
THE REST OF... MYSTERY OF THE AGES

*Did you ever ask yourself: "Who am I?
What am I? Why am I?" You are a mystery.
The World about you is a mystery.
Now, you can understand.*

*After reading Herbert W. Armstrong's book,
did he inspire you to ask even more questions about
God and His great plan for mankind?
Now, you can understand more!*

RONALD WEINLAND

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Chapter 1

THE COMPLETION OF MYSTERY OF THE AGES

This publication is a companion to Feast of Tabernacles' sermons given in 2010, which explain four new truths that God has given His Church. These truths are a magnification and a final refinement to a book written by Herbert W. Armstrong entitled, *Mystery of the Ages*.

God raised up an apostle in the Philadelphian Era to lead the Church out of the darkness that had come upon it in the Sardis Era, which came to an end when it had become spiritually dead. Only three basic truths remained by the end of that era, and God called Herbert W. Armstrong to restore truths to His Church and begin preparing it for the end-time.

After more than fifty years of ministering to God's Church, Herbert W. Armstrong wrote his final book, *Mystery of the Ages*, which was an accumulation of knowledge and truth that God had revealed to him over that span of time. It was the single most important book written since the Bible. It was also the most revealing and concise explanation of the plan of God ever written up to that time, but it was not complete.

Over the past 6,000 years, God has progressively revealed His plan and purpose to mankind. Then God intensified and accelerated His revelation to mankind about His great plan that He has been working to fulfill, as the era of the Philadelphian Church was just a few decades away from the time when God's Kingdom would come to this earth. Therefore, God led Herbert W. Armstrong to compile the revealed truths He had given him into this final book.

Mystery of the Ages, in a step-by-step fashion, clarified the story of God's plan through the ages. After nearly 6,000 years of human history,

God had now given mankind the clearest picture ever of His purpose for His creation of all things. 2

Although this book was a compilation of the fifty plus years of revealed truths given to Herbert W. Armstrong, there was still more truth to be revealed. God reserved a double portion of His spirit to be poured out upon His final apostle for the end-time. The giving of that extra portion of His spirit was for the explicit purpose of revealing many more truths to His Church, and to the world, before His Son returns as King of kings. God's purpose in this has been to reveal far greater understanding of Himself and His creation at the final stages of the end-time. God is doing this to open the way for great understanding when He begins to pour out His holy spirit upon multiple millions to be called into His Church.

These final four truths that God has given His Church are profound beyond measure. In this final great revelation to mankind, these truths put the finishing touch on what God is now going to perform in His great creation, as He ushers in His Kingdom upon the earth.

God's end-time Church has a history that has been riveting and filled with astonishment. God revealed to Herbert W. Armstrong 18 great truths that He restored to the Church. Then, during the seventh era of the Church, the prophesied end-time apostasy was fulfilled. The end-time man of sin, also called the son of perdition, sought to destroy these truths. In that apostasy, the majority of the Church was destroyed and a third was scattered, of which much more would become destroyed.

In the aftermath of that apostasy, God began to raise up one body of people who would continue as His Church for the final stages of the end-time. That prophesied remnant has been blessed to receive many more truths revealed to it, while all other scattered groups have stagnated and have only carried a resemblance of the Church before the apostasy.

These final four truths, revealed through God's final end-time apostle, bring the total of additional truths added since the apostasy to

36. This is double what God gave during the Philadelphia era. Indeed, a double portion of God's spirit has been poured out, and the Church and world are now prepared for the final events that will transpire and lead into God's Kingdom finally being established on this earth.

The Spirit Realm

The first of the last four truths that God has chosen to reveal at this stage of the end-time concerns God's judgment upon Satan and the punishment he will receive from God for his rebellion. To understand this punishment and why Satan has been allowed to dwell on this earth, in the presence of mankind—deceiving mankind, cannot be fully understood without understanding the two truths that follow this one.

Although this truth concerning Satan's punishment was the first of four given at the Feast of Tabernacles, this first truth will be discussed in a different sequence. The order in which this revelation was given at the Feast was by God's special design and purpose. Here, it is presented in a different manner for a different purpose.

But before the second truth that was revealed at the Feast is addressed, first we are going to focus on the beginning of existence in a spirit realm.

In God's own words, He proclaims, "*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last*" (Rev. 22:13). Who can understand such a thing? Mankind's existence is temporary and short lived. In this modern 21st Century, man has the use of great technology and seeks to ever understand more about our existence and even the very creation of the universe (while omitting the possibility that God created it). Great advancement in science has led man to peer into the universe several billion light-years away. Yet the concept of a single light-year is nearly impossible for man to truly grasp, let alone the concept and truth of eternity.

Eternity is beyond man's ability to see and understand. The capacity of the mind of man is limited to physical laws, existence, and science. Man cannot know nor understand that which is of the spirit unless God

grants him the ability to do so. Otherwise, it is simply impossible to know that which is spirit or of a spirit realm. Yet God says again of Himself, "*For thus says the high and lofty One who inhabits **eternity**, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones*" (Isaiah 57:15).

God clearly reveals that He dwells in, lives in, exists in eternity. Yet even with God's spirit that communicates such a truth, it is still impossible to fully grasp and comprehend His words about eternity. We are limited to either choosing to believe Him or not believe Him. So, the physical creation with physical laws and physical elements cannot "see" – cannot comprehend the spirit realm – cannot understand God and His existence.

God Reveals Existence from the Beginning

Although God speaks of a beginning, God can only give us a limited explanation of that beginning, which we can only begin to grasp and comprehend; on a very limited level indeed. Other than the fact that God states that He dwells in eternity, the farthest that we can go back to a beginning revelation about the existence of God is found in the Book of John.

It simply states, "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*" (Jn. 1:1). This verse begins to reveal great and awesome things about God, yet most who read this do not begin to comprehend the magnitude of what God is revealing. Most of the Church of God that was scattered after the apostasy read things into this verse that are neither stated, nor implied.

Most individuals make an assumption concerning verse 14; this is a grave error and actually blasphemous in nature. It states, "*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth*" (Jn. 1:14). This is a simple statement in reference to verse 1 of a revelation

to mankind concerning the Word of God, but because of the awkward translation of the verse into English, it is misapplied to a Trinity doctrine. The Trinity teaches that there are three beings in the Godhead that are separate, yet one. The belief of the Trinity is that the “Holy Ghost” (as translated into the English, King James Version) is one of those beings and has eternally existed. The belief also teaches that Jesus Christ is one of the beings of this Godhead who has eternally existed.

So when people read in John 1:1 that the “Word was **with** God,” they mistakenly assume that this is speaking of the Word in verse 14 that was made flesh—which is clearly speaking of Jesus Christ being the one made of flesh. Because of this assumption, people miss the far greater revelation that God is giving about Himself and His plan for mankind.

When it states that the “Word was **with** God” it is not stating that the Word was Jesus Christ who was “with” (along side) God. This word “with” in Greek does not mean “along side or together with, as to be with someone.” A simple short study of the word would reveal how it is used in other scripture. There is another word in the Greek language that does mean “to be with someone or along side someone,” but this is not such a word.

Let’s notice a simple example of this: “*And he said, Go into the city to [this word “to” is the same Gk. word translated as “with” in Jn.1, but means “unto,” “to,” “at”] such a man, and say unto him, The Master said, My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at [the same Gk. word that means “unto, to, at”] your house with [a different Gk. word that does mean “with,” as along with], my disciples*” (Mat. 26:18). Jesus was not telling his disciples to go into the city “with” the man they were to meet, but they were to go into the city “to or unto” the man he described. He was not telling them that he would keep the Passover “with” the house, but “at” that house. He did say that he would keep the Passover “with” his disciples.

Now, returning to the verse in John 1:1, it is simply saying the “Word was **unto** God,” not “with” God. In other words, the “Word” was unto God and unto no other. The Word was ONLY unto God. It was God’s Word. In this verse, Jesus Christ is clearly not being spoken of as being “with” God.

This verse is simply a greater revelation of what is recorded earlier: “*I am the LORD [Yahweh], and there is none else [Heb.—“no one else”], there is no God [Elohim] beside me: I girded thee, though you have not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD [Yahweh], and there is none else [Heb.—“no one else”]*” (Is. 45:5-6).

Those who cling to any part of a Trinity doctrine, either claiming that the Holy Ghost has eternally existed, or that Jesus Christ has eternally existed, or both, ignore God’s clear words. This false doctrine of the Catholic Church (that many others have embraced) has caused great confusion in the world and has hindered the spread of the true Gospel (good news) from God about His true plan and purpose for mankind. It has hindered those in Judaism and Islam from learning truth that came through God’s great Prophet, Jesus Christ. The reason being, both of these religious groups believe that God is One (which the world of traditional Christianity has always rejected), and that only the One Almighty God has eternally existed; therefore, they have been quicker to reject any of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In very clear and even stronger terms, the LORD God (Yahweh Elohim) reveals that He is the Creator of all things and that there was no one else who helped in His creation: “*For thus says the LORD [Yahweh] who created the heavens; God [Elohim] **Himself** who formed the earth and made it. He has established it. He did not create it in vain, but He formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD [Yahweh]; and there is none else*” (Is. 45:18).

Revelation of the Word

To understand what God is saying concerning the Word, it being from the beginning, that it was “unto” Himself and unto no other, is to learn much about God and His plan and purpose for the creation of mankind. How is it that the Word “was” God? What does this mean? This is a truly beautiful revelation IF you understand the meaning of the “Word” as the Greek word “Logos.”

Logos has to do with far more than speech or writing of words. It conveys the meaning of “thought and intent” of that which is communicated. Most describe this Greek word “logos” to mean “that which embodies a conception or idea,” or it has also been explained as, “the revelatory thought.”

So when speaking of God’s Word that is His and that it embodies Him—*“the Word was with [unto] God, and the Word was God”*—we are being told about that which is the embodiment of the very being of God. We are being told that the Word that comes from God is His “revelatory thought.” It is His revealed word—that which comes from Him—the very mind of God—the embodiment of the very being of God.

We need to proceed now by reading the correctly translated passage again and then continue in the following verses: *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was unto God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning unto God. All things were made by him [by “it”— the Word/Logos, who is God]; and without him [without “it”] nothing was made that was made. In him [“it,” the Word] was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in darkness; and the darkness does not comprehend it”* (John 1:1-5).

God chose to reveal essential elements of His very being to the human mind in such a manner that we might begin to grasp “what” God is doing and “how” He is doing it—again, in the most basic terms. He chose to do this by describing that there is that basic element in His life that describes Him most fully. It is His Word, that which can reveal the very thoughts of His mind to whomever He chooses to do so.

We should be able to understand that which reveals who we are is that which originates in our mind. Who we are is revealed or reflected in our communication to others, whether it be by our verbal communication or our actions in life. That which makes each of us different as individuals is due to that which originates in the “thinking” and “thoughts” of our mind. That essence of each individual reflects who they are and their unique life. The life of God, and the way He is, is revealed to man through His Word.

God then tells us that His Word is life. It is “His life” and there is great power in it as we will come to see more clearly in this publication. This life of His that is contained in His Word is light to mankind as it will enlighten in the true ways of life that mankind can choose to embrace if he will do so. If he chooses not to embrace the light (the true ways of God), then his life will be filled with darkness and confusion and eventually death for eternity.

Then God goes on to show how He is going to give His Word that can light the way for mankind: *“There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lightens every man who comes into the world”* (John 1:6-9).

These verses are speaking of John the Baptist who was sent by God to bear witness of His Son, Jesus Christ. God had purposed from the beginning of time, before anything was created, that He would have a Son who would be the one through whom the “light”—the way of the life of God—the Word of God—would enlighten mankind as to the very purpose of God for them. Jesus Christ was made that light for mankind:

“He was in the world, and the world was made by [through] him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them who believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but

of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:6-14).

We have already read where God clearly reveals that He is the Creator of all things. But the purpose of all His creation is to create Elohim (the Family of God), which could only become a reality through a Son. Therefore, the purpose of all of God’s creation was established from the beginning to be made a reality through His Son—*“and the world was made through him.”*

But those who were given life, who were to have the potential of becoming part of the God Family, did not receive the Light that God sent to them. Mankind does not have the capacity to accept or receive the light of God, the Word of God, without His help. When God calls a person to see the light, that person has a choice whether or not to receive it (the Word of God in and through Jesus Christ).

God says through Jesus Christ that *“No man can come to me, except the Father who has sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:44).* And further, He says through His Son, *“And he said, Therefore I said to you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father” (Vs. 65).* In God’s timing, a person can choose to receive the light, the Word of God, that is offered to him or her.

So the Word of God was made flesh. The Word of God was given in the very life of His Son, into the mind of His Son. Now His Son was of the same mind, of the same light, of the same “way” of life and purpose.

God chose the one and only true and perfect way to reveal Himself and His purpose to mankind and that was through a Son, the one who was born “the Word of God made flesh.”

These verses in the first chapter of John reveal so much more than what the world, or even the Church that was scattered, has ever known about God’s great purpose being fulfilled through His Son. Yes, in the beginning was the Word, who was God (Yahweh Elohim).

The Character of God’s Word

From the beginning, only that which is spirit existed and it was only in the form of the one we know as the One Eternal God—the Self-Existing One, the God of all Eternity. We have just read where this Great God revealed Himself from the beginning as the Word.

There is further revelation God has given to us so that we can understand even more about the beginning that He has described as the Word. This matter of “the Word” is explained a little differently in Proverbs, but is basically speaking of the same thing—as it is the same result of that same life—the Self-Existing One of all Eternity. Notice how Proverbs speaks of “wisdom,” which is another means God uses to reveal the character of His “Word”:

“Doesn’t wisdom cry out, and understanding put forth her voice [speaking of the most basic beginning of what is understood as “wisdom”]? She stands at the top of the hills [context... of the road of life], along the way in the places of the paths [the road of life]. She cries at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors [at every opening of life that is before us]. I call out to you, to all of you, and my voice is to all of mankind. O you simple [minded], understand wisdom: and, you foolish, be of an understanding heart [strive to be of such]” (Prov. 8:1-5).

God begins by revealing that there is wisdom available to us if we will search it out in life. He also continues by essentially revealing that all true wisdom is of Him and from Him:

“Listen, for I will speak of excellent things; and from the opening of my lips come forth right things. For my mouth [of wisdom] speaks truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips. All the words of my mouth are righteousness, and there is nothing devious or perverse/distorted in them. They are all plain to him who has understanding, and right to them who find knowledge. Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold. For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to her. I

wisdom dwell with good judgment, and know where to find knowledge and discernment. The fear of the LORD is to hate evil [how you can develop wisdom, when you grow in a right reverence of God and seek to live His Word]: Therefore I hate pride, and arrogance, corruption, and all that is perverse. Counsel is mine [saying, “it comes from me”], and sound wisdom [sound mindedness]: I have understanding [..to give]; I have strength. By me kings reign [if they will, they can begin to receive these traits], and princes pronounce justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth” (Prov. 8:6-16).

Mankind is being shown that “wisdom” exists in God’s creation, and if any will seek it out, they can grow in it and it will be a strength and blessing in their life. Then God reveals the greater importance of wisdom and its true source:

“The LORD possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old” (Vs. 22). God now describes more about His ways contained in His Word as being a matter of wisdom. Before anything was ever created, God shows the importance of such character that is His: “I was set up [established] from everlasting, from the beginning, before the earth ever was” (Vs. 23). So again, God speaks of the beginning, before anything else ever existed or was created. God established wisdom. It was the character of His Word. It reflects Him in all that He does.

He continues, “When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills I was brought forth: While as yet He [the Eternal, Self-Existing God] had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When He prepared the heavens, I [wisdom] was there: when He set a compass upon the face of the depth: When He established the clouds above: when He strengthened the fountains of the deep: When He gave to the sea its decree, that the waters should not pass its commandment: when He appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him” (Prov. 8:24-23). The

ways of God are His own true delight, for they are the ways of true wisdom that produces full and abundant life – that produces the true and lasting fruit of existence/life.

And further, He states, “And how happy I [wisdom] was with the world He [God] created; and I rejoiced in the human family. Now therefore listen to me, you children: for blessed are they who keep my ways [the ways of true wisdom, which are the ways of God]. Hear instruction, and be wise, and don’t refuse it. Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For who ever finds me finds life [the life that God offers—age lasting life in His Family], and shall obtain favor of the LORD. But he who sins against me wrongs his own life, and all they who hate me love death” (Prov. 8:31-36).

All this has said much about God, His purpose, and existence—that which fills His life and can fill ours. It is what God has told us is of the very beginning.

A Spirit Realm

There is a physical realm and there is a spirit realm. As it was earlier stated, only that which is spirit existed from the beginning and it was only in the form of the one we know as the One Eternal God—the Self-Existing One, the God of all Eternity.

Concerning anything that is mentioned as existing from a beginning of time, God reveals there was only Himself, and as He stated, there was “none else.” The Self-Existing One, the One Eternal God has described His existence through the Word—**His Word**—that is of His essence and all that reflects His mind—His Being, His thinking and His thoughts. Then, that “revelatory thought” communicates His plan and purpose for all that follows—all life and its purpose for existence.

God reveals Himself in many ways, so that we can come to more fully know Him. Although God has revealed Himself from the beginning in terms of the Word and that of true wisdom, God’s existence is spirit. He is composed of spirit essence. His mind, His thought, His

WORD is also spirit, but it is **the holy spirit**, because it emanates from God, and it reveals Him. The holy spirit is the essence of His being, of His thought, of His Word and His way—of all that reveals who He is—His truth—His very mind.

So there is spirit essence. It is the power of God that proceeds from God, but His purpose, His thinking, His Word, His mind and all that is communicated and proceeds from Him, from His being, is in what we call the **holy spirit**. This holy spirit proceeds from Him and reveals His thought, His Word to those who can and will receive it. It is “to those who can” because no one “can” until God grants it—speaking of mankind.

So, only Yahweh Elohim existed from the beginning, and then He began to create and bring other than Himself into existence. What followed and why?

God reveals that there was purpose and order to His creation: *“Giving thanks unto the Father, who has enabled us [made it possible for us] to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by [through] him all things were created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, **visible and invisible**, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by [through] him, and for him”* (Col. 1:12-16).

All things created by God are wholly about His Family and how it will come into existence, beginning in and through Jesus Christ. So, when it speaks of all things that have been created, both visible and invisible, things that can be seen and things that cannot be seen, they have been created with that great purpose as the design for it all. Further, it will be accomplished through His Son.

There are things created that are of spirit essence and there are things created that are of physical essence, as there are things that were

first created in the spirit realm and then things created in the physical realm. Let’s first look at that which was created that is of spirit essence.

Before even the angels were created, God created a spirit realm for them to exist in. The angels were not brought into nothingness. God first created a spirit realm in which they could exist and function.

Scripture only reveals a few things in that spirit realm, and it is not for us to conjure up such a realm with speculation of things that “may be” or “may not be.” God has not revealed such things and you are NOT to create in your own mind such possibilities or potential scenarios. We are to keep away from such foolish thoughts, talk, speculation and presumptuousness.

Suffice it to say, there is a spirit realm that God has created which is made of spirit essence just as there is a physical realm made of physical essence (physical elements)—ALL sustained by God. In the beginning, God began by creating things of spirit essence in a spirit heaven—again, something we cannot comprehend.

Let’s consider that which God created of spirit essence that exists in the spirit realm. We can grow in greater understanding of what God is revealing to us by comparing the following example in what John describes when he speaks of being in the spirit—seeing things revealed to him as they appear in a spirit realm to those things that are physical:

“And I saw as it were a sea of glass [mentioned in Rev. 4 as being like crystal] mingled with fire: and those who had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God” (Rev. 15:2).

Things like this sea of glass are made of spirit essence, but it has no life existing in it, in the sense of something that is alive. A glass table top or big picture window have unique properties and can be seen in a unique manner. In a spirit world, it is the same with a sea of glass. It has a spirit structure that is held together by spirit law. There are spirit properties as there are physical properties.

It would be good at this point to note that we are not going to use

the term “spiritual law” as we might use to describe physical law. This is because the term “spiritual” is biblically used in the sense of the mind. If we describe something as spiritual from God, we would use it to describe the nature of God—as it is spiritual, of the holy spirit.

We should easily grasp that there are things like the sea of glass that are made of spirit properties, just as there are those things in this world that are made of physical properties, physical elements. Then we read of what God did next, after a spirit heaven was created:

“God, who at different times and in many various ways spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Has in these last days spoken unto us by [through] his Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, by [through] whom [Christ] also HE [God] made the worlds [as part of that master design for the eventual creation of His Family]; Who [Christ] being the brightness of His [God’s] glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power [all things are upheld and sustained by the power of God], when he [Christ] had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made [Gk.—to come into being] so much better than the angels, as he has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they” (Heb. 1:1-4).

“For unto which of the angels did He say at any time, You are my Son, this day have I begotten you? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he brought in the first begotten into the world, He said, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels He said [in Psalms], Who makes His angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire” (Heb. 1:5-7).

We see that God “fashioned”—“made”—the angels of spirit essence with spirit given life. He gave independent life (as free moral agents, free individuality) to beings (angels) composed of spirit essence.

Continuing, *“But to which of the angels did He say at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits [angels] sent forth to minister for [to] them who*

shall be heirs of salvation?” (Heb. 1:13-14).

There is a spirit realm with things created of spirit essence. Then there are angels who dwell in a spirit realm, whom God made of spirit essence, but with life IN them. The angelic beings are composed of spirit essence and they have been given individual spirit life, but all that is spirit and all that is physical is sustained by God.

These angelic beings are pictured in a spirit realm as being created differently, describing wings, and eyes, and varying kinds of faces, etc. It was and is a most unique and beautiful creation.

Let’s read just a little bit more about that spirit realm so that we can have a good picture of that unique part of God’s plan and creation—of that which constituted the beginnings of God’s creation on a spirit plane:

“After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up here, and I will show you things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he who sat was to look upon like a jasper [a translucent stone] and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like an emerald. And around the throne were twenty-four thrones: and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting [some of those who are of the angelic creation], clothed in white clothing; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out from the throne proceeded lightning and thunder and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four creatures full of eyes before and behind [part of the angelic creation]” (Rev. 4:1-6).

“And the first creature [angelic being] was like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face as a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle. And the four creatures each had

six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they do not rest day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who sat on the throne, who lives for ever and ever, The twenty-four elders fall down before him who sat on the throne, and worshiped him who lives for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, You art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for you have created all things, and for your pleasure they are and were created” (Rev. 4:7-11).

God describes for us a spirit realm of great grandeur that is difficult for us to picture in our minds.

Summary of the Spirit Realm

As a quick summary, mankind of himself can only see what God has created that is physical, with physical laws and “physical essence.” That which has existed from eternity cannot be understood by the mind of man. The spirit essence of God, of His mind and thought, and all that is the composition of God—His very existence—is not something we have been given the ability to comprehend.

The first of anything created began in a spirit realm in a spirit heaven, where God created things of “spirit essence,” which have no life, such as the sea of glass, and the throne of God, etc. Then God began to create spirit beings, composed of spirit essence and having independent life (in the sense of being free moral agents with free choice/thought/thinking in life). That life was the angelic realm that is within the spirit realm.

That which is of the spirit, specifically the holy spirit, from the mind of God is His Word that is revealed in His “truth,” and it can only be understood by man when God chooses to give it. It must come from God and be communicated to man by God.

Chapter 2 **HISTORY OF THE SPIRIT REALM**

We have focused upon the creation of the spirit realm and those things that God created of spirit essence, including angelic beings composed of spirit essence and given spirit life.

There are numerous accounts of angels recorded throughout scripture. Those sent by God, who were faithful to God, served Him in His purpose being worked out in mankind. Most of their activity is recorded in the first 4,000 years of mankind. After that, there isn’t much written except in some prophetic accounts, as recorded in the Book of Revelation.

Many have disputed the structure of the angelic realm and their hierarchy, and as a result there exist many ideas and beliefs on the subject. Nearly all ideas about angels are misguided and come from perverted and distorted teachings from Judaism, the Catholic Church, traditional Christianity, Mormonism, and more, but ALL have a distorted influence that has come from Satan.

The Bible does not give absolute structure in these matters and there is a good lesson in this in that no one should speculate and open themselves to demonic influence. Too often, when making things of the angelic realm a strong focus of study and research, people begin to “add to” and “take from” what God has given and they thereby make themselves vulnerable to demonic influence.

In times past, I have heard sermons that have focused upon some of these things, stating much more than what scripture actually shows, as people have speculated about the angels, Satan and the demons. Sometimes people foolishly engage in conversation about personal or other’s encounters with the demonic portion of that realm. Such is not

spiritually healthy to do! It should be handled only as led by God through His ministry to serve and help others in understanding or counsel, as this is an area where demons like to become involved in order to darken and twist the truth.

We are focusing on this subject in only a Biblically revealed manner as directed by God's spirit so that we can come to better understand God's creation and His purpose for it—how much of it works and for what reasons. But do not speculate and do not add to what God has given, nor take from it.

Three Great Angelic Beings

God reveals that there were three angelic beings who were created great in the angelic realm and served great purpose before God. These three archangels are mentioned by name. Two of them, Gabriel and Michael, are faithful to God, but one rebelled against God and chose to live another way than the way God showed him. His name was Lucifer, but after his rebellion, God changed his name to Satan and the Devil.

Gabriel is known as the messenger of [or “sent from”] God. He is mentioned as the one whom God sent to Daniel to give him answer from God and to reveal matters of prophecy to him. Then several hundred years later, Gabriel is the one whom God sent to speak to Zacharias about a son [John the Baptist] that would be born to his wife Elisabeth. Then six months later, Gabriel was sent once again, this time to carry the good news to Mary that she would conceive from God and bear Jesus the Messiah.

The archangel Michael is one who is spoken of as a great warrior who has fought against the spirit realm that rebelled along with Satan. Michael is spoken of as the great angel who stands up and fights for those whom God has called—those whom God is working with to become part of His Family.

Only three angelic beings have been mentioned by name, but there

are vast numbers of angelic beings whom God created in the spirit realm. Herbert W. Armstrong was given the knowledge to understand that there had been a great rebellion of Satan, along with a third of the angelic realm that was created. ¹¹

That rebellion was so great that all physical life on the earth was destroyed. The earth then remained in that condition for tens of thousands of years. It was that way until the time we read of in Genesis, in the first chapter, when God refashioned the earth. He put it back in its proper orbit and cleared the atmosphere so that light could once again reach the surface. God began to do this within that seven day week, as He also began to put living things back on the earth, also adding the creation of mankind on the sixth day.

The Second Truth of the 2010 Feast

God reveals that in the beginning there was nothing else that existed except Himself as the Almighty Self-Existing One, with eternal life inherent in Himself. He further reveals Himself and His very character in the “Word” and in the “true wisdom” that is described in the Book of Proverbs.

Then God began to create. The first of His creation was in the spirit realm, which He created of spirit essence in what we refer to as the third heaven—a realm that is fully spirit. The second heaven, created much later, is where the physical universe exists and then the first heaven being that of the atmosphere that surrounds the earth.

After the creation of a spirit realm, of spirit essence, God then created beings composed of spirit who were given life—the angelic realm. But in all that God has created, both in the spirit realm and in the physical realm, nothing has eternal life inherent in itself, not even the angels.

This is a great truth that is now being expounded upon. Satan has sought to deceive the world about such matters of immortality. From the beginning, he has deceived mankind into believing that man has

an immortal soul, or immortality dwelling within him, or something he can attain to without God. Only God alone has immortality inherent within himself. Everything else has a beginning and is simply sustained by God, for as long as God sustains it.

TRUTH #2: Angels were created and composed of spirit essence and given life by God (spirit life), yet **they do not have self-sustaining life inherent in themselves.** They are sustained by God, and only God has immortal, self-sustaining life inherent in Himself. It also needs to be understood that at their creation (although the angels were given spirit-sustaining life) **they were never given of the holy spirit, nor were they ever given access to it.**

Satan's End

Mr. Armstrong was given much to understand about the creation of angels and the purpose of their existence, which he wrote about in the *Mystery of the Ages*. But God did not give him that full picture which He is now, due to His purpose of revealing more at this final end-time.

God is now solidifying the firm truth that only He has immortal life inherent within Himself. Not even the angels who are composed of spirit essence and given spirit life have immortality inherent within themselves. Only God does. Life as a spirit being, who is composed of spirit essence, does not mean that such life is immortal just because the composition is of spirit.

God tells about His great creation of Lucifer and of the magnificence He gave to him. Yet God also has shown how Lucifer became lifted up with pride about himself and that he desired more than what God gave to him. He was not content with the abundance God had given him. He rebelled against God and became the great adversary to God's purpose for life, and in his treacherous rebellion he seduced a third of the angelic realm to follow him. Lucifer became Satan the Devil.

Satan has hated the plan God has for His Family, Elohim, ever since

he learned of it from God. Jealousy entered into him, along with bitterness and hate, and he became bent on a destructive path of violence and literal destruction. Satan sought to destroy the earth itself, but God prevented it. 12

Then after a long span of time, God refashioned the earth and created mankind upon it. Since Satan has hated the plan of God concerning the purpose of mankind, he has worked from that beginning to thwart and destroy God's purpose in mankind. Satan has never understood how great His Creator is, nor has he respected and honored Him as such.

Yet in the midst of all this, what a paradox it is, that as Satan has tried at every juncture to thwart and destroy God's plan and purpose for mankind, it is because of all that he has done that God is able to create Elohim. The existence of such evil on this earth was necessary for the creation of the Family of God [Truth #3 that will be covered later]. Satan has mocked God for so long a time, but God reveals that Satan is actually mocked by his own foolish, perverted, and rebellious actions.

In his long effort to destroy God's purpose in the creation of mankind, Satan has actually supported and aided in the development of righteous character of those who will be the very foundation and pillars of the Family of God—Elohim. That which Satan has hated is that which he has helped to build. To unwittingly end up giving some of the greatest support and aid to the development of the Family of God, for Satan himself, there could be no greater ignominy (shame, disgrace, and stripping of dignity) in all of God's creation.

God has passed judgment upon Satan. The first great judgment, that most in God's Church (and in the scattering) are familiar with, is that of the Devil being confined as he is removed from the presence of mankind during the millennial reign of God's Kingdom on earth, and at the end to be released for a very short time. At that time, he will still seek to destroy what God is creating and he will again fail miserably. But what follows his failure has not been known to man.

Judgment on Satan and his Punishment

God has clearly reserved the pronouncement of Satan's judgment for this time. Long ago God gave prophecy concerning that judgment, but only now is clearly revealing it.

At the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings, Satan is imprisoned for a thousand years and then released for a short time. That confinement and release is described in this fashion: *"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit [abyss – a place of endless restraint – until unlocked] and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years. And cast him into the bottomless pit [abyss], and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should not deceive the nations any more, until the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be released for a little season" (Rev. 20:1-3). "And when the thousand years has expired, Satan shall be released out of his prison. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea" (Vs. 7-8).*

When Satan is released from his confinement after nearly a thousand years, he will be released for a very short time to do his last evil work upon the world. Being of spirit essence, once he chose the way of sin to rebel against the Word of God, the way of God, he corrupted his mind and it became perverted. He became perverted in judgment and reason, yet he does not believe so, as he has chosen to believe that God's way is not right, but that his is. This is perverted thought and reasoning, yet it is his, and being fully spirit he has no desire to change, but is "set" in **his way**.

He is not like mankind who is created of physical elements, but with a spirit essence that enables the mind to think, plan, reason, remember, etc. The mind of man is not set, but can change. Man does not have a spirit mind, fully composed of spirit. The angels were composed of spirit and given minds fully of spirit (not the holy spirit), and at any time that

one would choose a way other than God's, then that mind would be set in its "own way." 13

So when Satan is released, he is the same and will set out to destroy once again. But this time God stops it, and this great event will then become one of the last great lessons from which the begotten children of God must learn.

During this time, those who have been deceived into following Satan (and there will be many) will try to destroy what God has built through that thousand years: *"And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and encompassed the camp of the saints, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil who deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are [correct translation should read "where the beast and false prophet were earlier cast"] and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Rev. 20:9-10).*

The expression of a "lake of fire burning with brimstone" is a Biblical expression defined as a totally consuming fire with heat so intense that it cannot be extinguished until it has fully consumed what is in it. The expression is used in the complete consuming of Sodom and Gomorrah. The "lake of fire" and "hell fire" (gehenna fire) are all expressions of actual punishment that will consume (destroy) those who are unrepentant as a matter of final judgment, meaning they will never be given life again, and this is a final sentence of eternal punishment. It is a punishment that lasts for eternity because they can never be resurrected to have life again (and not meaning, being eternally punished).

Revelation 19:20 shows that an end-time false prophet and the leader of the beast power in Europe will be destroyed in such a manner when Jesus Christ returns. But how does such a punishment apply to Satan, a spirit being?

That which is spirit cannot be destroyed by that which is physical in nature. No physical burning fire can hurt or destroy a spirit composed being. Yet the expression being used about judgment upon Satan is one

of destruction and the ending of life.

When it says that the Devil will be cast into this lake of fire, it goes on to say that he shall be tormented day and night forever. It is easy to read the wrong meaning into this. It does not say that he will be tormented in the fire forever. However, it does say that he will be tormented forever, which simply means that he will be tormented “without end.” In other words he will be tormented ceaselessly until the time punishment is completed. That is all this expression means.

From the moment Satan knows that the judgment upon him is to cease to exist, he is mentally tormented by that knowledge on a continuing basis, ceaselessly, without end—until the end.

The pronouncement upon Satan is absolute and it is sure. His end is near. He has very little time left to be in the presence of mankind, to deceive and torment mankind. He is now entering a time of torment upon himself which is the result of his own doing.

So how does Satan come to his end? God revealed a lot about Satan in the Book of Ezekiel and even then, He gave prophecy about Satan's end:

“Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus [a rule equated with Satan], and say to him, Thus says the Lord GOD; You sealed up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. You have been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of your tabret [used to symbolize “production of music”] and of your pipes [“settings,” as work done by a jeweler] was prepared in you in the day that you were created [all the angelic realm was created]. You were an anointed cherub who covers; and I had set thee: you were upon the holy mountain of God [in the highest government of God]; you have walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. You were perfect in your ways from the day that you were created, until iniquity was found in you” (Ez. 28:11-15).

“By the multitude of your merchandise [trafficking] they have filled ¹⁴ the midst of you with violence, and you have sinned: therefore I will cast you as profane out of the mountain of God [no longer part of God's government]: and I will destroy you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty [became filled with self-willed pride], you have corrupted your wisdom by reason of your brightness: I will cast you to the ground, I will lay you before kings, that they may behold you. You have defiled your sanctuaries by the multitude of your iniquities, by the iniquity of your traffic; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of you, it shall devour you [Heb. – to consume, devour, destroy] and I will bring you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold you. All they who know you among the people [not mankind, but his “fellows”—the demons who have long known him] shall be astonished at you: you shall be a terror [to his fellows], and never shall you be any more” (Ez. 28:16-19).

It is to be made abundantly clear that Satan will be made to cease from existence when God's punishment is carried out. The fire that destroys him may well be speaking in terms of that which God has not yet revealed within the spirit world that can destroy a specific portion of a spirit creation that He sustains. He can cease to sustain what He sustains, and He sustains all that is in the physical realm and in the spirit realm. God can do as He wills. He has certainly left us with two possibilities so that we can know either can be true. It is a matter of His will and purpose.

God can create that which can be seen in a spirit world that appears as fire, which can consume what He has been sustaining. God can also make that which is composed of spirit become physical. And all that is physical can easily be destroyed and made ashes in a physical realm. Those who limit God are foolish indeed. Satan has always limited God and refused to magnify the unsearchable and unknowable power and majesty of His Creator.

TRUTH #1: There is an end to Satan’s existence. His punishment is that of eternal death, never to have life again.

Some have believed that since angelic beings are composed of spirit that they cannot cease to exist and are therefore eternal beings. Angelic beings can cease to exist. The only angelic being who has been formally judged by God, through scripture, is the one who was created in the beginning as Lucifer, but who now carries the names of Satan, and the Devil.

Chapter 3

THE CREATION OF EVIL

After focusing on the creation of the spirit domain (heaven) in which the angels were created to exist, it is necessary to focus on events in that angelic realm that led to a great rebellion in it. To understand how such a thing was possible, is to come to learn “how” God is creating His own family—the Family of God—Elohim.

God inspired Isaiah to write that which has puzzled many scholars and teachers of religion. This should come as no surprise since scripture is revealed only to those whom God has called and chosen to reveal His Word. But even within God’s Church, Isaiah’s statement has been puzzling.

“I am the LORD [Yahweh—the Eternal Self-Existing One], and there is none else, there is no God beside me [no God except He Himself—Yahweh]: I girded you [clothed you—an expression “of providing everything for you”], though you have not known Me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else” (Is. 45:5-6).

These verses have already been covered, but God goes on to inspire Isaiah to write something most profound: *“I form [fashion, potter] the light and create darkness: I make [produce, do, work] peace and create evil: I the LORD do all these things” (vs. 7).*

What does this mean? Does God really mean that He creates (or created) evil? The answer to this is “yes!” The existence of evil is absolutely essential for the creation of the Family of God—Elohim. It is a necessary part of life that makes possible the molding and fashioning of the mind of God in His begotten Family, followed by actual birth and existence in

Elohim. It is part of the very reason Satan and the demons have existed on earth in the presence of mankind, with the power to deceive and wreck havoc in human life.

To understand “how” evil was created is to grow in understanding of how Elohim is being created.

Psalms gives a unique contrast between what God has said of mankind and what is said of the angels. Notice closely the difference in what God said through David:

“Like as a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him [fear to disobey and give reverence to God and His instruction]. For He knows how we are formed; He keeps in mind that we are dust [created of physical elements]. As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourishes. For the wind passes over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more [the life of mankind is temporary]. But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them who fear Him [give reverence to Him and His word], and His righteousness unto children’s children; To such as keep His covenant and to those who remember His commandments to do them” (Ps. 103:13-18).

Then notice what God inspired David to write about the angels:

“The LORD has prepared His throne in the heavens; and his kingdom rules over all. Bless the LORD, all you His angels, you mighty ones [KJ – those who excel in strength] who do His commandments, obeying the instruction of His word. Bless the LORD, all you His hosts and you ministers [meaning “to serve” – servants] of His who do His pleasure. Bless the LORD, all His works in all places of His dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul” (Ps. 103:19-22).

This was recorded to make a clear distinction in that which should be understood in the difference between the creation of mankind and the creation of the angels. Although we know there is a difference in composition, the point of it all is missed.

Mankind was formed (created) in weak and temporary form and is

able to receive **mercy** when working (living, striving) to be obedient and faithful to God and His Word. There is no such thing said of the angels. Then, what is the difference? 16

The angels are described as mighty ones (those who excel in strength because they are composed of spirit essence) who are **expected** to praise God, to do His commands, to obey His instruction. This is how they were created, to live such a life.

Learning from the Differences

God is leading us to more closely examine the differences in the creation of mankind and the angels so that we can come to a deeper appreciation of the overall purpose being worked out in His great plan.

The angels were made of spirit and not of temporary physical flesh. They were not created with a frame that could feel pain, know hunger, experience thirst and physical discomfort. They were not made subject to the kind of pulls that exist in a temporary physical creation, such as the pull from the lust of the flesh or the lust of the eyes—the pulls of selfishness that are naturally produced from being a temporary, physical, physically sustained being.

Mankind was made subject to such vanity, but the angels were not because God’s purpose is different in both. For the creation of the Family of God, it was necessary that physical human beings be made subject to vanity and have “natural” pulls that would fuel selfishness. Why? Because if it were done in any other way mankind could not become part of the Family of God. This **process** of the creation of the God Family is now being more clearly revealed so we can see more of the brilliance, beauty, and awesomeness of the “how and why” of such a creation:

“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed IN us. For the earnest expectation of the creature [Gk.- “creation” —of mankind] awaits the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creation [of mankind] was made subject to vanity [a word that contains a mixture of thought and

intent of—futility, the pull toward self, emptiness produced through selfishness, the vainness of life that comes from temporary existence], *not willingly, but by reason of him who has subjected the same in hope [of what is better and enduring, that can only come through free choice], because the creation itself [of mankind] also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption [Gk.—destruction, corruption] into the glorious liberty of the children of God*” (Rom.8:18-21).

This bondage comes from the product of sin, the choice of evil, of disobedience that leads to destruction and destructive lives. So God created us in this way for a purpose. It states in 1 Corinthians 15:42 that we are “sown in corruption (destruction).”

We have been sown into a life that is subject to vanity, a life that comes into the bondage of corruption (destruction) into which we have been planted (placed).

Notice what is stated several verses before this: “*Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*” (Rom. 8:7).

The mind of man, by nature, is enmity against God and is not subject to the law of God. The angels were not created in the same fashion. Their mind is not naturally at enmity with God like that of mankind, but instead, they were created to be naturally subject to the law of God.

As was stated earlier, the obvious difference in the creation of both angels and mankind is easy: one was created of physical elements and one was created of spirit elements. But what this **produced**, in the sense of what was **sown**, because of one being composed of spirit and the other physical, is not as obvious and easy to see.

Each automatically produced “different thinking!” It is a **different process** of thought (thinking) that would “naturally” come from (out of) them. To understand that **process** of “different thinking,” there is an element of basic knowledge that will give understanding of God’s purpose in the differences of both creations.

Giving of the Holy Spirit

Although the focus has been on the differences in God’s creations, there is also that which is basic and the same in both. Without a clear picture of this key element in all of God’s creation, the understanding of God’s creation of His Family will be clouded.

In the creation of both the angelic realm and of mankind, what do they both have in common that God did not give to either?

There is that which is the same in the creation of angels and the creation of man—neither was created with the holy spirit, which conveys the very mind of God, the Word of God. Only one has ever been created in such a fashion and that was the very Son of God—Jesus Christ. He was born of the holy spirit—of the Word of God from the beginning.

God created angels of spirit composition and gave them spirit life, but He did not give to them His mind, His Word, His holy spirit to dwell in them. Neither in the creation of mankind did God give His holy spirit to dwell in the mind of man. That would come later in time, as He began to create His Family.

God’s purpose from the beginning was to create mankind as weak, temporary, subject to vanity, and without access to His holy spirit—to be sown in corruption. Yet, God says that this early phase of His creation was good:

“And God said, Let the earth bring forth all living creatures after their kind, all animals, and all moving things [all that is given life], and it was so that all living creatures [KJ—“beast,” but its the same word as above] of the earth were brought forth after their kind. And God made the living creatures of the earth after their kind, and all animals after their kind, and every thing that moves upon the earth after their kind: and God saw that it was good. And God [Elohim] said, Let man be made in our image, after our [Elohim/God Family] likeness [...in other words, “after the God kind]: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every moving thing that moves upon the earth. So God created

man in His image, in the image of God created He him; He created them male and female” (Gen. 1:24-27).

And after this creation of mankind it says, “And God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day” (vs. 31).

Everything God had created, formed, and fashioned on those six days was very good, including human life that had been created in bondage to corruption (destruction). It was God’s purpose that mankind be created in a physical world that would be subject to vanity, selfishness, and temporary existence.

From that beginning, mankind was not made complete with the capacity to be made (created) into the image of Elohim—the God Family. That phase of creation would require mankind receiving the impregnation, the begetting of the holy spirit, the Word of God, the very being of God dwelling in them.

God gave to Adam and Eve “the way” of life they should live that would produce “peace” and fullness of life, **but** they were created in—sown in—being made subject to vanity. It did not take long for them to “choose” a different way and thereby **evil** was created in human life, because mankind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be **until** begotten of the holy spirit.

It did not take long, therefore, for mankind to become corrupted, as they were “sown” in corruption. God said of this phase of his creation that it was “very good.” It was God’s purpose for mankind to be made in such a fashion that the carnal mind **could not be** “naturally” subject to the law—the ways—of God. The creation of the Family of God requires that mankind must make a “free choice” of the ways of God in such a fashion and creation that the mind can come into complete unity and harmony with God. Holy, righteous character, in union with the mind of God can come in no other way than what God has revealed is that process.

Understanding the Creation of Evil

Knowing that in both, the creation of angels and of mankind, God did not give the holy spirit is essential to understanding what followed and why—why it was God’s purpose that “evil” followed. If you can come to more clearly see what happened to mankind in the beginning, you can come to see what happened in the angelic creation and why it had to be so.

Looking at what happened in the very beginning reveals great purpose and pattern to all that has followed through time. Right after the creation of man and woman, Satan was there. It begins in Genesis 3 with a description of his being like a “serpent.” In the Hebrew language the word does mean serpent, but he was a “spiritual serpent,” given this description to show his ways, the way of slithering around in order to corrupt and to destroy. This word actually comes from a word that means “to divine, to enchant,” as to practice divination, enchantment, and spiritual seduction. Notice the description of Satan:

“Now the serpent was more subtle than any living creature of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Has God indeed said, You shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman replied to the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, You shall not eat of it, neither shall you touch it, lest you die. And the serpent said to the woman, You shall not surely die:” (Gen. 3:1-4).

Satan began by twisting the truth and thereby lying to the woman. Satan told her that she would not die. This was partially true in that she would not die right away, but God had created her of physical composition so that she could die and cease to exist physically, but Satan knew that it was “sin” that leads to the kind of death God had told them about, and Satan wanted to see them fail and to be destroyed. He knew that this was about death for all eternity due to the penalty for sin—for disobedience to God. Satan did not know, however, God’s plan that

would bring the forgiveness of sin through a Passover. From this very beginning, as he was trying to destroy God's purpose in the creation of mankind, Satan was actually aiding in the purpose of God for "evil" to exist in that creation. He has always been easily outwitted by God, as his mind and actions are so predictable due to his blindness that comes from pride and his choice of evil.

That serpent had more to tell the woman: "*For God knows that in the day you eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods, knowing [discerning, perceiving] good and evil*" (vs. 5). He wanted the man and woman to "sin" by rejecting God—their Creator—as their source of truth and authority in life and to decide for themselves, by their own prerogative—their own way. He knew his own sin originated in this very fashion and he wanted mankind to sin in the same way, by choosing any other way than God's as a rightful prerogative.

From the very beginning, mankind was not subject to the laws of God and sinned. A beautiful world had been created, and Adam and Eve were placed in a Garden of Eden where all their needs in life were provided. It was a perfect physical environment of peace, but then they sinned and "evil" was created within the human family.

Adam and Eve were selfish by nature, as is all mankind. It happened quickly that they sinned, and that serpent was right there from the beginning to speed along the process to introduce evil into their life and take away peace. He has been allowed to do this for nearly 6,000 years now, and it has been God's purpose that it be so. It is through this process of choosing evil that in time mankind can be shown a different way—the way of peace—and then be given the help to begin living and growing in it, through the conversion (transformation) of the mind. It is through such a process that Elohim can be created.

The Creation of Evil in the Spirit Realm

Are you beginning to "see" how evil was created? Earlier we read what Isaiah was inspired by God to record, "*I form [fashion, potter] the light*

and create darkness: I make [produce, do, work] peace and create evil: I the LORD do all these things" (Is. 45:7). 19

God used a comparison that our limited minds can understand. He used the example of the beginning of creation in a physical universe when nothing had yet been created to fill an expanse of space that was created first. This vastness of space, in itself, is impossible for the human mind to comprehend. Within that space, with nothing else existing, God began to create things composed of physical elements which became regulated by physical laws. He created suns that gave light. By making light to exist, darkness was then created. Space existed and then light revealed the darkness. By forming light, God did create darkness.

In like manner, within the spirit realm nothing except peace ever existed because that is the way of God, the way God lives, thinks, exists—until something else came along that could "think" differently. God created angels of spirit essence, who were given spirit life that was sustained by Him, but they were not given of the life that emanates from God—from His holy spirit. It was never God's purpose to give them of His life that emanates from Him, from His very being, in the form of the holy spirit because such life cannot be simply given to spirit created beings. So, they were created individually, being given their own minds that were free to think independently, make choices, and having the power of reason and thought.

They were not created physically in a manner that would automatically stir up selfishness and pride, as mankind was. They were created in a realm of spirit life and peace. In the beginning, they simply accepted God as their Creator and never questioned anything about their existence. There was no motivation to do anything other than what God said. The angelic realm was filled with God's purpose and responded in thankfulness for all that He had given them. Even when God created the physical universe, the angels rejoiced in all that God had created. They were excited by what they saw being brought into existence in a physical realm.

God does not tell us the amount of time that passed before one great angelic being, known as Lucifer, began to be filled with pride, jealousy, and resentment toward God. Because the angels were composed of spirit essence and had spirit life, this change may not have come for a very, very long time.

The angelic realm only knew peace and the way of God. This is the way they lived, and there was no reason to live any other way. That may have continued for thousands or even millions of years. We simply do not know and the timing is not important. What is important to know is that even in such a perfectly created realm, the fact that all the angels were given individual, independent minds is the very thing that would eventually lead to the creation of evil. Due to the reality of God giving such life and minds to individual beings, apart from Him and without His holy spirit (which is of His mind and conveys that mind, way, truth, Word, and light that is fully of Him), evil would come into existence. God's mind, through the power of the holy spirit, could not be placed in the minds of angelic beings if they were to have free, independent thought and thinking.

So God created an environment for angels that had the greatest potential for continuing peace and happiness. Yet because of their individuality in such a creation, God created the potential for eventual evil because it would only be a matter of time before someone began to choose some other way than God's and that would be the moment that evil would come into existence.

Yes, by forming light in a physical universe, darkness was created. In like manner, when God created individual, independent thinking angelic beings in an environment that only knew peace, evil was created.

The creation of the God Family required the existence of evil. In the future, God will more fully elaborate on this needful and very long process for the creation of His Family. But for now, He is giving us a deeper understanding of that very thing, but there is much more that will be learned.

TRUTH #3: God created both good and evil, but to understand “how” ²⁰ is to understand why God gave beings, both human and angelic, independent free choice, apart from Himself, as free moral agents.

God's way is the way of all right living that produces the only **true peace** that exists in right relationships. By revealing (showing, teaching) “this way—the way of peace,” evil was created. This happened because “in” those created, there existed the choice to live a different way than the way of peace revealed by God. When any being in God's creation chooses a different way of living than the way of peace that He has shown (given), then “evil” is created.

Chapter 4

THE CREATION OF ELOHIM

After digesting the previous three new truths that God has revealed, the next truth can now be understood with much greater appreciation and understanding. Indeed, these final four truths that God has revealed at this end-time complete the *Mystery of the Ages*.

To more deeply understand the process of how God is creating Elohim, which has only been seen to a far lesser degree in times past, it is necessary to build upon some of those things that we now know, that God has just revealed.

We have covered how angels and mankind were created as free moral agents, as God gave minds to both, giving independent reasoning and thought to all. Both creations were the same only in the sense that neither was given the holy spirit upon creation. God has shown why it was necessary to create both spirit beings (angels) and physical beings (mankind) without His holy spirit, so that evil could exist in free moral agents.

By allowing free choice to exist in independent thinking angels, within a realm where only the way of peace existed, it was inevitable that the choice of evil would follow. After a passage of time, Lucifer and a third of the angels did choose the way of evil.

Once evil is chosen by a spirit created being with a spirit-composed mind (not of the holy spirit), that mind is “set” and will never have desire (nor be able) to be in complete agreement with God again. Instead, such a spirit-composed mind becomes corrupted and perverted in reasoning and thought. A physically composed mind with a spirit essence added to it (a “spirit in man” – not of the holy spirit), gives the ability

for independent reasoning and thought, and such a mind can change (repent) and become something different. ²¹

Those angels who remained faithful and witnessed this heinous change in the angelic realm (of so many choosing the way of evil) were then made capable of becoming more deeply convicted of God’s one way of life that produces true peace in relationships.

In spirit created angelic beings, it must be understood that it could have taken thousands or even millions of years before evil was chosen, but eventually, it was. This was purposed to occur first in a spirit realm of angelic beings in order to help make possible the creation of Elohim that would follow later. It is not possible that Elohim can be created instantaneously in a spirit realm as the angels were.

Therefore, in God’s time, He would finally begin to create mankind upon the earth and begin His creation of Elohim in them. Mankind was made physical so that the combination of a physically composed mind, with a spirit essence in it, could be molded and fashioned into Elohim, if it so chose to yield itself to such a process. It was also necessary for physically created beings that the process of learning about evil be accelerated and not take a prolonged amount of time (as within the angelic realm).

It needs to be stated that God has never made anyone choose the way of evil. Yet as a result of giving free choice to beings who have the capacity of independent reasoning and thought, its existence was necessary and inevitable.

As mankind was given a short span of life, shortened even more after the flood, and then shortened once more a few generations later, it was necessary that the repetition of life’s experiences be accelerated as well. Mankind was made so that one generation could live for a short time on the earth and then die, while at the same time new generations would begin life, they too going through the same cycle of life. Through this means, God was shortening the time of human bondage to corruption and the suffering of human life that goes along with such life-long experiences.

In His perfect brilliance and planning, God perfected and provided for the greatest potential for multiple billions to be born into human existence, who in time would have the potential of being born into Elohim—the very Family of God. As the history of mankind progressed, with all the accumulated suffering that entered that history, the length of life was lessened until God brought mankind to a simple basic necessity of living an average lifespan of 70 years.

In the midst of all this, Satan and the demons were present, being part of God’s plan to help accelerate the lessons of human life that must be experienced before Elohim can be created. They have ever been present to help create that Family (to help speed the process)—something Satan has never understood—but about which he is now learning.

God’s creation and planning for mankind was determined before the spirit realm was ever created, long before angels were brought into existence. And God determined that, in His time, He would create mankind and give such existence over a space of 7,100 years in order to create His complete Family.

God’s Purpose from the Beginning

It was long after the life and death of King David, and then that of his son, Solomon, who built the Temple of God (David had so desired to build), that God finally began to reveal a building that He had planned and purposed before He created anything.

God began to reveal this plan prophetically through the prophet Isaiah, and through time He continued to reveal more: “*Thus says the LORD, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool: where is the house that you can build unto Me? And where is the place of My rest? For all those things has My hand made, and all those things have been, says the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at My word*” (Isaiah 66:1-2).

That which God inspired Isaiah to write, in time, would be given greater clarity and explanation. God simply asked the question through

Isaiah regarding the ability of man to build anything in which He could dwell. But God’s plan was to build Himself a Temple in which He could dwell, and this before He created anything. He gives a clue concerning His plan toward the end of these verses, by tying in the importance of the “place of His rest” with that of a person with whom He can work with, who has a right spirit and attitude toward His Creator—that of poor and contrite spirit and one who trembles at His word (fears to live otherwise and shows reverence to God). 22

So what did God mean by “the place of My rest?” David had desired to build a temple for God, and God is then referring back to this event and asking any and all who will listen: “Where is the place of my rest?” To understand, it is necessary to see what was in David’s heart: “*Then David the king stood up on his feet, and said, Hear me, my brethren, and my people: As for me, I had in my heart to build a **house of rest** for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for the footstool of our God, and had made preparations to build it*” (1 Ch. 28:2). This story is about David’s desire to build the Temple of God and his thinking that went with such desire. Yet, David was told he could not build that physical temple. It is this account that God was referring to when He asked the question about the place of His rest.

More of the story is revealed in the Book of Acts: “*Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as He had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen. Which also our fathers that came after brought in with Joshua into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David; Who found favor before God, and desired to find [to build] a tabernacle for the God of Jacob*” (Acts 7:44-46).

God then ties the two accounts together for us: “*But Solomon built Him a house. However the most High does not dwell in temples made with hands; as the prophet says [as we read in Isaiah], Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool: what house [Gk.—a house, a dwelling]*”

will you build for Me? says the Lord: or what is the place of my rest? Has not My hand made all these things?" (Acts 7:47-50).

God revealed that Solomon had indeed built Him a house, but that He does not dwell in a temple (a house) made with hands. God clearly states that there is no temple or dwelling place that can be made with human hands in which He can dwell. So the question is asked, "Where is the place of my rest?"

The Temple Begins with the Church

God has given greater understanding of the creation of His Family by helping us understand the role of the Church in our lives. The Church is the primary place where Elohim is created, although some had been worked with individually by God (through the same process) before the establishment of the Church in 31 A.D.

Paul was inspired to write much about the Church being the Temple of God and that each member of the Body of Christ, the Church of God, is part of that Temple. To become part of God's Church is to be baptized and have hands laid upon oneself by the ministry of His Church. This is the very time one is impregnated with the life of God, through the power of the holy spirit, in order to become begotten of God. Herbert W. Armstrong spoke of this state of "being begotten of God's spirit" as being likened to the Kingdom of God "in embryo" and not yet born into Elohim, the Family of God.

Notice how Paul spoke of this state of being begotten of the holy spirit and becoming part of the Church of God, as he gives correction to the Corinthians: "Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God [the holy spirit] dwells in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple you are" (1 Cor. 3:16-17). And again, He says, "What? Do you not know that your body is the temple of the holy spirit which is in you, which you have from God, and you are not your own [but God's]?"

Then Paul becomes even more specific: "And what agreement does

the temple of God have with idols? For you are the temple of the living God; as God has said, **I will dwell in them**, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (2 Cor. 6:16). 23

After baptism and the laying on of hands, we are begotten of the holy spirit of God. We are able to become part of the Church of God, the Body of Christ, the Temple of God, and thereby God actually dwells IN us through the power of His holy spirit. He does so in order to create a new mind in us.

This changing of the human mind, from one way of thinking to another, is the very process of spirit growth which takes place in the womb of the Church. It is the very process of creating Elohim. Paul speaks of this change in the mind: "And do not be conformed to this world: but be you transformed by the **renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:2).

This word "transformed" comes from the Greek word "metamorphoo." There is much to be learned from the use of this word that describes a change in the very mind of mankind. This Greek word is from where the word "metamorphosis" originates. The dictionary definition is: 1) a change of form, shape, structure, or substance; transformation, as in myths, by magic or sorcery 2) a marked or complete change of character, appearance, condition, etc 3) in biology, a change in form, structure, or function as a result of development; specifically the physical transformation undergone by various animals during development after the embryonic state, as of the larva of an insect to the pupa and the pupa to the adult, or of the tadpole to the frog.

In the case of mankind, it is the transformation from man into members of the God Family. This is accomplished by the power of God's spirit dwelling in a person as a result of that person's choice and desire for this to happen. Paul describes this even more specifically: "But we all, with open [unveiled] face beholding as in a glass [seeing in the reflection of a mirror] the glory of the Lord, are **changed** [metamorphoo] into the

same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Cor. 3:18). The expression of being transformed into “the same image from glory to glory” is a direct expression of what God is doing by changing us from a glory given to mankind in a physical creation to that of what God is creating IN us to bring us into the greater glory of a spiritual creation—the Family of God.

As we have focused on the previous three truths, the language concerning God’s spirit has been very specific. If that distinction has not been fully recognized, it is important that it become clearly understood. Expressions that describe God’s spirit are used in **two ways**. Far too often, expressions that describe God’s spirit are used too loosely when speaking of God’s power. It is needful to differentiate the two definitions or distinctions when speaking of God’s spirit.

First, is about His power, which includes His power to create things in a spirit realm that are composed of a “spirit essence,” and His power to create things in a physical realm that are composed of physical elements. This includes His power to “sustain” life in spirit and physical beings. But all this concerns the “power” of God—His spirit—to produce His will.

Second, is to understand God’s power that is a matter of His holy spirit. This is the power of life that reveals, produces, communicates the Word of God, and illuminates the truths of God, the very mind of God—the nature of God. It is the power to unite as one, in harmony, oneness, unity of spirit, in the ways of God—in the ways of peace—in age-lasting agape (a Greek word for “God’s love”). This power emanates from God and contains the very nature, Word, truth, love, and ways of God that come from the very mind and being of God.

It is in this second usage that the Family of God—the Kingdom of God—becomes a reality through the power of God’s spirit, spoken of in terms of the holy spirit, the spirit that communicates and reveals the mind of God. This process that can work in the mind of mankind, once begotten of the holy spirit, is a metamorphosis from mankind to the

God-kind, in the Family of God.

It is through that power and life that emanates from God, in the power of His holy spirit, that we are able to be begotten of God after baptism and the laying on of hands. We are begotten and then born of the holy spirit—of the very mind and being of God Almighty—of God’s nature, and then growing in complete unity of spirit into everlasting life. This process begins in the Church, where the Temple of God is created and constructed.

*“And came [Jesus Christ] and preached peace to you who were afar off, and to them who were near. For through him [Jesus Christ] we both [Jew & Gentile] have access by one spirit [the holy spirit] unto the Father. Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household [Family] of God [begotten into Elohim]; And are built [are being built] upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building is fitly framed together and grows into a **holy temple** IN the Lord: In whom you also are built [are being built] together for an **habitation of God** [Gk—“dwelling place”] through the spirit [holy spirit]” (Ephesians 2:17-22).*

The Church is the beginning of construction in the creation of Elohim. All who are in the Church are described as growing into a holy temple. It is holy because of God’s presence is in it. To be begotten of God’s holy spirit means that God must dwell IN the one who is begotten.

The Process of Conversion

To understand how carnal human beings can be born into the Family of God is to “see” the process of conversion that must happen in every person’s life.

Angels were composed of spirit, but God’s holy spirit was not given to them. Adam and Eve were made of physical elements, and like the angels, they were not given God’s holy spirit.

However, mankind was made unique in that God provided for them

the means by which the human mind had the capacity to be joined together with His holy spirit (His mind). This occurs in such a manner that God gives the closest physical analogy that we can comprehend, by comparing it to human impregnation, in the joining together of an egg and sperm to create life in the womb. The Biblical expression of this is “begettal” or “being begotten” of God’s spirit (the holy spirit).

At this point in this story of God’s great creation, it is important to recognize another important distinction in His purpose in Elohim. This process of being begotten of God’s holy spirit that is being covered here is about all who are fully of mankind, not of Jesus Christ, who’s Father was God. Adam and Eve were created of physical elements and all who followed have been born of physical parents, except for Christ, who had only one physical parent.

Jesus was born of the holy spirit (access to the mind/Word of God) from the beginning as he was born into a physical life, and later he was begotten himself of the holy spirit after baptism. There is a great difference in having access to God’s holy spirit (being drawn by it, or led by it) and that of being begotten of the holy spirit (the formation of a new spirit life in embryo).

It was God’s purpose for His Family that there be only one who would live such a life as Jesus did. There could only be one Passover, one high priest, one cornerstone, one intercessor between God and man, one Word of God made flesh, and one such Son of God.

It is good to understand the different process that worked in the life of Jesus Christ until the time of his being begotten by God than that of the process God uses to work with man until he can become begotten of God. It is necessary for all to be begotten by God because it is only by being begotten that an independent spirit mind can grow and then become born into God’s Family.

From birth, Jesus Christ had continuing access to the holy spirit (which was in him, part of his very mind and being), and as he matured in life it became necessary that in time he would also be begotten of

God’s holy spirit. With the rest of mankind, a person must first be ²⁵ “called” by God as they begin to receive a limited access to God’s holy spirit. As they yield themselves to being led by the holy spirit, then they can become begotten of God’s spirit.

Being begotten is necessary for the beginning of spiritual life to form in a separate single entity who will have one’s own unique individuality and personality. Before anyone is ever given the impregnation of the holy spirit (after baptism), they must be “called” or “drawn” by God through the power of His holy spirit. This is a limited access to the very nature, being, Word and truth of God. It is in this phase of life that one will make the “choice” of whether they want to be baptized and be begotten of God. In this state of being “called,” one has not yet been begotten of the holy spirit, but has only been given access to it in a very limited fashion. This state of being called is similar to the life of Jesus Christ before baptism and his being begotten, except he had this power working in him from the beginning of life and not in the very limited fashion as we do later in life upon being called.

We were created to be subject to vanity. This natural selfishness of human life placed us (planted us) in an environment that brought us into a bondage of corruption (destruction). In God’s creation, the human mind is “naturally” against (at enmity with) the way of God. Paul wrote that: “*it is not subject to the law of God, and neither indeed can be*” (Rom. 8:7). Such a carnal person (before receiving a “calling” from God) may choose to live by some small portion of what God says, but will never choose all. Yet, the only choice before mankind is to either choose ALL of God’s way or to choose eternal death. However, that objective choice can never truly be made until given access to God’s holy spirit (through a calling). Only then can a person have the ability to grasp things that are truly spiritual and of God, when the holy spirit gives the ability to “see” the truths of God—His Word and way of life, and then to begin to see one’s true nature that is selfish and filled with sin.

Before this, people can only know what they conjure up in their own

mind concerning God or what they have been taught by others about what they believe is of God. But to truly “see” the things of God requires the receiving of God’s help through the power of His holy spirit because the things of God are spiritual. They cannot be understood or seen by the human mind through human intellect and reason. That is the very reason there are so many thousands of beliefs about God in the world, while only one is true—the “one” that is of God’s holy spirit.

Everlasting life beyond this temporary physical life is a gift from God for those who truly want to be in His Family. Until one is drawn by God’s spirit, they do not know what that Family is or how it lives—the way of life in it. Once a person sees the need to become different from what they are, to believe and live different from who they are, then they can become baptized and receive the impregnation of God’s holy spirit. That power “continually” living in a person will bring about a complete conversion in life, a complete metamorphosis in the human mind—from the way of selfish human nature to that which creates the molding and fashioning of God’s nature.

The Battle for Life

The uniqueness of a metamorphosis in the human mind is a process that is only possible through a battle that is waged against evil. Engaging in this battle is at the very heart and core of what is needed for the development of spiritual character that can grow into absolute unity and oneness with God.

To choose God’s way of life in this weak human form, with the selfish spirit of corruption that exists in us, is to acknowledge that we must enter a great battle of conflict, as we choose to engage in a spiritual war against our own human nature, against our own selfish mind. This is spoken of often and in many ways throughout the pages of the New Testament. It is through the waging of this warfare against evil that makes possible the transformation of our minds from being selfishly, inwardly, humanly motivated, to becoming outwardly motivated in

God’s love through the process of “choosing” God’s way and seeking to live it. It does not come “naturally” to choose God’s way due to this nature that exists in us, so we must choose to fight it if we want God’s one and only true way of life. 26

The apostle Paul speaks a great deal about this battle, of fighting against our own vile nature (and the ways of this world) as we choose God’s way and fight to live it through the help of His holy spirit in our life. Chapters 7 and 8 of the Book of Romans are good to read and these explain this battle well. In Ephesians 6, Paul speaks of the need to put on the whole armor of God as we wage this great battle against selfishness and the ways of this world.

The essence of this great struggle is captured in an excellent way by Paul: *“For though we walk in the flesh [in physical lives], we do not war after the flesh [we do not wage war in a physical manner, with physical weapons]: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal [from selfish human nature—of carnal ability], but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations [reasonings from our own mind or the reasoning of others], and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought [our own thoughts/reasoning/mind] to the obedience of Christ;”* (2 Cor. 10:3-5).

God placed us in bondage to corruption (destruction) due to the creation of the natural selfish nature in us. So when God does offer us His way, with the help of His holy spirit working in us, then through our “free choice” the mind can be transformed into a mind that can eventually be born into His very Family. Such metamorphosis from a mind of evil to a mind in unity with God can come in no other way—through no other means.

To enter into such a conflict in life, by willingly choosing to fight our own wrong nature and then struggling daily to live by God’s way according to His nature (with His spirit working in us to help us do so), is the very means through which our minds can be transformed from

carnal to spiritual (of the holy spirit). This is indeed the most incredible accomplishment in all of God's creation through time, as He works to bring His Family into age-lasting existence.

God Dwelling IN Mankind

As a begotten member of the Church enters into the battle of fighting against one's own carnal mind while seeking to grow in the mind of God, the presence of God's holy spirit being ever present in them (in their mind) is absolutely necessary for the transformation of that mind. This is biblically spoken of in terms of God abiding IN a person—IN their mind—the spirit essence of the human mind coupled with the holy spirit of God. The same Greek word translated as “abide” is often rendered as dwelling, living, continuing, or remaining in a person.

There is no other way for the human mind to be transformed from selfish human nature to God's giving nature than for Jesus Christ and God the Father to dwell in us through the power of the holy spirit. This is the very process of the human mind being begotten (conceived) of God's holy spirit and nurtured by that spirit continually living in (dwelling in, abiding in) the mind. If the flow of that spirit ceases, the mind ceases to grow spiritually and transformation is halted. When this occurs, a person will actually begin to lose truth, as the mind regresses and goes backward toward the strong domination of carnal human nature once again—unable to move forward spiritually and grow in unity and oneness with God. This state is a state of falling asleep spiritually and only God can awaken one from that sleep, if they have not committed the unpardonable sin—sin for which one refuses to repent.

In Truth #35 that was given to God's Church, God revealed the truth about Jesus Christ “coming” in the flesh that is spoken of by the apostle John. Most have taken this to mean that Jesus Christ came and lived a physical existence. Another similar expression of John is about Jesus Christ saying that he “will come again.” Most have taken this to mean that he is speaking of coming again in the future at his return

as King of kings. Yet John is speaking of the need for Christ living IN, ²⁷ dwelling in, continually coming into the mind of one who is begotten. The closest in English grammar to these Greek expressions is that of the present progressive tense. It is about the need for God the Father and Jesus Christ to “continually be coming” into our life through the power of the holy spirit. This is simply expressed biblically as their abiding IN, dwelling IN, living IN or continuing IN the life of the one begotten.

Such expressions used by John are powerful and have deep meaning for all who receive it: *“Abide in me, and I in you, as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in me. I am the vine and you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit, for without me you can do nothing”* (John 15:4-5). Then again, as John records the words of Jesus on that last night of his physical life on earth (as our Passover, on Passover), as he was praying to his Father, he said: *“Neither pray I for these alone [the disciples who just took of the Passover with him], but for them also who shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as you, Father, are IN me, and I IN you, that they also may be [become] one IN us: that the world may believe that you have sent me. And the glory which you gave me [of the holy spirit working in the mind] I have given them; that they may be [become] one, even as we are one: I IN them, and you IN me, that they may be made perfect [perfected] IN one; and that the world may know that you have sent me, and have loved them, as you have loved me”* (Jn. 17:20-23).

Much of what John witnessed in the words of Jesus Christ was later magnified in meaning, and John taught these truths in a more powerful way in the later years of his life. The entire books of First, Second, and Third John focus on this powerful process of life that works to transform our minds from our selfish ways to God's way, of His kind of love and mind IN us. One such passage says much: *“No man has seen God at any time [mankind cannot see spirit, but spirit can live in mankind and help us to “see” God spiritually]. If we love one another [the word*

is “agape” which is God’s love, with the source being God, as no such love dwells in mankind], *God dwells IN us, and His love is perfected IN us* [this is the only way to experience the mind and life of God, as He dwells IN us and gives us the help to begin living His kind of love that is humanly impossible]. *Hereby we know that we dwell IN Him, and He IN us, because He has given us of His spirit* [only by the power of the holy spirit in us can such a love and life be experienced, and this shows or proves God is IN us]. *And we have seen* [“see” God spiritually through this process] *and do testify* [Gk. “to witness”] *that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world* [this very process experienced by us, in our life, proves that Jesus Christ is the Son of God]. *Whosoever shall confess* [not a verbal exercise, but one that reveals by the way one is living, then such confession is real] *that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells IN him, and he IN God. And we have known and believed the love that God has to us. God is love; and he who dwells IN love, dwells In God, and God In him*” (1 Jn. 4:12-16).

Understanding “how” a person enters into a spiritual battle to conquer their own mind and wrong thinking, is to grasp the necessity of God and His Son to dwell IN us through the power of the holy spirit. This transformation is only possible through this manner. It is a marvel and the most awesome phase of God’s creation—the creation of Elohim that takes place within the Church.

As we read in Ephesians earlier, those in the Church are described as those who are part of the building that is growing into a holy temple IN the Lord, in whom we are being built together for a habitation (a dwelling place) of God. It should be clear about the need of Jesus Christ and God the Father to dwell IN the life of all who are begotten, and for them, in turn, to dwell in God and His Son. Herbert W. Armstrong described the Church so well, as being like the embryo of the Kingdom of God—the Family of God. That embryo exists only by God dwelling/living IN it. But an embryo is not yet born.

The Existence of God’s Family

The same thing is required for the existence of God’s Family that is required for the existence of the Church of God. Although this has been known on various levels concerning the Church, it has not been fully known nor understood concerning God’s Family. This leads us to the final truth. After stating this truth, other scriptures will come alive for us in a much greater way. So first, we will focus on this truth before continuing.

Although it was clearly stated in a previous sermon at a Feast that God would dwell in His Family into everlasting life, this truth has never been stated as a doctrine and given the clarity and understanding of this process and purpose that God is now giving.

TRUTH #4: Through the power of the holy spirit, Almighty God will “dwell” IN His Family into everlasting life, and they will always dwell IN Him. This will be accomplished through the power of the holy spirit that emanates from God and it will never cease to be “coming into” the lives of all who are in the God Family. This will be a perpetual and continuing process into everlasting life.

Once begotten of God’s holy spirit, the flow of the holy spirit can be suppressed and completely removed (cut off) from a begotten person’s life.

God dwells (abides, lives) IN the life of a spirit begotten person (a person of the holy spirit) and they therefore dwell IN Him. Through the power of the holy spirit, the life (nature, truth, Word, way of life) of God begins to dwell in a begotten person’s life (in the spirit essence given to the human mind), helping to change the very way one thinks and lives, from that of selfishness and pride to that of outgoing concern and love toward others. This power however is suppressed and sometimes cut off because of sin, as God will not dwell in sin. Once given spirit life in a

resurrection from death (or resurrection from physical life) to spirit life, this process of God dwelling in a “born” person’s life (no longer begotten), and they in Him, will never cease nor be interrupted, but will be perpetual and continuous into everlasting life.

Each member who is born into God’s Family has independent reasoning and thought, but each is perfectly united in purpose, will, and one way of life through the power of the holy spirit that will forever abide in them (which continuously emanates from God—who is the source). It is God “forever dwelling” in each member that makes the Family of God a reality in “one” perfectly united way.

Continuing... The Existence of God’s Family

Those who are born into God’s Family are separate, individual, and unique members of the Family, but they are never separated from God, but are fully “at one” with God into life everlasting. The holy spirit identifies the very nature and being of God. It is a power of God’s spirit that emanates fully from Him and is “holy” because it is of His very being, Word, and nature. All who are born into that Family will be fully united in a spiritual manner of oneness of purpose and way of life.

Yet with this knowledge, we are still very limited in our ability to understand it fully, as we are so limited in this physical existence. But with this understanding of being able to always have the holy spirit dwell IN us into everlasting life (God dwelling IN us), we can come to more deeply appreciate God’s great creation and all that He tells us about it.

So when God said that He would build a temple to dwell in, it becomes easier to see how the Church is the place where it is constructed—where it is created.

As it was stated earlier concerning members of the Church: “*And are built [are being built] upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the*

*building is fitly framed together and grows into a **holy temple** IN the Lord: In whom you also are built [are being built] together for an **habitation of God** [Gk—“dwelling place”] through the spirit [holy spirit]” (Eph. 2:20-22).* 29

This Temple of God is spoken of in many ways. It is the place of God’s rest—that which He has been working for so long to create. It is Zion, the holy city Jerusalem, the Temple of God, the Kingdom of God, the very Family of God. Understanding such things more deeply gives greater inspiration to so much of what God has recorded for us.

God asked through Isaiah, “Where is the place of my rest.” But He tells us about it in the Psalms: “*Arise, O LORD, into your rest; you, and the ark [the gathering] of your strength*” (Ps. 132:8). This is a prophetic reference to God’s rest that is gathered together into His strength—by His power into His greater power. Candidly, it is a reference to His holy spirit and the power contained in it—from Him—from His power to produce what is being created by the holy spirit—His Family, the spiritual temple. It then adds, “*For the LORD has chosen Zion; He has desired it for his habitation [Heb.—dwelling place]. This is My rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it*” (vs. 13-14).

God is going to dwell IN His temple, IN Zion, which is His place of rest. It is the Family of God. It is Elohim. God will always dwell IN His Family as His place of rest, and the Family will dwell IN God and have rest—peace for ever.

We have looked at some of what John wrote concerning how God dwells in us through the power of the holy spirit, but even there, more is revealed in Jesus’ own words: “*Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me? The words that I speak to you I speak not of myself: but the Father who dwells in me, He does the works*” (Jn. 14:10). All power in life emanates from God, who is the source. He desires that His Family share in that power while having the same purpose and will in life, and further Christ said: “*If you love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter [the*

holy spirit], *that it may abide with you for ever*" (vs. 15-16). God is magnifying Himself in greater power and might, in His Family. Even here, God revealed that it was His purpose to dwell in His Family into everlasting life.

These final truths that God has now revealed to His Church reflect the way in which God has worked with His Church through this final end-time, to bless His Church exceedingly so with greater strength and focus of purpose in order to help thrust it into a glorious new age. God has now given the necessary knowledge to help those who will be called to grasp more clearly, the rest... of the *Mystery of the Ages*.