

**Christmas, Easter,
Halloween & Other Non-
Biblical Holidays**

by B. L. Cocherell (Nevada)
(Continued from Issue #9)

PAGE 2

A Child's Theory

by Jeffrey Caldwell
(Redwood City, California)

PAGE 5

Parable of the Ten Virgins

by William P. Goff
(Myrtle Beach, South Carolina)

PAGE 6

**The Oppression of the
American People
and the Suppression of
Freedom**

(Copyright) by Richard Markland
(London, Ohio)

PAGE 10

The Titanic--Then and Now

by Myra McQueen
(Odessa, Texas)

PAGE 10

**The last straw, tepid
support for Trump**

(Copyright) by Curtis Dahlgren
(Stephenson, Michigan)

PAGE 12

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The "New" Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
April 10, 2021 --- Issue No. 10

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Articles

Christmas, Easter, Halloween & Other Non-Biblical Holidays

by B. L. Cocherell (Nevada)

(Continued from Issue #9)

THE TRUTH ABOUT CHRISTMAS

Most professing Christians believe that Christmas is one of the most important holidays. Without question, many people blindly follow its observance. Moreover, they assume that Jesus was actually born on December 25th. Because we look to Christ as our Savior, it is important to take a deeper look into his birth. We often hear people say, "Let's put Christ back into Christmas!" Perhaps we should investigate just how Christ got into Christmas in the first place.

Most Bible scholars agree that Christmas is of pagan origin. In his book 4000 Years of Christmas, Earl W. Count, Professor of Anthropology at Hamilton College, explains the origin of the Christmas celebration: "We do not know its beginning . . . we do not really know when the Christ child it venerates was born: or the time and place when Christmas was first celebrated: or exactly how it was that, over the centuries, a bishop saint of Asia Minor, and a pagan god of the Germans merged to become Santa Claus."

"Although the Christmas story centers in the Christ child of Bethlehem, it begins so long before his coming that we find its hero arriving on the scene after more than half of the time of the story has gone by. Christmas began over 4000 years ago, as the festival which renewed the world for another year. The 12 days of Christmas, the bright fires and probably the yule log; the giving of presents; the carnivals with their floats; their merry makings and clowning; the mummers who sing and play from house to house, the feasting; the church processions with their lights and song—all these and more began three centuries before Christ was born. And they celebrated the arrival of a new year" (ibid., p.18).

"For that day [25th of December] was sacred, not only to the pagan Romans but to a religion from Persia which, in those days, was one of Christianity's strongest rivals. This Persian religion was Mithraism, whose followers worshiped the sun, and celebrated its return to strength on that day. The church finally succeeded in taking the merriment, the greenery, the lights, and gifts from Saturn and giving them to the "babe of Bethlehem" (ibid., p.27).

"It happened that the date [December 25th] did fall in the midst of the Saturnalia. Far from being an invention to compete against Roman and Persian paganism, the birthday of Christ ran the danger of being swallowed up in pagan merry making. The [church] fathers tried strenuously to keep Christmas strictly a churchly celebration. It was part of their unremitting struggle to break the grip of the pagan gods upon the people. And as they broke, Romans became Christians . . . but the Saturnalia remained" (ibid., p.28).

"When was Jesus born? No one knows. December 25th is no more than the historical date of his birth than is any other" [p. 50]. "Christmas, as we have seen, is of the Mediterranean for the Mediterranean world already had not merely centuries, but millennia behind it, when Christ was born; and even the religion which he founded had traveled several centuries before it discovered its need of Christmas" (p.86).

"Renewal and rebirth: After 4000 years, the festival that has grown about the birth of the Christ child remains an affirmation that all things can be made anew" (ibid., p.91).

Although no one knows the exact date of Christ's birth, there is evidence that he was not born in the winter: "*And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night*" (Lk.2:8). This never could have occurred in the month of December in Palestine. The shepherds usually brought their flocks from the mountainsides and fields and corralled them no later than the middle of October to protect them from the cold, rainy season that followed. The Song of Solomon 2:11 and Ezra.10:9, 13 show that winter was a rainy season during which shepherds could not have remained in open fields at night:

The "New" Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
April 10, 2021 --- Issue No. 10

"It was an ancient custom among the Jews of those days to send their sheep to the fields, and deserts about Passover [early spring] and bring them home at commencement of the first rain. During the time they were out, the shepherds watched them night and day, the first rains began early in the month of Marchesvan, which answers to part of our October and November [begins in the middle of October] we find that the sheep were kept out in the open country during the whole summer, and as these shepherds had not yet brought home their flocks, it is a presumptive argument that October had not yet commenced, and that consequently, our Lord was not born on the 25th of December, when no flocks were out in the fields by night. On this very ground, the nativity in December should be given up. The feeding of the flocks by night in the field is a chronological fact" (The Adam Clarke Commentary, Volume 5, p.347).

There is no command in the whole Bible that tells us to observe Christmas. Under the inspired teaching of Paul and Peter and the other apostles, the Christians of the first century never observed Christ's birth date. Christmas came to us through the Roman Catholic Church, which is where it gets its authority as a religious holiday. According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, which is published by the Catholic Church: "Christmas was not among the earliest festivals of the church. The first evidence of the feast is from Egypt."

We find this truth acknowledged further in the Encyclopedia Britannica: "Christmas [i.e., the Mass of Christ] was not among the earliest festivals of the church."

The Encyclopedia Americana states: "Christmas, . . . it was, according to many authorities, not celebrated in the first centuries of the Christian church, as the Christian's usage in general was to celebrate the death of remarkable persons rather than their birth . . ." (The communion, which is instituted by New Testament authority, is a memorial of the death of Christ). . . . A feast was established in memory of this event (Christ's birth) in the fourth century. In the fifth century, the Western church ordered it to be celebrated forever on the day of the old Roman feast of the birth of Sol, as no certain knowledge of the day of Christ's birth existed."

How did the pagan custom get into the church? Most recognized authorities agree that Christmas was not observed by the early church for the first two or three hundred years and that its origin began in the western segment of the Roman Church in the fourth century A.D... However, it was not until the fifth century that the Roman Church ordered it to be celebrated as an official Christian festival.

The Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia: "How much the date of the festival depended upon the pagan Brumalia (December 25th) following the Saturnalia (December 17-24), and celebrating the shortest day of the year and the "new sun" . . . cannot be accurately determined. The pagan Saturnalia and Brumalia were too deeply entrenched in popular custom to be set aside by Christian influence. The pagan festival with its riot and merrymaking was so popular that Christians were glad of an excuse to continue its celebration with little change in spirit and manner. Christian teachers of the West and Near East protested against the unseemly frivolity, while Christians of Mesopotamia accused their western brethren of idolatry and sun worship for adopting as Christian the pagan festival."

"The observance of December 25 (as a Christian festival) only dates from the fourth century and is due to assimilation with the Mithraic festival of the birth of the sun" (World Popular Encyclopedia, Volume 3).

"Gradually a number of prevailing practices of the [heathen] nations into which Christ came were assimilated and were combined with the religious ceremonies surrounding Christmas. The assimilation of such practices generally represented efforts by Christians to transform or absorb otherwise pagan practices" (The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, Volume 1, p.805).

"The pagan symbolism was taken over and, in Christian view, elevated. Jesus became the "sun of justice" and the "sun of righteousness" (Celebrations: The Complete Book of American Holidays, Myers, p.310).

"Our annual Christian festival (Christmas) is nothing but a continuation under a different name of this old solar festivity (Saturnalia)" (The New Golden Bough, Frazer and Foster, p.653).

"Christmas was generally celebrated in the West only after the triumph of Constantine when the time of Christ's birth was reckoned with the Day of the Unconquered Sun on 25 December" (From Christ to Constantine, Smith, p.150-151).

The "New" Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
April 10, 2021 --- Issue No. 10

"The assimilation of Christ to the sun god, as sun of righteousness, was widespread in the fourth century and was furthered by Constantine's legislation on Sunday, which is not unrelated to the fact that the sun god was the titular divinity of his family" (A History of the Christian Church: Revised, Walker, Section 13, p.154-155).

The Myth of Nimrod

Nimrod, the grandson of Ham and the great grandson of Noah, was the real founder of the Babylonian system of worship and government that continues to thrive throughout the world.

Ancient writings speak of Nimrod as the one who started a great, organized world apostasy against God, which still dominates the world. It is said that he was so wicked that he married his own mother, Semiramis. After Nimrod was killed, his mother-wife propagated the doctrine of the survival of Nimrod as a spirit-being. She claimed that a full-grown evergreen tree sprang up overnight from a dead tree stump which symbolized the resurrection of Nimrod. On each anniversary of his birth (supposedly December 25th), she claimed Nimrod would visit the evergreen tree and leave gifts upon it.

Mother and Child Theme

Through her scheming and planning, Semiramis became the Babylonian Queen of Heaven, and Nimrod, under many other names, became the Divine Son of Heaven. Through the generations, in this idolatrous worship, Nimrod also became the false messiah, son of Baal, who was the sun-god. In this false Babylonian religious system, the mother and child (Semiramis and the reborn Nimrod) became chief objects of worship. This worship of mother and child spread throughout the world. Only the names varied because of differing languages. In Asia they were known as Cybele and Diorus. In Rome they were Fortuna and Jupiter. In Egypt, their names were Isis and Osiris. Long before the birth of Jesus Christ, the counterpart of the Madonna can be found throughout China, Tibet, and Japan.

The following are explanations of the origins of popular practices and symbols of the Christmas celebration.

Yule Logs

The yule log is in reality the *sun log*. Yule means wheel, which is applied as the pagan symbol of the sun. Today, professing Christians speak of the sacred yuletide season. There is nothing sacred about it! The symbols come from the worship of false gods.

The Christmas Tree

The Christmas tree was equally common in pagan Rome and pagan Egypt. In Egypt that tree was the palm tree and in Rome it was the fir tree. The palm tree denotes the pagan messiah, Baal-Tamar (Jdg.20:33), and the fir tree denotes the same pagan messiah under the name Baal-Berith. The mother of Adonis, the sun god and great divine mediator, was said to have been mystically changed into a tree. And when she was in that state, she brought forth her divine son.

Mistletoe

"That mistletoe bough in the Druidic superstition, which was derived from Babylon, was a representative of the Messiah, "the man of the branch." The mistletoe was regarded as a divine branch, a branch that came from heaven, and grew upon a tree that sprang out of the earth. Thus, by engrafting the celestial branch into the earthly tree, heaven and earth, which sin had severed, were joined together. Thus, the mistletoe bough became the token of divine reconciliation to man, the kiss being the well-known token of pardon and reconciliation" (The Two Babylons, Hislop, p.99).

The Encyclopedia Americana says: "The holly, the mistletoe and the yule log . . . are relics of preChristian times."

Gifts

Many exchange gifts because the three wise men presented gifts to the Christ child. Did you know the Bible nowhere states there were three wise men? Did you know those wise men never appeared at the manger on Christ's birth night; they actually arrived many months later? They didn't appear at the manger, they appeared at Christ's house (Matt.2:11).

Although most people believe that the custom of giving gifts at Christmas is associated with the men that brought gifts to the child Jesus, the New Standard Encyclopedia, Christmas, says: "In reality, at least so far as the English speaking people are concerned, it [gift giving at Christmas] is derived from an old heathen custom."

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
April 10, 2021 --- Issue No. 10

"The wise men gave their gifts to Christ but did not exchange gifts with each other. The gifts presented to Christ were to a king, because of his royalty, and not because of his birthday. He was a king, and the people of the East never approached the presence of a king without a present in their hands" (Adam Clarke Commentary, Volume 5, Matt.2: 11, p.34).

The Christmas Wreath

"The use of Christmas wreaths is believed by authorities to be traceable to the pagan customs of decorating buildings and places of worship at the feast which took place at the same time as Christmas. The Christmas tree is from Egypt and its origin dates from a period long anterior to the Christmas era" (Answers to Questions, Frederick Gentlemen Haskins).

Christmas and many other observances have come directly from paganism, but the annual observances and festivals of Leviticus 23 have come from God and should be observed today by God's earthly children.

Santa Claus

The name Santa Claus is actually the corruption of the name St. Nicholas, a Roman Catholic bishop who lived in the fifth century.

"St. Nicholas, Bishop of Myra. . .a saint honored by the Greeks and Latins on the 6th of December. . .a legend of his surreptitious bestowal of dowries on the three daughters of an impoverished citizen. . .is said to have originated the old custom of giving presents in secret on the eve of St. Nicholas (December 6) subsequently of Christmas and Santa Claus" (Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th Edition, Volume 19, p.648-649).

Kris Kringle

"From the German people were to come those most universal of Christmas customs: the Christmas tree, and the portly beneficent Kris Kringle, known as Santa Claus.

"Gradually the Presbyterians, Quakers and Puritans accepted such customs as the Christmas tree, the giving of small gifts and the Christmas feast. But they spoke violently against the corruption of the Christkindl, (the Christ Child) into Kris Kringle. After Kris Kringle was fully assimilated, there was much concern among all religious groups about the non-religious trend of the holiday" (Christmas Day: The Complete Book of American Holidays, Myers, p.314-316).

(To Be Continued in Issue #11)

A Child's Theory
by Jeffrey Caldwell (Redwood City, California)

A child's theory of everything came to me as I drove to work.

What is the primordial order of origin of the Creation ("universe" --if you prefer)?

Moses' account indicates time comes first. Matter and space exist in time--not otherwise!

There must be "space" to have a place to "put" matter!

To have any "thing" organized matter must occupy at least some of the "space"!

So, it occurs to me, the primordial order of Creation is time, space, matter. All must relate to each other as they do for us to have the universe as we know it.

Then, suddenly, a thought: what are the conditions for "human being" as we know it?

"Human being" requires time! From conception to death (at least), for all sorts of experiences.

"Human being" requires space. You (all of your mass) must be "somewhere" at all times.

"Human being" must be made of something (at least the body as we know it) – organized matter.

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
April 10, 2021 --- Issue No. 10

Furthermore, “human being” as we know involves contemplation or interaction (generally with a considerable degree of dependency) with “other things” – first other people [mom and dad, and many others] but also all else that we know – notably the air, land, sea, and other waters, all the forms of green vegetation, astronomical bodies, and animal life. “Human being” as we know it is intertwined with the universe as we know it. “Human being” involves “working” with these things – perceiving them, contemplating them, and all that follows. Universe “organized as I know it” is necessary for “human being” as I know it – so, at least, it seems.

Everything in the universe makes sense in the light of “human being”!

Everything we know involves things that seem to be invested with information. Water seems to always know what water is “supposed” to do – very predictable.

Even more amazing, the information found in every living thing – every form of life “knows what to do” to live its life – which gets incredibly complicated when we consider metabolism, instincts, and reproduction. How did all of that “information” – really – “get there”?

For us, at least, and it appears at least to varying degrees for other organisms we must account for consciousness. It “flows” – exactly from where or to where, one may not know. What is it and where did it come from? Without it, “human being” has no meaningful “being”!

Is it really so crazy to think that a Living One from eternity “made” time, space, matter, investing tons of information into everything we perceive but especially all living organisms, granting, as well “life” and “consciousness” – all of that to facilitate “human being” for you and for me?

Parable of the Ten Virgins

by William P. Goff (Myrtle Beach, South Carolina)

A Parable Misunderstood

The parable of the ten Virgins consists of only 13 verses, but those 13 verses may be the most important and valuable verses in the entire Bible concerning the church and our being ready for our Lord’s return.

I am sure we are all familiar with the parable of the ten Virgins found in Mathew 25. This parable speaks Much about the return of our Lord and Savior, and what is about to befall the church.

This parable also, not only warns us that we better be prepared for what is coming, but also tells us exactly how to prepare.

This is an important Bible Study because many of us in God’s church (even many long-time members) have misunderstood and misinterpreted this parable and fail to prepare as it says.

Remember, it is the ones with the “Oil” that will be ready at His soon coming. But those without the “Oil” (Those who have not been stocking up on this precious “Oil” will fail.

(We all know, if we fail to prepare, we prepare to fail.)

(And there is Nothing more important for us [the church] to be preparing for, than for the return of our Lord, and the Coming Kingdom of God.)

This parable tells us His coming will be a Happy day for those who are prepared. (Because they will hear Him say “Well Done”!) But for those who have not prepared, those who are not ready, it will be a sad day, because He tells the unprepared, the foolish “I never knew you.”

So, let us take this study seriously, because this parable tells us a Lot, including a lot about the current condition of the church, and what is soon coming upon God’s church, and also upon the whole world!

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
April 10, 2021 --- Issue No. 10

Brethren, we are not living in the time when Christ began to build His church that was 2,000 years ago. We are living at the time He is about to “**complete**” His church.

This world is about to be shaken, and in an “Unprecedented” way. The last time our Heavenly Father disciplined or corrected the entire world, He shook it. But this time He is not only going to shake the earth, this time He’s going to be shaking both the heavens and the earth.

This parable tells us how, yes how to prepare. It tells us what we need to be doing now to be prepared.

But many are failing to prepare because we have allowed men to lead us astray. You see, most men teach that the “Oil” spoken of in this parable, that we need to be stocking up on, represents God’s Spirit. But it doesn’t!

The oil represents something that takes time and effort on our part to collect, and store.

It is important for us to understand this parable correctly, because if we fail to collect this “Oil” we will not be ready for what is coming, and our Lord’s return.

We are at the end of the AGE. Many signs are here now that tell us our Lord is Soon to return.

For most of us we have been hearing our entire life that our Lord is soon to return.

But things are different now.

We can clearly see the worldly conditions deteriorating, the pestilence, the plagues, all the signs increasing all around the entire world show us that our Lord’s return is near.

In the book of Matthew, our Lord speaks about His soon coming, and He tells us to be ready for Him. (Matthew 24:44.) (Read it)

The book of Luke has some verses that show us we are at the end of the age. And it also tells us this generation will witness our Lord’s return. Luke 21:31-32 (Read it)

This short parable speaks of a “Midnight Cry” that will be heard by ALL members of the Church of God around the entire world.

The “Midnight Cry” will be the alarm, the whistle announcing the beginning of “The Great Tribulation” and the return of our Savior.

The Great Tribulation that is soon coming is a time when the entire world will be in great trouble and suffering. The Scripture says it will be the biggest and worst time of trouble ever.

Yes, the Scripture says this coming Tribulation will be the worst time of trouble and suffering for the whole world, worse than ever before **and worse** than it will ever be again.

Let us see that, let’s go to the book of Matthew, because there is a Great Tribulation coming. (Matthew 24:21) (Read it)

This Great Tribulation, this time of Great Trouble that is coming upon the Kenyans, the Americans, the Chinese, the Entire World, is going to be very bad, so bad that the next verse tells us that God will have to *cut it short*, or stop it, before every man, woman and child on the face of the earth is dead. (Matthew 24:22) (Read it)

Yes, God says for the Elect’s sake, that time of trouble will be shortened before all humanity dies. (We will see who the “Elect” are, as we move on.)

The parable of the 10 virgins speaks of two groups in God’s church. There are many different churches out there. But God speaks of only two, two groups.

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
April 10, 2021 --- Issue No. 10

This parable is very simple. Some are called “wise”, and some are called “foolish”

(Which group we are in, is our choice. But make no mistake about it, each of us are either amongst the “wise” or the “foolish.”

The “wise” are preparing for our Lord’s return and will be ready for Him. But the “foolish” are not preparing and will not be ready. (We need to check our “Oil” level. Because what this “Oil” does represent, is something that we can observe and measure.)

Let us read this parable now, and see what this “Oil” represents, and if we have been filling up on it, or neglecting to do so.

Mathew 25:1 *Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.*

(The Bridegroom of course is Christ; He’s coming back to marry His church.)

- ² *And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.*
- ³ *They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:*
- ⁴ *But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.*
- ⁵ *While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.*

This is where we are today in God’s church slumbering and sleeping. Busy with our daily lives. Not even realizing that our Lord is already at the doors, about to return. (Matthew 24:32-34.)

We need to know what this “Oil” represents, so we can be fetching it, and filling up on it, because God is about to sound a very sobering wake up call.

- ⁶ *And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.*

(This cry is the Midnight cry that will begin the “Great Tribulation”, and the return of our Lord.)

- ⁷ *Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.*
- ⁸ *And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.*
- ⁹ *But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that **sell**, and **buy** for yourselves.*

Brethren, you cannot buy the Holy Spirit. Simon Magus proved that. (Acts 8:14-20)

You cannot buy the Holy Spirit; it is a free gift from God. The “Oil” does not represent God’s Spirit. The “Oil” represents “Truth”. (Proverbs 23:23.) (Psalm 119:105.)

“Truth” is what we need to be filling up on Brethren, God’s “Word” is “Truth” (John 17:17.)

Truth can and must be bought; we buy it with our “time.” We need to be Studying the Scriptures, rightly dividing them, and that takes time, and effort.

And don’t be fooled by men. We are living at the time when “*The way of Truth is evil spoken of.*” Many fables (even in the church) are still being taught (and believed) as Truth but are not Truth. (2 Peter 2:1-2.)

We have to study more than we might realize. Our Lord warned us (Also Peter and Jude and others warned us) “take heed that no man deceive you.” (Matthew 24:4-5.)

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
April 10, 2021 --- Issue No. 10

Many, if not most of the pulpits in the cog today, still preach and teach the same doctrines, and have the same beliefs, the same knowledge they have had for the past 50 years or more, with little or no growth. We are to be growing in grace and knowledge.

Some in God’s church have raised red flags over the years, questioning some doctrines, knowing they are incorrect (not Truth). But they get discredited, shunned and even disfellowshipped as heretics, as if heresy is a bad thing.

We need to understand something about heresy.

“Heresy” itself isn’t necessarily a bad thing. Heresy is just a teaching or belief that is contrary (or at odds) to what is generally taught or believed. Even Paul was said to teach heresy, and he was proud of it. (Acts 24:14.)

It is “Damnable Heresy” that we have to be on guard against. Especially now when the way of truth is evil spoken of, and the many are following “pernicious” ways. “False Teachings that lead to death.” (2 Peter 2:1-2 again.)

Many false teachings and damnable heresies have been around and taught for so long, they are now being believed as “truth” when the real “Truth” is evil spoken of.

(We need to be very careful here NOT to get our heresies mixed up.) Because some of our beliefs (strongly held beliefs) might be contrary to the Scriptures. That is why we have to “study” “prove all things” “Hold fast to that which is god” That’s why the Scripture is for “Proof” and “**Reproof**” and “Correction in Righteousness”. That is why our persuasion (concerning what we believe) needs to come from the Bible, not from the mouth of men.”

Brethren, “Truth” is what this “Oil” represents, and Truth is what we need to be filling up on before it is too late.

Let us also see who the “Elect” are. Remember Matthew 24:22 said: “*For the “Elect’s” sake, those days (of Great Tribulation) shall be shortened.*”

Elect = Strong’s 1588 Favorite, Chosen.

It is the same Greek word used in Matthew 24:14 where it says: “*Many are called, but few chosen.*” “Chosen” Strong’s 1588 Favorite, Chosen (same word.) The “Elect” are the Chosen of God.

All of us in God’s church have been called, but not everyone will be chosen. The chosen are the ones who take God’s Word seriously, (search and follow Truth not fables.) walk in His ways. Keep His Commandments, do things that are pleasing in His site.

Continuing in Matthew 25:10: “*And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.*”

- ¹¹ *Afterward came also the other virgins, (The Foolish) saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.*
- ¹² *But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.*

Let us take our High Calling seriously, let us prove all things. Hold fast what is good. (1 Thessalonians 5:21.) Let us study (work) to show ourselves approved. Rightly divide the Word of Truth. (2 Timothy 2:15.)

Let us always be careful when men preach and teach. It is okay to listen to men, but we must ALWAYS search the Scriptures, to see if what they say is Truth. Acts 17:10-11.)

This “Oil” that we need to be filling up on is “Truth” God’s Word. Let us not fail to find it, so our vessels will be full of this precious “Oil” and we will be fully prepared and ready for our Lord’s soon coming.

Let me add one thing. Some believe our Lord is still a long way from coming, with a lot of prophesy that has to be fulfilled. **Hogwash!** Our Lord comes quickly. Prophesy is already being fulfilled right before our eyes! And if we cannot see it, it’s because we are Laodicean Blind and desperately in need of that “Eye Salve”.

Wake up Church of God. Our God Comes Quickly. Didn’t we see how quickly He can move, and how powerful He is, after seeing the latest unprecedented “Arctic Outbreak” or “Blast” that passed through Texas, taking many by surprise?

The "New" Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
April 10, 2021 --- Issue No. 10

(How many wake-up calls will it take?) Well, we know the answer to that. The Midnight Cry is coming, and it will be the last call, and heard by all.

The "Midnight Cry" of Matthew 25, comes out of the "Cried" of (Revelation 10:3) (They are the same Cry.) Sounded by the mighty angel saying:

"Time NO Longer!" (Revelation 10:3 & 6.)

Let us not be taken by surprise. Let us be ready. And understand something very important. Qualifications must be met. In order for any of us to fulfill our High Calling, we have to be "overcomers." To be ready, we must conquer our sinful lives and walk upright!

(1 John 3:3.) How Pure does He want us? As Pure as He is Pure. And He is no respecter of Persons.

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(Copyright) by Richard Markland (London, Ohio)

PART 1

Any given event of and by itself is not as important as what takes place in the days, weeks, and months beyond when it has happened.

The Corona Crisis is taking on a life of its own. The abuse of power is rearing its ugly head, yet few Americans are aware of how much their lives are going to be impacted. Covid 19 is going to alter the life of every man, woman and child in ways that would have been considered farfetched months ago. It will become a matter of life and death beyond the virus itself. Daily life and precious freedoms now taken for granted will become a thing of the past.

Local and state officials are putting restrictions in place that they say are necessary, yet the damage being done is immense. What presents an even greater danger is the fact that law enforcement and the nation's military can be used by the federal and state governments to effectively enforce policies that the American people will be told are for the betterment and safety of everyone.

Measures already put in place and planned for the future will have dire consequences. Freedom of speech and freedom of movement will not be permitted unless approved by Big Brother. Technology will become a Frankenstein monster used to the advantage of those in power but to the detriment of the American people.

A vaccine has taken on messianic overtones that has become a political weapon. Emphasis is being placed upon it as a necessity if the Corona Virus is to be defeated. Will it be required of everyone and anyone refusing to take it will be considered a risk to society?

Economic hardship will become a reality and far beyond the inability to make ends meet. Big government will be called upon to intervene as people are at the mercy of restrictions put in place.

Social unrest is coming if the oppression by Big Brother grows but by the time the American people wake up, it will be too late. A state of crisis will blind people because the deception and lies will be so pervasive that people will not know what to believe.

A Blast from the Past

The Titanic--Then and Now
by Myra McQueen (Odessa, Texas)

I just want to sort out something here that appears to be a 'token' for those of us who have survived the past in the **WCG** but remain yet in the bondage of carnal drives and other men's 'devices' (ie, II Pet. 1:16) and 'Jewish fables' (Titus 1:14).

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I am not much of a movie goer but after reviewing an editor's remarks about the amazing 25 negative miracles that led to the sinking of the 'unsinkable' **Titanic** in 1912, I decided to research the history a little and found four documentary videos on the subject in a local library. With some astonishing facts under my belt, I decided to check out why so many movies and documentaries, etc., had been made of this event which was disastrous-but perhaps no worse than some of the disasters of the world wars.

At least six movies were made along with several documentaries and some television program series (ie, "**The Unsinkable Molly Brown**"), of this historical event during the 20th Century, and isn't it remarkable that the title of one was, "**A Night to Remember**": (Exd. 12:42)

The ship of iron (like the 'iron furnace') was called 'the ship of dreams' and a symbol of man's mastery of his environment. Some of the witnesses of the launching of the **Titanic** on her maiden voyage were heard to say that "even God can't sink this ship". Those who went on her maiden voyage were separated by a class system, as the elitists were the only passengers allowed to come up on deck and to breathe the fresh air. Third class had to stay below in more cramped quarters (ie, bondage?). The **current movie** (made in the early '90s and well worth seeing), was made with the help of a director who wanted to point out the prejudices that separated the passengers due to the class system and the upper class male ego-mania that prevailed in that pre-war period of time. Men had their smoking lounges (women of course were not allowed to smoke or to take any prerogatives or privileges without male permission).

The owner of **White Star Lines** (sound familiar?), refused to place enough lifeboats on board because he said they would detract from the view of the ocean and the beauty of the ship. There was an air of complacency that was comparable to the "sleeping virgins" of Matt. 25 (ie, unaware that the tribulation was on their doorsteps because they had no peace with God and rejected revelation). One historian is quoted as saying that "complacency was written all over the story" and **Titanic** woke everybody up with a tremendous jolt" (Isa. 30:13-14). There was not enough urgency about the situation while there was time to save lives (compare Matt. 24:21 with Isa. 63:4-5) --our "watch"? And what are we to "watch" for? (Matt. 24:42-46, Christ, not the world.)

While the orchestra played, and the lights of the ship burned (their version of 'light') the lifeboats ("chariots of salvation" Habakkuk 3:8) were lowered half empty because the passengers were not in a hurry to leave their "comfort zones" and had been told that there was no real emergency that could not be dealt with by these master craftsmen.

The poor died mostly because they were poor, and their class system would not allow for these unfortunates to be in the same vessels as the rich. They were not allowed on the deck anyway. Confusion reigned during the final hours as no one was really aware of the deadly ice fields (compare Psa. 147:16-18 with Job 38:22-23--the 'tribulation'), that lay in their path.

The captain was of the old school and refused to acknowledge that the 'modern gimmicks' of the telegraph could be accurate in its warnings and the telegraph operators along with the ship's captain did not think to put these messages together and map out the paths of the ice fields so they could avoid them. According to one editor, the ship's crew were not accustomed to maneuvering a ship of this size, (**WCG** was said to be worth \$4 billion at the time of **HWA's** death and neither **Tkach** nor **HWA** had even a high school diploma). The warnings about the ice fields were haphazard and time-wasting and the operators made fun of what was happening and were complacent (ie, leadership of the scattered churches? -who make fun of each other and refuse to acknowledge the authority of God in their doctrinal precepts). Later the **Titanic's** wireless operator goes to sleep-missing more important messages (revelation-Hosea 8:12). They were unable to locate the binoculars for the "watch" crew before they went up into the crow's nest (crows are of the raven family-Song of Sol. 5:10-11), and so had nothing to "watch" with, except their own eyes and it was nighttime (darkness in their 'way' now). It is extremely cold in the crow's nest and the only warning device was a bell type apparatus that rang a phone in the ship's control room.

From all accounts the actual iceberg that the **Titanic** hit was now black on its surface due to turning over with the change in water temperatures and no snow had fallen on it to outline its surface. By the time the crew in the crow's nest were able to detect the iceberg the ship's crew had exactly 37 seconds to respond and get the gargantuan ship out of harm's way: Even after the iceberg was hit the reports were casual and most of the first-class passengers went into the gym rather than getting on the lifeboats and most were left with the feeling that there was nothing serious about to happen.

The ship's designer was on board for this maiden voyage (**Thomas Andrews**), and when he found out that five below-deck compartments of the ship's hull had been punctured, and he relayed to the ship's captain that with 5 compartments punctured the ship would sink, as it could stay afloat with 4 punctured-but not 5.

The sinking of the **Titanic** left 1800 dead and dying victims in its wake and few survivors (Isa. 16:14).

One more thing-the closest ship (only ten miles away), that could have saved the people's lives had a captain on board and in charge whose name was Lord, and he refused to come to their rescue!

(This article has been updated and re-printed from "The Church of God Messenger" July/August 2001—Issue No. 4.)

Other Items

The last straw, tepid support for Trump (Copyright) by Curtis Dahlgren (Stephenson, Michigan)

TO THE EDITOR, NATIONAL REVIEW:

Just reread the article that was the last straw, "Has the Presidency Become Impossible? No, but it is too hard for the incumbent" (2/24/20). I didn't try to cancel the dumb subscription, but I'm letting it expire. The writer Richard Brookhiser quotes academics, one of whom says the job hurts the health of Presidents and they die young (tell Jimmie Carter and Bush 41). "Trump, a novice with no information, limited intelligence, and bad character, has held office for over three years without catastrophe. . .," writes Mr. Brookhiser. "What amazes and appalls are the noxious aspects of Trump's personality, the aura of insecurity... His grotesqueries are so numerous they defy listing... "

He quotes a professor who describes Trump as a man "lacking the attributes of a magnanimous soul... " Brookhiser says his foibles "define a demagogue... captive of popular passions... (and) the rot goes back... ultimately to Thomas Jefferson (a populist)." He then picks apart a quotation that is one of my favorite TJ quotes: **"The moral sense, or conscience, is as much a part of man as his leg or arm. It is given to all human beings in stronger or weaker degree... State a moral case to a ploughman and a professor. The former will decide it as well, and often better than the latter, because he has not been led astray by artificial rules."**

So said the patron saint, along with Jackson, of the "Democratic" party, which has done a 180 and become the party of the elite academics and billionaires. And too many Republicans subscribe to elitism, too. They used to be called country club GOPers, now "shiny shoe Republicans" by some. Many went to elite so-called universities and became more HIP than people who get their hands dirty on the job. They proved to have more in common with the liberal elites in 2020 than with traditional conservatives.

The insider GOP politicians always cashed in on pro-life votes but only with a sneer; they were secretly pro-abortion. As Rush Limbaugh often pointed out, they detested "one issue" fundamentalists. Brookhiser concludes: **"Statesmen in a democratic age must master the arts of popularity [but] they don't have to be little arts. It is hard. Too hard for the incumbent."**

P.S. If I could unfriend Brookhiser on Facebook, I would. We can love our neighbor, our enemy, and God but still unfriend someone. Can't we? And can we get over labels such as "anti-intellectual" if we agree with one Thomas Jefferson?

PPS: The never-Trumper intellectuals probably thought they could say almost anything about him in 2016 and it wouldn't make any difference *because he was going to lose anyway*. My brother was a GOP insider, county chairman and so on, and when I told him that Trump was going to win in a landslide, you should have seen the look on his face. I wish I could have been a fly on the wall the night Hillary Clinton lost. Schadenfreude.

Holy Days 2021

Passover - March 28, 2021 (Observed at Sunset the Evening Before)

Unleavened Bread - March 28, 2021 to April 3, 2021

Pentecost - May 17, 2021

Trumpets - September 7, 2021

Atonement - September 16, 2021

Tabernacles - September 21 to 27, 2021

Last Great Day - September 28, 2021