

Readers may be interested in the following article which highlights the importance of epigenetics to them, “[Epigenetics—Inheriting More Than Genes](#),” [www.AnswersInGenesis.org](#), 24 Jan. 2021, by Georgia Purdom: “Epigenetic markers, how your parents’ diet may affect you, and the problem it poses for evolutionists...”

“The food you eat, and other aspects of your environment can change these tagalongs. Then they can be passed down to your children and even your grandchildren, affecting the genes that are turned on.”

#### **Can Memories Be Passed Down The Generations?**

Consider this: if one’s physical appearance (especially face), mental attributes, talents, propensity to particular diseases and sicknesses can be carried down the generations, then why not memories? After all, our genes “remember” the aforementioned.

In a remarkable article, “[Scientists have found that memories might be passed down through generations in our DNA](#),” 30 May 2014, we find that Emory University School of Medicine has discovered that certain information can be inherited through chemical changes in DNA. The study found that mice can pass on learned information about traumatic experiences, such as fear of the smell of cherry blossoms, to subsequent generations. This suggests that experiences are transferred from the brain into the genome, allowing them to be passed on to later generations. The researchers now aim to further understand how information is stored on DNA and whether similar effects can be seen in human genes. However, more careful mechanistic study of animal models is needed before applying these findings to humans.

For many years, some churches believed — like so many in society used to — that you could sort of “imprint” character (to some degree) on future generations by one’s behaviour. There was a lot of research on this over the decades which was later “pooh-poohed” by the liberal-left academic Del Ratzsch in *The Battle of Beginnings*, as well as the establishment and their media allies.

But “Science is a complicated, historically shifting play among nature, theories and a host of often-unstated nonempirical principles that shape our thinking, evaluating, theorizing and even perceiving. Since the parts are so interwoven, changes in one part frequently have consequences for the content and contours of other parts. Parts do change over time — theories are replaced, shaping principles alter, and so forth. And sometimes entire systems involving all three components are overturned and replaced by others” (p. 128).

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How much more so with inherited traits? As the Apostle Paul was inspired to write:

“For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate...

“For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.” (Rom. 7:15,18)

But to be clear: one’s inherited attributes do not overwhelm one and this can never be used as an excuse for any negativities or criminal activities. It is not some sort of invisible force that overwhelms one or possesses one, but it does seem to tug or pull at one in a certain direction. A sort of propensity to this or that behaviour. Yet one can still make decisions that can change the propensity. In other words, though these pull and tug at us, in the end we have far more capacity at making decisions and choosing what to do — we have free moral agency and must take personal responsibility for our own actions. Animals have less capacity to do so — much less. See Scriptures that support this position such as Deut. 16:15-20; Eccl. 8:11; Phil. 2:12; II Pet. 1:10; James 1:13-14.

Perhaps the mental imprint of the founders of the nations listed in Genesis 10 was so powerful as to affect the behaviours of their descendants for centuries. In other words, unresisted propensity may exert a powerful influence. Hence national characteristics originate this way, at least in part?

For example, some admixture may dilute or change the propensity in some way, but this will take an enormous amount of research and vast resources to prove or disprove.

In a header to their article on epigenetics, *Vision* magazine contained this statement: “Science is revealing how our environment and behavior from conception to old age affect not only us but also future generations. The Ripple Effect.”

According to the article’s author, Dan Cloer, understanding epigenetic systems reveals that humans are preprogrammed at birth for certain behaviors, which can be changed and reprogrammed in the future. This can lead to harmful relationships and suggests a form of inheritance outside our DNA code. This revelation is unexpected, but it could be beneficial for our well-being. (“[The Ripple Effect](#),” *Vision*, Fall 2012, online.)

Another article of note is “[Can trauma be passed on through our DNA?](#)” by Jonathan Davis, 3 March 2016. The article discusses that understanding how to heal from trauma before passing it on to the next generation is crucial. So, thanks to the emerging discipline of epigenetics, researchers are uncovering that trauma can be inherited by future generations through mechanisms beyond just learned actions.

Previously it was stated that these influences do not, of course, possess you or force you to do anything. They simply influence you or provide an “urging” of sorts to operate in a certain way. You are not helpless to change, and I might add, not all these influences are bad. Some are good or a mixture of good/positive and bad/negative. It is almost as if these inbuilt influences “drag” you in a certain direction because inside your mind are forces or energies that pertain to certain behaviours or characteristics that you are born with. See Rom. 7:15-23.

These come from your parents and even distant forefathers.

In this regard one article worth a read is “[Culture etched on our DNA more than previously known, research suggests](#),” *CBS News*, 11 Jan. 2017 by Shanika Gunaratna.

The study suggests that factors like common ancestry, culture, and environment contribute to the genomes of individuals within the same ethnic groups. For the first time, researchers have quantified the non-genetic aspects of race and identity for those from the same ethnic background.

The researchers examined DNA methylation — markers that can be inherited or altered by life experiences and influence gene expression — in 573 Mexican and Puerto Rican children. They found 916 methylation differences associated with Mexican or Puerto Rican ethnicity. Interestingly, only three-quarters of these differences could be explained by genetic ancestry. This led the researchers to theorize that a significant portion, around one quarter, of these DNA fingerprints likely reflect the biological signatures of environmental, social, and cultural differences between the ethnic groups.

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Factors like diet, neighborhood conditions, and smoking habits tend to vary across racial and ethnic groups. These subtle cultural and environmental differences can be manifested in DNA methylation patterns!

The study’s lead researcher, Dr. Esteban Burchard, emphasized that this furthers our understanding of the complex relationship between race, ethnicity, and biology. It suggests that the common framework of viewing race/ethnicity as social constructs versus genetic ancestry as a biological construct is overly simplistic.

Going forward, the researchers plan to explore whether these findings apply to other populations beyond the Mexican and Puerto Rican groups studied. Understanding the interplay of genetic, environmental, and social factors in shaping racial and ethnic identities is crucial for healthcare professionals in diagnosing and treating health issues.

**“The research suggests that abandoning considerations of race and ethnicity in medicine — as some academics, who view race and ethnicity as social constructs, suggest — would be a grave mistake, and that these lenses carry valuable insights for more precise and culturally specific medicine.**

“The future of medicine, Dr. Burchard argued, carefully considers genetic ancestry, race, ethnicity and culture all at the same time. He published research back in 2011 showing how far the medical research establishment is from factoring in the nuances of race and ethnicity. That 2011 research showed that 94 percent of study participants in modern genetic studies are white, Dr. Buchard said.

“We study whites a lot, and then we try to generalize that to Sri Lankans, blacks, Asians, and other racial groups. **That’s not just socially unjust, it’s bad science and bad medicine’** Dr. Burchard said.” [emphasis mine].

**Lessons for us today**

The great lesson to take away from the above is simple: control your thinking, reactions to traumatic events, and eating habits for the sake of future generations. Because you can pass on attributes — both positive and negative.

You can either be a blessing or a curse to those that come after you — your very descendants.

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See Craig M. White’s other articles at:

[White, Craig M. – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://www.church-of-god-bismarck.org)

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**Iron Sharpening Iron**  
**In regard to:**  
**The Gospels’ Accounts of Events Passover Night**

Article by Gary C. Miller  
Comments by Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)

The gospel accounts look like a tangled mess when you try to figure out who did what and when, but I believe that Gary untangled the sequence of events in regard to footwashing, the bread, the wine and the song.

For over 20 years we have been doing the footwashing last, just before the song based on this set of scripture:

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**Joh 13:2** And **supper being ended**, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, to betray him;  
**Joh 13:3** Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;  
**Joh 13:4** He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. (Old King James Bible)

A more accurate rendering of verse 2 would be “as supper began” or “during supper”.

**Joh 13:2** **During supper**, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, (World English Bible)

**Joh 13:2** **While supper was proceeding**, the Devil having by this time suggested to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, the thought of betraying Him, Jesus, (Weymouth)

**Joh 13:2** **The evening meal was in progress**, and the devil had already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, that he should betray Jesus. (New English Translation)

And there are others.

Another way to untangle this is to understand that the books of John and Matthew will be more accurate as time lines go, as they were both at this meal, whereas Mark and Luke wrote their accounts based on what they received from others (perhaps from John and Matthew).

Below are what the commentaries tell us about John 13:2 and most of them are in agreement.

**From Vincent's Word Studies:**

**John 13:2**

**Supper being ended** (**δείπνου γενομένου**)

The most approved reading is **γινομένου**, the present participle, denoting *while a supper was in progress*. Hence Rev., rightly, *during supper*. The A.V. is wrong, even if the reading of the Received Text be retained; for in **Joh\_13:12** Jesus reclined again, and in **Joh\_13:26**, the supper is still in progress. It should be, *supper having begun, or having been served*. It is important to note the absence of the definite article: a supper, as distinguished from *the* feast, which also is designated by a different word.

**Robertson's Word Pictures**

**John 13:2**

**During supper** (**δειπνου γινομενου**). Correct text, present middle participle of **ginomai** (not **genomenou**, second aorist middle participle, “being ended”) genitive absolute. **Joh\_13:4** shows plainly that the meal was still going on.

**Jamieson-Fausset-Brown**

**John 13:2**

**supper being ended** — rather, “being prepared,” “being served,” or, “going on”; for that it was not “ended” is plain from **Joh\_13:26**.

**George Haydock**

**John 13:2**

*And when supper was done*. By this we must not understand, that the supper was over; for we afterwards find that Jesus again sat down, and gave bread to the traitor. But these words only mean, that all had partook of refreshment, and might be therefore said to have supped. (St. Augustine, tract. 55. in Joan.) --- He knew that he went out from God, and would return to God; but at the same time, he did not leave God, when he went out from him, nor us, when he returns to him. (St. Augustine, as above.) --- And though he went out from God, and returns to him, yet here he condescends to perform the office, not of the Lord God of the universe, but of a man and a slave; (St. Augustine) and this, says St. John Chrysostom, (hom. lxi. in Joan.) that he might tread all pride under foot: doing every thing himself on this occasion, to teach us with what eagerness we ought to perform the duties of humility.

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**Cambridge Bible**

*supper being ended*] There are two readings here, but neither of them means ‘being ended,’ moreover the supper is not ended ([Joh\\_13:26](#)). The common reading would mean ‘supper having begun,’ and the better reading, ‘when supper was at hand,’ or, ‘when supper was beginning.’ “It was the custom for slaves to wash the feet of the guests before sitting down to meat; and we are tempted to suppose that the symbolical act, which our Evangelist relates here, took the place of this custom.” S. p. 214.

**Adam Clarke**

**John 13:2**

**And supper being ended** - Rather, [δειπνου γενομενου](#), while supper was preparing. To support this new translation of the words, it may be remarked that, from [Joh\\_13:26](#), [Joh\\_13:30](#), it appears that the supper was not then ended: nay, it is probable that it was not then begun; because the washing of feet ([Joh\\_13:5](#)) was usually practiced by the Jews before they entered upon their meals, as may be gathered from [Luk\\_7:44](#), and from the reason of the custom. I think that John wrote, not [γενομενου](#), but [γινομενου](#), as in BL. Cant. and Origen, which latter reading is approved by several eminent critics, and should be translated as above. By the supper I suppose to be meant, not only the eating of it, but the preparing and dressing of it, and doing all things necessary previously to the eating of it. The devil had, before this time of the supper, put it into Judas’s heart to betray his Master. See [Mat\\_26:14](#), etc.; [Mar\\_14:10](#), [Mar\\_14:11](#); and [Luk\\_22:3](#), etc. See also Bishop Pearce, from whose judicious commentary the preceding notes are principally taken.

**Albert Barnes**

**Supper being ended** - This translation expresses too much. The original means while they were at supper; and that this is the meaning is clear from the fact that we find them still eating after this. The Arabic and Persic translations give it this meaning. The Latin Vulgate renders it like the English.

**Joseph Benson**

**John 13:2**

*And supper being ended* — Or, as [δειπνου γενομενου](#) should rather be translated, *supper*, or *supper-time*, *being come*, or, *while they were at supper*, as Dr. Campbell renders it. Thus, [Joh\\_21:4](#), [πρωιας γενομενης](#), *when morning was come*. [Act\\_12:18](#); [Act\\_16:35](#), [ημερας γενομενης](#), *when day was come*; and [Act\\_21:40](#), [σιγης λενομενης](#), *when silence was made*: in all which places, and in many more, which might easily be collected from the Greek writers, it would be absurd to translate the word, *ended*. “When [γενομενης](#),” says Dr. Campbell, “is joined with [πρωιας](#), [οψιας](#), [ημερας](#), or with any term denoting a precise portion of time, it invariably signifies that the period denoted by the noun is begun, not ended.”

**E. W. Bullinger**

**supper**. The last supper recorded. See App-157. **being ended**. In view of [Joh\\_13:26](#), Alford’s translation, “supper having been served,” is preferable to Authorized Version and Revised Version renderings. It means “supper being laid”. Washing would naturally *precede* the meal Compare [Luk\\_7:44](#).

I am generally not always a fan of commentaries because I think many of them go down rabbit trails which are not needed, but in this case some of them explain why it should be “beginning or during” instead of “after”. They also point out that there are verses clearly showing that the meal was not ended.

So, with that said from here on out we have changed our timing of the footwashing from before the song to before the meal. When we are proven wrong, we will change, will you?

**The Gospels’ Accounts of Events Passover Night**  
**(Copyright 2020) by Gary C. Miller (Pocahontas, Arkansas)**

**MATT. 26:**

**NO foot washing**

(1). **Betrayal:...**v. 21: “...as they did eat...one of you shall betray me.”  
v. 23: “...He that dippeth...with me in the dish...”

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v. 25: "...Judas...is it I...Thou hast said."

(2). **Bread:**.....v. 26: "...were eating...took bread,..blessed [gave thanks]...this is my body."

(3). **Cup:**.....v. 27: "...took the cup...gave thanks..is my blood of the new [Vat. & Sin. omit]..."

(4). **Song:**.....v. 30: "And when they had sung a hymn, they went...into the mount of Olives."

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**MARK 14:**

**NO foot washing**

(1). **Betrayal:**..v. 18: "...as they...did eat...One of you...shall betray me."

v. 20: "...one that dippeth with me in the dish."

(2). **Bread:** ....v. 22: "...as they did eat...took bread...take eat: this is my body."

(3). **Cup:**.....v. 23: "And he took the cup,...and had given thanks...and they all drank of it."

v. 24: "...This is my blood of the new [Vat. & Sin. omit] Testament [covenant]..."

(4). **Song:**.....v. 26: "And when they had sung a hymn, they went...into the mount of Olives."

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**LUKE 22:**

**NO foot washing**

(1). **Cup:**.....v. 17: "...he took the cup...gave thanks.. divide among yourselves:"

(2). **Bread:**.....v. 19: "And he took the bread...gave thanks...This is my body..."

**v.20: \*\*\* This verse tends to indicate the cup FOLLOWED the bread: v. 20: "Likewise also the cup AFTER supper...This is the New Testament in my blood..."**

**(RSV omits the last part of verse 19 and all of verse 20.** RSV note: "Other ancient authorities add *which is given for you. Do this remembrance of me.*" <sup>20</sup> *And likewise the cup after supper, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."*). *Concordant NT says the Alexandrinus and Sinaiticus (the most complete and most perfect manuscript, p.21) both contain verse 20. Generally considered the oldest and most valuable codex, Vaticanus, DOES NOT CONTAIN THIS VERSE, and-except for the end of Hebrews, does not contain Paul's epistles and the Apocalypse (p. 26).*

**[See Conclusion reference to 1 Cor. 11:23-26: "...took bread (v.23)...After...the cup (v. 25) ..."]**

(3). **Betrayal:**..v. 21: "...him that betrayeth me is with me on the table."

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**JOHN 13:**

**NO Cup or Bread**

(1). **Foot Washing:**..v. 2: "...supper in progress [Vine's; p. 199; "during supper" RSV]..."

the devil having...put into the heart of Judas...to betray him;"

v. 4: "He riseth from supper..."

v. 5: "...poureth water in a bason...began to wash the disciples' feet."



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v. 14, “...wash one another’s feet...”  
v. 15: “...do as I have done to you.”

- (2). **Betrayal**.....v. 21: “...one of you shall betray me.”  
v. 27: “after the sop Satan entered into him.”  
v. 30: “He then having received the sop went...out: and it was night.”

**CONCLUSION:**

The only fact common to all four accounts is the betrayal comment. This is a constant which helps weave together several other important facts of that fateful Passover night in 31 A.D.

First, we know Luke says only [v. 21]: “...him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.” and nothing about dipping the sop. Too, note Matthew and Mark’s accounts show there would be a dipping of the sop, **but not when it occurred in the sequence of events**. Finally, John’s account only is left showing the order of the foot washing, the betrayal comment and dipping of the sop.

John’s record clearly shows Yahshua’s betrayal statement followed the foot washing. It is equally certain the betrayal statement is immediately followed by the disciples’ concern over the traitor’s identity [Matt. 26:22; Mk. 14:19; Lk. 22:23]; leading to John asking Yahshua who he was (Jn. 13:25). Yahshua then answered and directly gave the sop to Judas (v. 26). Judas left promptly after receiving the sop and did not eat the blessed bread and wine (v. 27). There is no noticeable break in this series of events from the foot washing to Judas’ exit.

Two accounts, possibly three, show the betrayal comment and the disciples’ query preceded the Bread and Cup [Matt. 26; Mark 14; Luke 22 (?)].

Two accounts [Matt. 26; Mark 14] record the taking of the **Bread preceded the drinking the Cup of wine**.

The KJV translation of Luke 22:20 indicates a **second** reference to the cup, showing the **bread preceded** the cup (see reference above). This translation is consistent with Paul’s statements recorded in 1 Cor. 11: 23-26: “...Yahshua...took bread:...and said, Take, eat...this is my body...**After the same manner also he took the cup**...as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup...”

John’s account, which is undeniably true-of an unbroken series of events of the footwashing/betrayal sequence, with the other Gospel accounts, show the betrayal preceded eating the Bread and drinking the Wine.

Together, they make clear **the following must be the case:**

- (1). **The foot washing preceded the betrayal comment.** [Jn 13:5]
- (2). **Judas left before the bread and cup were given.** [Jn.13:20]
- (3). **The betrayal comment preceded the bread and cup.** [Mat. 26:21, Mk. 14:18]
- (4). **The bread preceded the cup.** [Mat. 26:26, Mk. 14:22, Lk. 22:20 (?)]
- (5). **Taking the cup was the last act of the Passover sequence except the song, his advice and later his prayer.** [Matt. 26:30; Mk. 14:26]

**NOTE:** Several Biblical examples show foot washing **preceded a meal:**

**Gen. 18:4:** “...wash your feet and rest... (vv. 5-8): “...and they did eat...”

**Gen. 19:2:** “...your feet...” (v.3): “...made them a feast, unleavened bread...”

**Gen. 24:32:** “...water... .to wash your feet...” (v. 33): “...set meat...”  
(v. 54): “...they did eat.”

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Gen. 43:24: “...they washed their feet...for they heard...” (25)...they should eat bread...”

Judges 19:21: “...they washed their feet and did eat...and drink...”

**Editor’s Note:** Gary told me the above scriptures do not have anything to do with the gospel accounts of footwashing but that he inserted them to show that footwashing was generally done before a meal. Laura Lee

**SEQUENCE FOR PASSOVER NIGHT:**

1. FOOT WASHING
2. BREAD
3. WINE
4. SONG

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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**A Bride Prepared (Chapter 12)**  
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**Chapter 12: Love and Marriage**

***A Bride Prepared***

**Love and Marriage**

In the same way that betrayal of love is the most painful of all possible hurts – Godly character is the most beautiful of the Bride’s virtues. This most exquisite feature of Godly character is described as *pure gold tried in the fire* (Revelation 3:18). The love that Christ will have for His Bride and the wholehearted love that the Bride will have for Christ will be a perfect **spiritual love**. As surely as God created a wife for Adam, He is fashioning His own Bride-to-be. *“The Lord said, Yes, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be fashioned, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets...”* (Jeremiah 31:3-4)

From the time of creation until now, the love between Jesus Christ and mankind has been by and large a unilateral love. That one-sided love will finally become a reciprocally shared love when the perfected Bride blossoms into spiritual maturation at the resurrection. No longer will Jesus have a unique Godly **love for His fiancée**, because at long last she will finally possess the capacity to be able to reciprocate with an eternal mutual love.

How does the Bride come to possess that level of Godly love? Almost everyone says that they love God, but there is another requirement – **loving others** – that does not receive the attention that it requires. Notice how Jesus says it. *“You shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.”* (Mark 12:30, Leviticus 19:18)

Let it be a given that we are not as calloused as the lawyer in the Biblical example who wanted to limit the number of

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people he was required to love by asking Jesus, “*Who is my neighbor?*” (Luke 10:29) Jesus reveals an important concept to us which explains that if we truly desire to develop a love toward God – we will first be practicing Godly **love toward one another**. The **Bride is not prepared** when the great majority of the brethren are not willing to interact in a meaningful way with each other. Jesus takes brotherly love personally! He equates Godly love to brotherly love when He says that **without brotherly love** there is no Godly love.

*“The King shall answer and say unto them, Truly I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the **least of these my brethren**, ye have done it **unto Me**... [and conversely] Then shall He answer them, saying, Truly I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye **did it not** to one of the least of these, ye **did it not to Me**.”* (Matthew 25:40, 45) Our rapport with each other is the key to knowing how to truly love God. This verse tells us that loving one another right now is the training occasion for knowing how to have a right relationship with God. We cannot love God **without truly loving the brethren**, and vice-versa; a **right relationship with God** is the prerequisite for loving the brethren. The love of God and His law is the foundation upon which is built every one of our right relationships in life.

#### **Warning Message**

This is a sincere warning message for the Bride-to-be. We are not truly ready for the spiritual wedding to Christ when we are **idle observers** rather than positive forces for good in the lives of the brethren. God’s advice to us, “*Get fervent and repent.*” (Revelation 3:19) Thankfully, God has given us additional time so that we might heed His direct command to us to rectify the apathetic, half-hearted, lackadaisical condition of so much of the Church.

Our overriding goal as God’s spiritual community is to help one another reach the Kingdom of God. As far as it is possible by way of the correct use of our spiritual gifts, we are to help all others attain to their full potential in the Kingdom of God. We are learning now how to say in the Millennium, “*This is the way, walk ye in it*” (Isaiah 30:21). And it is not just the job of the ministry – **it is everyone’s duty!** At Passover, we are taught in the foot-washing ceremony the *salvational* necessity to serve one another. The foot-washing is about loving our neighbor as ourselves. In washing each other’s feet, each member is admonished to watch over the *spiritual* condition of their brothers and sisters in Christ, and to take action when anyone begins to stumble. When we do this – Jesus says we have done it unto Him.

Get this straight: It is an act of Godly love to rebuke a sinner. A loving reprimand may save his eternal life. It is an **act of cowardice** to close one’s eyes to a person overtaken in a fault. It is a common misconception that all we have to do is look out for our own spiritual wellbeing. God demands brotherly interaction of those who would be the Bride. “*Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.*” (Philippians 2:4) Jesus was direct when dealing with those who were off-base – we must be also. “*Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one converts him; Let him know, that he which **converts the sinner** from the error of his way shall save a soul from death and shall hide a multitude of sins.*” (James 5:19-20) Saving a sinner like this brings rejoicing in heaven (Luke 15:7).

See Warren Zehring’s other articles at:

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

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## **What Kind of King Would You Be?** (Copyright 10-21-2024) by Rod Reynolds (Wentzville, Missouri)

The Fall Festival season pictures the Kingdom of God being established on earth. That means a new government will be established to rule all the nations of the earth! ([Revelation 11:15](#); [Daniel 7:14](#)).

Why is a new government necessary? Because government in the hands of man has failed miserably. The record of

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**The "New" Church of God Messenger**  
**A Newsletter for the People of God**  
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history is one of war, oppression, poverty, disease, all too often famine, and every other evil imaginable, often caused by government, or at other times not prevented by man's governments. Historically, government has often been man's greatest enemy. Yet, effective and genuinely beneficent government is essential to the well being of man. A new and much better government is needed to replace current governments with their failures, inadequacies and evils.

A big part of the responsibility of government is to regulate relations between people. God's government, through his law, regulates our relationships with God and with one another. In God's Kingdom, a big part of the job of those who administer the government will be to teach individuals and nations how to relate to one another and to God so as to produce peace and joy, happy and abundant lives on a universal scale. Scripture tells us that the resurrected saints will be given authority under Jesus Christ in his millennial Kingdom to help him rule over the nations of the earth ([Daniel 7:27](#); [Revelation 2:26-27](#); [5:9-10](#)).

If you were made a "king" (or "queen") today, what kind would you be? What kind of rulers does the world need?

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Sermon Link: [What Kind of King Would You Be? | COGMessenger](#)

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## Marriage Supper Parables

(Copyright 10-23-2024) by Rod Reynolds (Wentzville, Missouri)

In order to shed light on the message of the Kingdom of God Jesus used many parables. Among the parables used was that of a marriage supper — or wedding feast. In the book of Revelation, we're told "Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!" ([Revelation 19:9](#)).

What is this marriage supper of the Lamb? When is it and where is it? Is Jesus going to "rapture" the saints up to heaven to literally "get married" to him, as has been taught for a long while among some? Will there be a literal western style wedding ceremony in heaven, as some have speculated, followed by a literal sit-down "marriage supper"?

If not, how are we to understand these parables and related Scriptures? What does the Bible reveal about their actual meaning? Find the answers to the real meaning of the "marriage supper" parables and related Scriptures.

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Sermon Link: [Marriage Supper Parables | COGMessenger](#)

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## Tsunami of Death Is Upon Us

(Copyright 10-21-24) by James Steinle (Swanville, Minnesota)

Renowned Virologist Warns Fully Vaxxed Have Just Years Left to Live: 'Tsunami of Death Is Upon Us'

<https://disswire.com/renowned-virologist-warns-fully-vaxxed-have-just-years-left-to-live-tsunami-of-death-is-upon-us/>

Watch: 2.07-minute video and read the article.

**A REASON A PERSON WOULD WANT TO BE CONSIDERED AN "ELECT":**

Matthew 24:22 "And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short" ESV.

Now would be a good time to read and consider Psalm 91.

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

## The Book of Life

(Copyright 10-22-2024) by Rod Reynolds (Wentzville, Missouri)

In [Revelation 20:15](#) we're told that anyone who is not found written in the book of life will be cast into the lake of fire. What is this book of life? When and how can one's name be written in it? What can you do to make sure your name is there?

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Sermon Link: <https://www.cogmessenger.org/en/the-book-of-life-audio/>

See Rod Reynolds other articles at:  
[Reynolds, Rod – The "New" Church of God Messenger \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://church-of-god-bismarck.org)

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## Latest Article

(Copyright 10-12-2024) by Craig M. White (Australia)

My latest article "Your Thoughts and Actions Can Impact Future Generations" is now available online [here](#). Or [PDF](#).

This article is drawn from my [Notes on the Bible and Genetics](#) (80 pp).

Enjoy and any feedback would be appreciated.

- Craig

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See Craig M. White's other articles at:

[White, Craig M. – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](#)

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New American Standard Bible (Proverbs 27:17)  
As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

## Holy Days 2025

Passover – April 13, 2025 (Observed at Sunset the Evening Before)

Passover/Unleavened Bread – April 13-19, 2025

Pentecost – June 2, 2025

Trumpets – September 23, 2025

Atonement – October 2, 2025

Tabernacles – October 7, 2025, to October 13, 2025

Last Great Day – October 14, 2025

## Notes