
FALSE PROPHETS AND THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM

Greetings! Since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither has the eye seen, what he has prepared for him that waits for him.

James 1:5—“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of “God, who gives to all men liberally and without finding fault, and it will be given to him.” **1 Kings 3:3**—Solomon showed he loved the Lord by walking according to the statutes of his father David, except that he sacrificed and burned incense at the high places because there was no temple yet. Solomon went to Gibeon to offer sacrifices because that was the most important high place, and Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, “*Ask! What shall I give you?*” Solomon said: “You have shown great mercy to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in truth, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with you. You have continued this kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to you and you have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day.”

1 Kings 3:7—“Now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties. Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number.” **Verse 9**—“**Give your servant an understanding heart (a hearing heart) to govern /judge your people and to distinguish between good and bad.** For, who is able to govern this great people of yours?” Solomon had a very humble attitude. Having an *understanding heart* is a heart that hears. An understanding heart is eager to listen carefully and is willing to be taught. Then, as Paul says, “*prove all things*” – check things out by evidence. It is so important to learn between good and evil, between right and wrong, black and white—it is not easy! Wisdom does not just happen.

So many people today do not have the ability to think clearly and critically (analytically) in the positive sense. When someone hears the word critical, it often gives the connotation of something negative to them like people who find fault with something or someone. When I give an aspect of Bible study on critical thinking, I am talking about the mental process of independent, clear, rational, open-minded and informed by evidence, analyzing or evaluating information as a guide to behavior and beliefs. It is moving slowly through, carefully gathering all the constituents of a matter and looking at each one of those parts in detail to find out what the whole is made of before jumping to a conclusion or making a decision. This is a discerning way of deciding whether a claim is true, partially true, or false.

Recently in a book by author Louis Lamour, he quoted the main character of the book who was talking to a bunch of cowboys and ranch hands that were ready to lynch him and string him up to a tree. To the man who had the rope in his hand he said, “Now, hold on before you throw a loop over that conclusion.” Today people are prone to throw a “loop” like a lasso over an idea and rope it in and hang it in place. They are quick to anger, precipitous in their action and lacking in righteous judgment.

- **Psalm 103:6, 8**—“The Lord executes righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.”
“The Lord is merciful and gracious; slow to anger and abounding in mercy.”
- **Proverbs 15:1** Solomon himself wrote—“A soft answer turns away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.”

I remember well, being corrected by Herbert Armstrong in the fall of 1966 when I was writing for *The Plain Truth* magazine. To my surprise, Editor Dr. Hoeh called me at 6 A.M. informing me I had an appointment in the Oval Office with Chancellor Armstrong at 10 A.M. that morning. Mrs. Armstrong had visited the Press where the current P.T. was being printed and she picked up one of the pages being printed which happened to be the front page of my article, “What is Real Repentance?” In the first paragraph, she read the question “Have you ever had someone come up to you and ask, ‘Brother, have you been saved?’” She immediately, handed the sheet to Herbert calling his attention to it. He immediately called Dr. Hoeh and succinctly dressed him down for allowing the article to run in the P.T. He reminded Dr. Hoeh that he had “picked him from off a chicken farm as a teenager.” “You have this young writer in my office tomorrow morning at 10 A.M. sharp!”

I was assigned to the Long Beach home visiting program, as well as, a writer in the Letter Answering Department and writing for *The Plain Truth* and *the Good News magazines*. I arrived at the office and sat down with the feeling of “going into the lions’ den”, but had absolute faith in God—that God was going to work it all out. My article was in front of him and he asked, “Do you know why you are here?” I had no idea and answered, “No Sir”. So he handed me the article and asked, “Do you see what is wrong with this question in the first paragraph?” Again, my reply was no, as I saw nothing wrong. He said, “the question “Brother, are you saved?” is just the way people think and talk in the southern states—in the Bible belt—and this statement will offend millions of readers of *The Plain Truth* magazine and they will cancel their subscriptions.” Then he continued saying that he had read the rest of the article, and it was all right and written the same as would come from one of the field ministers. “But, do you get the point?”

I assured him that I got the point, and also told him that I had lived in Arkansas as a teen and that I had been asked this very question after services at the Baptist Church where I was on the ball team by an eighth grade classmate, so I knew the expression. But I did not say anything further. Then Chancellor Armstrong said, “I have not been given wisdom when God called me, nor have the top ministers in this church been blessed with wisdom.” Why was he was telling me this, I wondered, because if anyone wants wisdom, **James 1:5 says, “If any of you lack wisdom, he should ask of God that gives to all liberally without finding fault and it will be given him. But let him ask in faith and not doubt,** because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea. Blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.” I thought to myself, it is that simple, but one must be respectful and does not correct the “apostle” unless he wants to be removed or fired. Shortly after this I was sent up to the Bay area under Minister Dennis Luker for further varied field experience and to learn greater wisdom. The rest of the article was published as a monthly serial question box feature until the article was completed. Maybe I have learned greater wisdom myself in the intervening years since then.

Lack of wisdom caused H.W.A. to make many mistakes, but I do not discount the fact that he was a man of God. He taught keeping the Sabbath, the holy days (the best he understood), salvation, that Christ is the Messiah, about marriage and proof that God exists. The WWCG was part of the church of God that Christ raised up—“I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.” At some point in the 20’s and 30’s, Mrs. Armstrong began keeping the seventh day Sabbath. Then her husband thought surely the majority of Christians keeping Sunday can’t be wrong, so he began studying the Bible to prove her wrong. He proved that there is a God and found out the Sabbath keepers were right after all. He compared the earth and its solar system to the *synchronicity* (the simultaneous occurrence of events which appear significantly related but have no discernible causal connection) of a watch that keeps perfect time. Neither could just happen to come together by itself and run perfectly without a maker. You cannot have a watch without a watchmaker, or a clock without a clockmaker. There cannot be a universal clock in the heavens

unless there is a heavenly creator. In later years, after the death of his wife he became side-tracked and the church became apostate and returned to Protestantism under leadership of Joseph Tkach.

We all need to learn wisdom. God wants every one of us to discern between good and evil, to learn wisdom, have balance, how to make a fair judgment and an understanding heart. That is not easy! We need righteous judgment. **John 7:24**—“Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.” **Psalm 119:7, 62**—“I will praise you with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned your righteous judgments.” “At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto you because of your righteous judgments.” **Deuteronomy 1:17**—“You shall not respect persons in judgment; but you shall hear the small as well as the great; you shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God’s.” **1 John 3:7**—“Let no man deceive you: he that practices righteousness is righteous even as Christ is righteous.” **John 5:39-47**—Christ said to the Jews who rejected him: “You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life. I do not accept praise (honor from men), but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts. I have come in my Father’s name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him. How can you believe, if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?”

John 7:21—Here, Jesus goes to the Feast of Tabernacles and teaches openly at the temple. He tells the Jews “my teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me. He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him. Has not Moses given you the law? Yet not one of you keeps the law.” “I did one miracle, and you are all astonished. Circumcision came through the patriarchs and you circumcise a child on the Sabbath. Now if a child can be circumcised on the Sabbath, so that the Law of Moses may not be broken, why are you angry with me for healing the whole man on the Sabbath?” They were commanded to circumcise their newborn male babies on the eighth day, no matter what day it fell on. If it fell on the Sabbath, it was done on the Sabbath. “**Stop judging by mere appearance, and make a right judgment.**” Make a righteous judgment. Don’t judge according to the way things sometime look. But be careful to get all the way to the bottom (dig out all the facts), investigate the evidence and then decide.

There are a lot of investigative crime shows on television such as CSI that people find interesting and are fascinated watching them. Little pieces of puzzling clues and findings of evidence found in various ways and places about some crime or another are sifted and processed through many departments, labs, DNA, eye witnesses and investigative agents. All of these are put together to determine the truth of the matter so justice can be rightly carried out. Today due process in a court of law must be performed and evidence presented before a sentence is pronounced and carried out. It is important not to “punish” the wrong person.

On occasion, I find that someone feels self-appointed to be my judge, jury and executioner. Something occurred this week that was obviously a bit personal. Someone called, but hung-up before we were able to pick up the phone. The message left was, “take my name off the tape mailings. Don’t call back.” No number or address was left, but since I knew the person, I called back. However, no one answered my call so I left a message and asked, “Why do you want to be taken off the tape mailings? What’s happened? Please explain.” About fifteen minutes later, he called back and began to go through a scripted spiel saying read these scriptures in Deuteronomy and Jeremiah, hardly giving me a chance to speak with him. So I said, “Wait a minute, tell me exactly what it is that has you all upset.” I am here to serve God as his servant not any man so I may offend people on my right and those on the left. **Luke 7:23**—Christ himself said, “Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me.” However, people did take offense at Christ as you all know. **Psalm 119:65**—David said, “Great peace have those who love your law, and

nothing causes them to stumble (be offended).” This man that called me to be taken off the tapes mail had become offended at something that caused him to stumble. That means that he does not have great peace and is under stress and agitation, therefore he does not love God’s law, because God’s law is the way to great peace and tranquility of mind. Those who love God’s law don’t stumble or get offended.

Let’s turn to **Deuteronomy 18:15-17** He did not give me all the details, but this is what disturbed the man. “And the Lord said to me: ‘The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren, Him you shall hear, according to all you desired of the Lord your God in Horeb in the days of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.’” “And the Lord said to me: ‘What they have spoken is good! **I will raise up for them a prophet like you (Moses) from among their brethren**, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.” That is speaking of Jesus Christ, the Messiah/Yeshua. **Verse 19-22**—“And whosoever will not hear my words, which he speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account. But the **prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded him to say, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.**’ **And if you say in your heart, ‘How shall we know the word which the Lord has not spoken?’** *If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the Lord does not take place or come true, that is a message the Lord has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.*”

Many do not listen to Christ and do what he said, the words that came from the Father that he told us repeatedly. **John 14:10-11, 24**—“Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? *The words I say to you are not just my own.* Rather **it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.** Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.” “He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. **These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.**” We have to listen to the words of the Father, or we condemn ourselves. The Jews rejected Christ and the Father’s words so they condemned themselves, unless or until they repent.

Being a servant of God, I consider it an office and a calling. I did not choose it for myself, but when I was called I could not say “no”. When Christ came through Galilee, he chose and called his apostles and said, “Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” They were chosen and called to preach the gospel and endure to the end. There can be many apostles. Apostle means *one who is sent*—a person who is sent with a message and the message is proclaiming the kingdom of God. So I am a messenger today proclaiming the kingdom of God. **Malachi 3:1**—“Behold, *I will send my messenger*, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; the Messenger of the covenant in whom you delight.” So the Lord is called **the Messenger of the covenant.** **Deuteronomy 18** —Christ is like Moses only greater than Moses. God said he would put his words in his mouth, and he did. Before the Lord comes he is sending a messenger before him to prepare the way. I feel that is what God has called me to do, is help to prepare the way and to preach the coming of the Messiah.

There have been a lot of people who have prophesied that Christ would come on specific dates. In 1914 the Jehovah Witnesses prophesied he would come, but he did not. William Miller of the Millerite movement did not claim to be a prophet, but he thought Christ was coming October 22, 1844, but he misunderstood the prophecy in Daniel 8:14. Many of his loyal followers had sold all their worldly goods, homes and farms and went up to the mountain tops and waited for Christ’s return. After what came to be known as the Great Disappointment a great falling away of his church members occurred. Searching the scriptures more carefully some of them found out about the seventh day Sabbath day which they had not been keeping and became what is known as the Seventh Day Adventists. Church of God Seventh Day was another split-off. People have made mistakes on dates all through history **Acts 1:5**—The apostles Peter,

James and John thought that Christ was going to return in their day and asked Christ while standing with him on the Mount of Olives, “Lord will you at this time restore the kingdom and bring in the kingdom of God?” The Old Testament prophecy said that Christ was going to usher in the kingdom of God and the gospel message is about Christ—who he is and about what he was going to do the first time he came and the other half is what he is going to do at his second coming which is still in the future.

Christ told the apostles in **Acts 1:7**—“It is not for you to know the times or seasons which the Father has put in his own authority, but you shall receive power from the Holy Spirit when it is come upon you, and you shall be witnesses of me in Jerusalem and all of Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth.”

Luke 19:13—Christ told his disciples to “occupy until I come.” He told them the parable of the *ten minas*. “A nobleman went to a far county to have himself appointed king and then return. His subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, ‘We don’t want this man to be our king’.” He gave his servants money to do a work until he returned and they were rewarded according to what they did with the talents given. The parable states that “**after a long time the nobleman returned.**” The one who had ten talents doubled his talents and was going to rule over ten cities. The one who had five talents and doubled them was going to rule over five cities. The one given one talent buried the talent and did nothing with it. He told the nobleman, “I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in reaping where you did not sow, so I just buried my talent.” The nobleman said, “I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?” “He then said to those who stood by, ‘Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas. I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but for the one who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away. But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me.’”

The point is that the man who was the *unfaithful servant* doesn’t enter into the kingdom of God when Christ returns. It has been about 2000 years since Christ walked on the earth as a human being, and he is about ready to return shortly. We don’t know when because Christ himself said in **Matthew 24:36, 42**—“No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.” I have made some *speculations* (suggestions, possibilities and projections) which were not right. I did not say that God said in his word Christ was definitely coming in 2012 or 2015, but in some of my articles in the 1990’s and 2000 I wrote articles speculating when Christ might come regarding “this or that scenario” and trying to figure it out.

1 Corinthians 15:50—“Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: *we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed*—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” **1 Thessalonians 4:15**—“For this we say to you brethren, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep (dead) for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage (comfort) each other with these words.” Peter and Paul toward the end of their ministry came to see the time wasn’t yet. **2 Peter 3:3**—Peter implies that he now knows that the second coming of Christ is not right away (in his time). “First of all you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing

and walking according to their own lusts, and saying, 'Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.' But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. 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 slow in keeping his promises as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up."

The Jews have long had the belief that each day of creation stands for 1,000 years in God's plan, and the seventh day of Creation Week is called the Sabbath day. This pictures the Sabbatical kingdom of God (Rev. 20) which is going to be for 1,000 years. So the seventh day the Sabbath day of the kingdom of God is a thousand years, then the six previous days would be 1,000 years apiece—6,000 years. Thus the total plan of God in the 7 days of Creation Week pictures the 7,000 Year Plan of God. With that understanding, is it anything unique that I or others try to understand when the 6,000 years are up and the kingdom of God will begin? Is that such a sinful thing to do? If our hearts are looking forward to Christ's coming, it results in a natural desire to want know when the Lord is coming. How soon will it be? Then what do we do? We search the scriptures as Daniel did.

Daniel studied the works of Jeremiah. Daniel says he searched the scriptures and came to understand that Jeremiah's prophecy of 70 years punishment on Judah was going to be fulfilled. Daniel began to pray about the determination of the 70 years and that God would redeem his people and bring them back from captivity. God did in the days of king Cyrus of Persia. We study the scriptures so that we can have understanding. **2 Peter 1:16**—"We did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory when a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. We have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to pay attention to it (heed) as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Above all, you must **understand that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved (inspired) by the Holy Spirit.**" One third of the scriptures is prophecy and 90 percent of that is about our day today.

Revelation 19:10—John is told by the angel who was sent by God to make known to the servants of Christ what must soon take place. John testifies to (writes down) everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. "He (the angel) said to me, 'These are the true sayings of God.' And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, 'Do not do it! I am your fellow servant with you and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. **Worship God!** For **'the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy'**." The words of Christ are related to prophecy of his first coming and his second coming, and the plan of salvation. Prophecy is important and should not be ignored. Prophecy of God does not fail, but prophecies of men do fail. Speculations of men are another subject. They fail all the time. People can say, well I think we will do this but change their mind. Teachers of God's word can say I think Christ may come in the year "1997" because it is the end of 6,000 years from the creation of Adam. It is not wrong to say "this or that may occur" and it is not a sin to be mistaken.

Allow me to give a little of my background. I believed that Herbert Armstrong was a servant of God and although he was not perfect, he taught a lot of the truth of God more so in the 1950's than anyone else on

earth that I knew. I searched through all the different Christian ministries on radio and television and found no one taught the truth that he did. The Adventist taught the Sabbath but ignored the annual holy days. Jehovah witnesses had some truth and taught that Christmas and Easter are pagan, but they ignored the divinity of Christ, the weekly Sabbath and the annual holy days.

I didn't necessarily like what I found, but I could not ignore having heard the truth of God. So I attended Ambassador College to learn more truth. However, I also learned about the imperfections in the church as well as its leaders who went astray. Yet God continued to reveal more of his truth which is based on the doctrine and the teachings of the law of God. If a person rejects the law of God, that person is on a slippery slope and sinking sand, because without the law of God there is no foundation. We now have revealed to us the true knowledge of Passover, the true day of Pentecost, the truth about counting the Omer, and the true calendar of God and his plan. The Jews today have preserved the knowledge of the calendar, but continue to keep a mathematically devised calendar instead of going by the observed new moons as scripture instructs and many people continue to follow the Jews and their traditions.

Romans 3:1—"What advantage then has the Jew, or what value is there in circumcision? Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God"—entrusted with the very words of God. "What if some did not have faith? Will their lack of faith nullify God's faithfulness? Not at all! Let God be true, and every man a liar. It is written, 'So that you may be proved right when you speak and prevail when you judge.' Though everyone else in the world is a liar, God is true. As the Scriptures say, 'He will be proved right in what he says, and he will prove his case as the *righteous and just judge*.'" "God cannot lie." (Titus 1:1). God is still true and God's word is still true. God has given us enough facts and information so that we can obey him and keep his calendar. Salvation does not depend on the Jews, but depends upon Christ. **Matthew 4:4, Luke 4:4, and Deuteronomy 8:3**—"It is written, **man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.**" We are to live by every word of God. Man does not live by bread alone.

Jesus Christ said *search the scriptures*.

- **2 Timothy 3:15-16**—"Paul told Timothy **the Holy Scriptures are able** to make you wise for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. *All scripture* is given by inspiration of God, and it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."
- **Matthew 19:17, 28**—"If you want to enter life, **obey the commandments.**" "I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the son of Man sits on his glorious throne, **you who have followed me** will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and **will inherit eternal life.**"
- **John 6:47**—"He who believes in me has everlasting life. I am the bread of life."
- **John 14:6, 12**—"I am the way, the **truth** and the **life.**" Most assuredly, anyone who believes in me, the works that I do, he will do also."

Man is prone to mistakes as the sparks of a fire fly upward. Matthew 4:36—Christ said, "Of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so also shall be the days of the coming of the Son of man." "In the days of Noah the world was filled with violence and the entire world was corrupt before God." We have reached the fullness of the sins of the Amorites in our country, and we are now on the threshold of judgment. Christ is nearer today than ever before.

When I was younger and a teenager in faith, I thought that Christ was going to come in 1975, because HWA thought he had the second coming all figured out and printed this in one of his booklets, as well as the place of safety (Petra). He was wrong and made a mistake. At that point, I began questioning where did he go wrong? In 1997 the Hale Bopp Comet was to appear, but no Christ. In January-February of 1991, President Saddam Hussein of Iraq was becoming a military giant in the Middle east and therefore was a threat to the stability of the entire region. His war with Iran was proof of this. The U.S. and other industrialized Western nations could not risk the loss of oil from the area. Kuwait is the second largest source of petroleum in the Middle East and so the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait sent the world oil market into a frenzy. Iraqi forces then gathered their forces on the border with Saudi Arabia, the second largest supplier of oil in the world. This in turn brought the military might of the United States into the conflict when President Bush, Sr. was in office. Many people thought Saddam Hussein was acting like he could be the end-time king of Babylon the Great and he was rebuilding the city of Babylon and promising the mother of all battles if attacked. He was just a forerunner.

During this time someone asked me if I had ever read the book of *Jubilees* which says that when Adam and Eve sinned in Eden and came under the influence of the devil it was seven years after the day they were created. Ah ha! They had been under God's rule the first seven years, so the 6,000 years would have to be delayed until 3,997 B.C., then count 6,000 years to the date of 2004 A.D. Since I yearn for the coming return of Christ to be soon, so I thought this might be a possibility. But the temple had to be rebuilt in Jerusalem first. Then the Mayan calendar long form ended in 2012 which offered another possibility. In more recent years we have come to see that the prophecy of **Daniel 9** talks about 70 *Shavuot* (70 annual Pentecost Sabbaths) being observed from the rebuilding of Jerusalem, Israel, in the Middle East. Israel became a nation in 1948. Seventy years from 1948 will be 2018, another possibility of the coming of Christ, or in that vicinity. Now there is talking about bringing in the peace treaty between the Palestinians and the Jewish people January 2014. *If this ties in with Daniel 9:24* about the **seven year covenant** being made, then counting 2014 as the beginning year the seventh year will be 2020 and a possible year when Christ returns.

Peter said, "In the last days scoffers will come scoffing" at the prophecies and promises of God, and others will be in an attitude of condemnation and judging rather than continuing to try to understand. Understanding should be progressive. **2 Peter 3:18**—we all are to "**grow in the grace and knowledge of** our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him, be the glory both now and forever." Amen. Knowledge is information or awareness gained from study or experience. Grace is unmerited favor given by God. When I ponder possibilities, theorize or speak in conjecture, I try to be careful to remember to preface my statement by saying "this could /or may, occur this way"... I may even use the word probably, but I definitely do not attribute my conjectures or possibility thinking to "thus says the Lord" or label my thoughts as "direct prophecy" from God. If someone tries to take it that way, they are going beyond what I say.

Deuteronomy 18:20—"a prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded him to say (his own ideas), or a prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die." The Key in verse 20 is "*by my authority*"—*my words*. If I were to write in an article (or even say in speaking) that "God says" that is taking God's name and putting his name on my words. How can we know when a message has not been spoken by the Lord? "If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the Lord does not take place or come true, that is a message the Lord has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him." I do not deny that I may have come to some conjectures and conclusions in the 1990's which were speculative and which were wrong. I had some dates wrong and thought that the United States economy was going to crash in the 1990's. A book predicting the fall of the U.S. as an economic power by Harry Figgie, Jr. came out entitled, "Bankruptcy 1995: the Coming

Collapse of America and How to Stop It.” The telling of how America got into this mess (politics of interventionism, and of free “lunchism”) adds up to a valuable lesson on why government is the problem and not the solution, that government has nothing to give save what it first takes away. As it turned out, the U.S. economy was a lot stronger than predicted and bankruptcy really didn’t happen in 1995. However, today as a consequence of its excessive debt the U.S. government was forced to raise the debt ceiling and shortly after the debt ceiling was announced, Standard and Poor’s downgraded the credit rating (8/5/11) of U.S. government bonds for the first time in history, leading to turbulence on financial markets across the globe.

The U.S. national debt stands at 17.28 trillion dollars with a total debt over 100 trillion dollars. Presently the debt per citizen stands at \$53,000. Logically in 1995 we went into debt, borrowing from other nations. It is a known fact that the U.S. government borrows a lot of money from foreign governments to settle its bills. About 47% of U.S. debt is owned by foreigners. Among the top ten owed are China (1.268 trillion), Japan (1.149 trillion), and Brazil (1.149 trillion). China leads all the other countries in foreign investments in U.S. debt. Considering that China is one of the USA’s biggest rivals, some quarters have raised doubts over whether investments from China are wise for the U.S.A. economy and national security. China can seriously devalue the U.S. Dollar by withdrawing all their investments in the U.S debt; however, by doing so, they would also be weakening their own economy in the process. (“*Top 10 Former Enemies the U.S. Owes Money To -The Richest*” www.therichest.com)

International Currencies: A Challenge to the US Dollar?—While the dollar is weakening it continues to be the world’s reserve currency, but an increasing number of countries are seeking an alternative to the dollar. Since the global financial crisis, the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) have been gaining prominence in the global economy and have signed two landmark banking agreements extending credit amongst themselves in their national currencies. (www.currency-converter.com)

The Bible prophecies are clear that we are living in the last days. Christ said it would be like the generation of the fig tree. When you see the fig tree (a type of the nation of Israel) prospering and putting forth leaves and fruit, you know that summer is near. When you see these things coming to pass, know that His kingdom is near. The important thing is to keep our eyes on Christ and his word. Don’t get “blown out of the saddle” by people who want to criticize and make snap judgments because they do not have understanding and insist that if a person makes a mistake in a conclusion that they are a false prophet. We all have free choice and a right to our own opinion in a lot of things. If it is the word of God or scripture we had better get in line otherwise we are endangering our salvation.

1 Samuel 15:2-21—God said to Saul “I will punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel, when they ambushed them as they came up from Egypt. Attack the Amalekites and totally destroy everything that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys.” But Saul spared king Agag of the Amalekites alive and his army spared the best of the animals. God told Samuel after Saul had disqualified himself as king that because he disobeyed the command God gave, to tell Saul God was going to replace him. Verse 23—“**to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the sacrifice of rams. For, rebellion (stubbornness) is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.** Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has also rejected you from being king.”

Acts 17—The Bereans searched and verified the scriptures daily proving whether what Paul was preaching was right. Now, if God has called me and I am preaching the word of God right and you have taken the time and proved it as you are to do as the Bereans did – the correct days of Sabbath, Passover, Pentecost, the calendar and the holy days—then this is God’s work, and I am his servant. It still gives me

the latitude to give my opinion; even as did the apostle Paul in a few places regarding relationships and marriage (see 1 Corinthians 7). If I have had opinions in the past of when Christ might come in 1975, 1997 or now have projected the possibility of his return in 2019-2020, this is not a prophecy, it is a “maybe or a possibility” according to *present truth* and understanding of the scriptures. *Present truth* is all that is understood at a given moment in time.

1 Samuel 16:4—the Lord asked Samuel, “How long are you going to mourn for Saul?” Samuel answered, “How can I go? Saul will hear about it and kill me.” Samuel did what the Lord said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elder of the town trembled when they met him and asked, “Do you come in peace?” **Verses 6-13** – Samuel said, “Yes, I come in peace. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me.” Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. The prophet Samuel thought Jesse’s son Eliab was surely the one he was to anoint, but the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

John 7:24—Christ said to the Jews who were condemning him after he healed a man on the Sabbath, “Stop judging by mere appearances, and judge with righteous judgment.” Look at the collective evidence and get all the facts, think the information through as a super sleuth would do in coming to the right judgment of a matter. Discern between prophecy and speculation, between “*it is written*/thus says the Lord” and “*my opinion is*.” I being human have made errors and been wrong a lot of times. I have had to grow in grace and knowledge. However, when it comes to the law of God and keeping the law of God I have had to grow in grace and knowledge. There was a time when I did not know about the Sabbath day and I did not keep it. After I learned about the Sabbath, I began to keep it regularly. The same is true about the annual holy days. Then in 1990, I learned about the true calendar of God given by God to Moses and the changes, postponements and traditions made in the Jewish calendar (mathematical) *used today* that was developed by rabbi Hillel II and adopted by the Jews at the time when the Jews were taken into captivity by Rome and *dispersed* throughout the Roman Empire. The mathematical calendar used by the Jews today is close but not always accurate according to the observed new moon calendar and can be off two or three days from the real appointed times of God.

Someone has asked about observing *Hanukah* which the Jews keep yearly in commemoration of the cleansing of the Temple by the Maccabees after its desecration by Antiochus Epiphanes. It is alright to keep Hanukah, but it is not a commanded holy day or festival of God. It is not a spiritual law of God, but merely a personal option if someone wants to do so. I don’t and we don’t. There are fables connected to Hanukah which are just tradition. We need to be discerning and have fervent love for one another. If we do not have love we are nothing, and therefore understand we are all human and prone to mistakes and misunderstandings. The devil is the accuser of the brethren and will go to great length to deceive anyone and everyone if possible. The world is full of false prophets—look at the teachings! Recognize and understand speculation for what it is; follow the words of Christ and be understanding and be forgiving of human errors. That’s the word of God. Amen!