There are probably few people in the world that haven't contemplated life's deepest questions. Herbert Armstrong claimed his book *Mystery of the Ages* answered those questions and that these mysteries were divinely revealed to him by God.

Can you know for sure these things are true? Does this book stand up to the truth of Scripture? Or is it merely black and white answers to life that come with a high price?

This review is based on the 1985 hardback version (363 pages) and will go through each chapter and confront these "mysteries." Its purpose will be to: 1. Help those who come into contact with this book to understand the true agenda behind it; 2. Show how Herbert W. Armstrong substituted the true gospel of Jesus Christ with a false gospel; 3. Help those who have exited from these groups to understand how they were snared and help them untangle themselves from the falsehoods, and 4. Prove that HWA was a false prophet and deceiver, who copied and plagiarized from other groups.

**Update:** Gerald Flurry of Philadelphia Church of God (PCG) deleted and changed portions of this book. Read: [April 13, 2004 letter](#) to ESN.

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Error, indeed, is never set forth in its naked deformity, lest, being thus exposed, it should at once be detected. But it is craftily decked out in an attractive dress, so as, by its outward form, to make it appear to the inexperienced (ridiculous as the expression may seem) more true than the truth itself. (Irenaeus Against Heresies, Book I)

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- Chapter 5 (Mystery of Israel)
- Chapter 6 (Mystery of the Church) (5 parts)
- Chapter 7 (Mystery of the Kingdom of God)
It doesn't take one long to see how Herbert Armstrong carefully lays a foundation for this entire book to be built upon. He begins by asking questions that have plagued man since the beginning of time. "Who am I? What? Why? Where did it all come from? Is there a purpose? etc." He continues by contrasting the world's amazing progress along with its most horrible problems.

He also activates the word "mystery" and firmly plants it into our minds, repeating it seven times in the first page alone! And 31 times in just the first six pages. Constant repetition is the key to advertising success, and HWA skillfully utilizes this technique. The word "mystery" was cleverly chosen. It implies "a puzzle to be solved," and HWA will later set himself up to be the man with all the answers to the puzzle that he is constructing.

Successful salesmen know that they must discredit their competitors in order for consumers to shed their loyalty. Once consumers begin to doubt their favorite brands, they become more willing to try another brand. Salesmen are keenly aware that they must be 100% convinced that their product is superior to all others. As the saying goes, "If you're not convinced, they won't be convinced." One must speak with complete authority and never waiver. Now let's see if these methods are used in MOA.

MOA begins by asking age-old questions about life, but as the book continues, it begins to shift focus. As early as page 2, HWA begins to discredit mainstream church authority. At first it is very subtle, and one may not understand that HWA was a master at progression. His experience as a salesman has taught him how to break down the doubts in the consumer's mind, and then introduce a "better product." Once the person becomes disarmed, HWA will become more flagrant in his pronunciations. Let's see this in action.

By insinuating that man's misguided thinking was foisted upon him by the Roman Catholic Church and Protestant churches, HWA continues discrediting these authorities by berating their picture of Jesus ("long-haired, semi-effeminate"). He begins to plant doubt in institutionalized religion. ("Why, if religious experts can't get the picture of Jesus right, what else are they teaching that is wrong?") But he doesn't stop there. He continues to discredit the scientific community ("these mysteries can't be explained by science"), and higher education ("ignorant minds filled with intellectual vanity"), and finally, government ("ruled by principalities of evil spirits"). Now the reader is set up to mistrust all these "authorities." Before the person has time to digest this, HWA unleashes a barrage a questions that lead up to his conclusion: There are "Seven Great Mysteries" that none of the churches or theologians have comprehended. (p. 5)

As if all this wasn't bad enough, we now learn that nobody can understand the Bible by reading it—"or certainly almost nobody." (p. 5) With all experts and authorities cut down, HWA cunningly introduces himself as "The One" who understands. Now our "new authority expert" takes the reins and presents a new product—a whole new religious belief system.

Let's review the Seven Mysteries:

1. God
2. Angels and evil spirits
3. Man
4. Civilization
5. Israel
6. The Church
7. The Kingdom of God

I quote Herbert Armstrong's own words:

The Bible is the basic mystery of all. (p. 5)

God deliberately coded his book so that it would not be understood until our modern time. Why was this purposely done? Even that is a mystery. (p. 6)

Above, HWA says there are two more mysteries. So in actuality, there are nine mysteries, and not seven! But HWA taught that seven is God's number, considered to be holy and signifying...
"completion": 7 holy days, Sabbath is the 7th day, creation finished the 7th day, etc. So here we see that he couldn't leave out the Bible, or the reason why it is coded because these are two major topics that cannot be ignored. But he wanted it to appear that God personally revealed these things to him, so he uses the number seven (God's number) to boost his claims, and appends the other two mysteries.

Now all good salesmen know that they must "target" their market. Who do they want to reach with their product? HWA targeted "Bible illiterates"—those who needed to "blow the dust off your Bible and read it." On page x of the Author's Statement, we see this astute observation:

Most people, I realized, accept or reject a belief on careless assumption due to whatever they have heard, been taught, or assumed without proof.

Armed with that understanding, he states,

If one begins reading the Bible continuously from beginning to end, one becomes bewildered. (p. 5)

This statement is partially true. Yes, one can become bewildered because of the pronunciation of unfamiliar names and locations, customs and rituals—not because it is coded, or a jigsaw puzzle that only fits one particular way. HWA knows his market will be those who realize that they assumed what they believed without proof, and now desire a deeper understanding, but who are completely untrained to discern his heretical teachings. He knows they have no solid foundation, so he easily knocks down what shaky little bit they had.

Salesmen are adept at making their customers feel that they have some kind of "inside knowledge" or "expertise" about their products, and they know how to get their customers to desire them (much like the serpent making Eve desire something she didn't have). So the another nail is hammered into the coffin of outside authority:

The clergy and theologians of organized "Christianity" therefore, cannot and do not understand the Holy Bible. (p. 6)

He chisels away at religious authorities more than the others. Why? Because the product he is selling is religion, and he wants the bonds completely severed. Once that has been achieved, he reverts our attention to the unanswered mysteries.

How then, can we, in this book, understand and reveal to the reader these boggling mysteries? That question will be answered in the Introduction to follow. (p. 6)

He ends this chapter by fanning the flames of desire, the quest for answers to these mysteries, not by giving us the answers all at once. Think how many salesmen that have entered your home left in five minutes? They know this will happen if they give you all the information at once. No, an expert salesmen will continue to titillate his customers with desire for their product. The longer he spends with them, the more influence he will have over their decision. With their defenses down, HWA will continue to build on the foundation that he has laid. He promises to answer these mysteries in the Introduction, but what the unsuspecting reader doesn't see is that the next 23 pages of the Introduction are about himself! Notice that the building being erected on the foundation isn't Jesus Christ, or God for that matter. It is about him, Herbert W. Armstrong, and how God has commissioned him to reveal these mysteries to us. Now let's get to the Introduction and review the methods used there.

By Kelly Marshall (former WCG member)
Exit & Support Network™
April 2004

Footnotes for Preface:

1 Page 24, Introduction to Mystery of the Ages shows this principle of "sevens" in action: "In the first dummy copy of The Plain Truth that I put together in 1927 – seven years before the magazine was actually published..."

*All footnotes throughout have been added by Kelly Marshall and D. M. Williams of Exit & Support Network™.
The title to the introduction does not reveal any more about the mysteries introduced in the Preface. Herbert Armstrong must first establish himself as God's Apostle. (Although he does not say it here—you have to be "in the Church" before this is revealed to you.) The opening of this chapter continues the contrast between evil (poverty, crime, immorality, etc.) and progress. What is the cause of this world's evils? HWA blames it on religion back in his introduction:

> When you see what's wrong with the world's religions, you'll have pinpointed the cause of all the world evils! (p. 8)

The Bible reveals that the cause of these problems is the heart of man—and that the world is fallen because of sin. But HWA is selling religion, so he must continue to blame every religion outside of his product as the cause of everything gone wrong.

Now HWA begins to position himself as a modern-day, God appointed "end time messenger" (also known as a "prophet" in less-subtle terms). In the Author's Statement (prior to the Preface), he implies that God has given him wisdom, even more so than Solomon, to understand these great mysteries (page viii). He believes that he is the dual fulfillment, and begins to describe his cleverly concocted "duality principle."¹ He claims he is the dual fulfillment of John the Baptist (that voice now cries out!), as well as Malachi's messenger and the Elijah to come. He describes the calling of Moses, Paul, Jeremiah, Jonah, Peter and Andrew—and how each of these men was commissioned against their will. His own personal resistance to God's call is "proof" that he, too, is God's personal messenger. He was personally "struck down" by Jesus Christ (he had to parallel Paul's experience to continue with the duality theme). With these claims established, he becomes more flagrant with his pronouncements against the church:

> People suppose the churches teach what is revealed in the Bible. (p.13)

> (I give you)….Biblical truths not believed or taught by the churches. (p.13)

Do you think there may be a good reason "why" the Biblical truths HWA gives us is not believed or taught by churches? Many who have read his book glossed over this very thing due to being excited that God would have a "modern-day, Apostle/prophet" walking the earth today.

Not known for his humility, HWA proudly reveals that his genealogy extends all the way back to the king of England and King David. There is a reason for this that the reader (outside of "the church") is unaware of. HWA will build his British-Israelism theme in later chapters, and from there, further claim his legitimacy through bloodline (ignoring what Jesus said about, "being a son of Abraham doesn't matter"). HWA wants us to know, in no uncertain terms, that he is special.

So far, HWA has spent nine pages establishing himself as the dual fulfillment of various prophecies. Leaders of deceptive, exploitive groups follow a pattern, and HWA is as predictable as they come. The Bible is never enough to prove one's divine appointment (especially since it is easy to see that his name is not written anywhere, and all of God's true prophets are specifically named²), so "sacred myths" must be fabricated. Loma Armstrong's dream about the three angels giving them direct commission from Christ to begin "The Work" no doubt
qualifies. He dismisses her dream, but cleverly labels it under the heading "The Unrecognized
Call." [Read: Myths About Loma Armstrong which describes this dream.]

HWA spends the next few pages describing how Jesus struck him down by dissolving all his
business ventures. Even though he tries to sound humble ("Really, I didn't want this job! God
made me take it! Just like all the other men in the Bible, I tried to run away!"), he concludes
under the subtitle "My Experience Unique" that he is on equal footing as the original apostles:

But I had been called specifically by the living God. (p. 24)

Jesus Christ....in person, taught the original 12 apostles, and the apostle Paul....the same
Jesus Christ who taught....beginning in A.D. 27, and 1900 years later, beginning in 1927,
myself. (p. 25)

From this point on, he openly and vehemently attacks the Christian church, sealing the coffin
of religious authority shut. Calling everything he has proved "truth," and any disagreeing
viewpoints as "popular church teachings not based on the Bible!" he brazenly declares that
mainstream church teachings are pagan. (p. 26)

Remember how HWA used the word "mystery" repeatedly in the Preface? The unwary reader
may not have realized that this same method is used with the word "truth" in this chapter. The
word "truth" is used 26 times, but in an interesting way. HWA bookends Loma's dream and his
personal conversion experience by concentrating the word "truth" just before and after this. Now
the reader's mind is being programmed to believe that the "mysteries" in the Preface are now
"TRUTH" in the Introduction. HWA carefully weaves this progression into our thinking.

To keep us from further investigation using outside sources, he informs us that he has already
read volumes of religious academic material and found them flawed:

In this in-depth study of the Bible, I had the use of all the biblical helps – concordances,
Greek-English and Hebrew-English lexicons, commentaries, Bible dictionaries and
religious encyclopedias. The latter three of these, I found, were the works of scholarly
but carnal minds. In historical fact....they give help in research, but in God's revelation
of spiritual knowledge, I found them of little help. (p. 23) [Emphasis mine]

HWA continues to implant thoughts in the reader's mind that he is special:

My research was totally different from that of students in a seminary. They absorb what
they are taught in the doctrines of their denomination. (p. 23)³

...neither went I [to a theological seminary, but I was taught by Jesus Christ, the Word of
God (in writing)]" (p. 29)⁴

...the experience I was painfully subject to in this original intensive study was unique in human
life and conduct in our time. I know of no world religious leader who arrived at his teachings in
such a manner. (p. 29) At this point, the unsuspecting reader is set up to a Catch 22.

Most people, I had discovered, are obeying false gods, rebelling against the one true
Creator who is the supreme Ruler of the universe. (p. 26)

This world's religious teachings did not come from God! (p. 29)

Now the reader must make a choice. So far, the reader can identify with HWA's statements
about automatically following the religion they were born into without question. Now HWA is
charging that the mainstream church is not only wrong, but pagan, and if we continue to
practice our beliefs, then we are obeying false gods and rebelling against God Himself! Now
what sincere person would ever want to do that? Since he seems to "speak with such
authority," we begin to wonder if he really is God's appointed man. Was Loma's dream really
true? We begin to doubt ourselves.

Now we are stuck, and must make a choice. This is exactly where the expert salesman wants us!
His whole goal is to explain the product (speaking with complete authority), and then bring us
to the place where we must make a decision, but not without first removing all obstacles so
we come to the decision **he wants us to make.** So if the reader chooses to say "no" to the product, then he will be left thinking that he has made a poor choice. (A vacuum cleaner salesmen would say, "So then you are choosing to live in an unsanitary home environment!" when some refuse to buy the over-priced item).

Just before the introduction ends, another piece of bait is tactfully waved in front of the reader's face: That not only are there seven biblical mysteries, but one must now:

\[
\text{...find that one and **only true Church of God** founded by Jesus Christ on the day of Pentecost, A.D. 31. (p. 30) [emphasis mine]}
\]

Clever. Very clever.

**Footnotes for Introduction:**

1 There are prophetic statements in the Bible that can apply to more than one fulfillment, but they are about how Jesus fulfilled these prophesies, not how Herbert W. Armstrong fulfilled them.

2 When one thinks how important Jesus' Second Coming is, it seems that God would have revealed the name of this important end-time messenger. How could He possibly have omitted Herbert's name? After all, He plainly named John the Baptist before Jesus' first Advent. It would stand to reason that He would have done the same if Herbert Armstrong's "duality" theme were true. The author makes a poor attempt at this by quoting Isaiah 40:3, 9-10 on page 9. Once the person comes into "the Church," it will be further revealed that the words "strong" and "arm" in this verse is actually "Armstrong.")

3 It is easy to see the hypocrisy in this statement: HWA knocks down other religions for teaching their own doctrines, but fails to point out that Ambassador College only taught his doctrines; therefore he is guilty of the same.

4 Herbert Armstrong failed to point out that Paul, himself, was a highly educated man, having gotten his education from the best "theological seminary" of that time.
Chapter One - Who and What is God?

Herbert Armstrong knew that if the reader couldn't discern his bogus claims about himself in the first two parts of the book, he has his foot in the door. He knows he has stoked our curiosity, waving these tempting pieces of knowledge in front of our hungry noses, and now he will begin to give us the juicy tidbits. This chapter should be renamed, "Confuse Them With Details," because HWA inundates the reader with a deluge of information so they can't digest it all. This is done so the reader will be awed by HWA's vast knowledge. We begin to think that maybe this man is getting his information straight from God's mouth since he seems to know so much and speaks with such confidence (something we lack at this point because we don't know our Bibles).

HWA spends the first part of this chapter in his usual manner of discrediting any and all authorities for not understanding (his version of) who and what God is. He lumps all of mankind, as well as all denominations, into this category. The second half of the chapter will be spent setting up the reader to examine carefully selected Bible Scriptures to prove HWA's theories correct (which he calls "TRUTH"). He will also begin planting the thought that there is a true church that not only is small, but "persecuted" so anyone who disagrees with him is in alliance with Satan, and persecuting God's only church.

Before continuing, let's try to understand what exactly did we know before coming into contact with this book.

**Before I read MOA, or had any contact with Herbert Armstrong literature:**

1. I had a thorough understanding of the Bible.
2. I occasionally read the Bible, but mostly the NT gospels since the other books were confusing and/or boring to me.
3. I went to church as a kid, and knew that Genesis was the first book of the Bible, and Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden, and I knew about Noah's Ark and the Flood; I knew Jesus was in the NT, and that He died for my sins; other than that, I really didn't know that much about the rest of the Bible.
4. I never read the Bible

**Before I read any Herbert Armstrong literature:**

1. I knew what an Apostle was. I was fully knowledgeable in discerning the difference between a true Apostle and a false prophet.
2. I knew Paul was an Apostle, but I never was really sure what that meant, except it was an important title.
3. As a youth, I learned in church that Jesus had 12 disciples.
4. I never even heard of the word "Apostle," nor understood what it meant.

**Before I came into contact with Herbert Armstrong literature:**

1. I fully understood the Godhead (Father, Son and Holy Spirit).
2. I knew about the Godhead while partaking of the Holy Communion, but I never really understood exactly what it meant.
3. As a youth in church, I remember hearing about the Father, Son (Jesus), and Holy Spirit, but I never understood that they were called the Trinity or Godhead.
4. I never heard of the Trinity or Godhead.

**I would say my experience with church history:**
1. Has been thorough; I completely understood the history of the church from the time of Jesus through today.

2. Has been familiar; I knew something about Catholicism and the Protestant Reformation, the Crusades, Judaism, and Islam from school or church.

3. Has been scant; I learned in Sunday School that Jesus founded the Church, but I was never really sure what that meant.

4. Has been non-existent. I knew nothing about it.

The answers to this quiz should give you an idea of what you understood before coming into contact with this book (or any other HWA literature). When you understand how little you actually knew before you read this book, then you can understand why you were easily influenced.

In sales, the motto goes: "When something works, stay with it." We learned that HWA used repetition to implant thoughts in an unsuspecting reader's mind, and this chapter is no different. He uses the phrase "WHO AND WHAT GOD IS" sixteen times, making sure that this topic, with all his answers, is firmly planted in the reader's mind. Carefully observe the same pattern of logic he uses with this question. He will first discredit everyone, and then point to himself (and will now include the church he founded) as the only ones who understand. He claimed that:

1. Billions are willingly ignorant (but God is not judging them now).
2. Mankind is deceived by a super deceiver (Satan, revealed in the next chapter).
3. The most highly educated and scholarly don't know who and what God is.
4. Nobody in the past knew, and nobody today knows.
5. Man is passively hostile against God.
6. Only the small and persecuted church founded by Jesus knows and believes (what HWA says about Him, and His true mission).

HWA tells us that not only does man not know anything about God, but that he doesn't want to know, and by this, man is willingly ignorant. He claims his theory is an astonishing truth (p. 33). From this, he claims that that "one explanation, only, is possible!" (p. 33). And of course, he is the one who has the only possible explanation! Can you begin to see the pattern?

He pronounces this universal deception as fact, and introduces the notion of an enemy "DECEIVER." Yes, Satan is a deceiver and a liar, that is true, but notice how he carefully lumps mainstream Christians together with unbelievers. He does not teach the Biblical definition of believers (those who accept Christ as their Savior) and unbelievers (those who don't). Instead, he teaches that everyone outside of his church (those who don't believe his particular doctrines espoused in this book) are unbelievers, and deceived by Satan as well. Once they are in a mainstream church, they are called "counterfeit Christians."

On page 35, HWA brings out the fact that education is about memory instillation. But there are two things he fails to point out. One is that much of the memory work done by students is FACT—spelling, reading, writing, grammar, mathematics, chemistry, physics, etc. Without them, the student cannot function in society. Memorizing facts, whether true or false, does not mean that the individuals never grow up and have an opinion! Regardless of what we are taught as children doesn't mean we don't change our views as we get older. (HWA in later chapters will teach that God gave man a "free mind" to think his own thoughts, but here he paints a picture that man does nothing more than accept every error he is taught in school without question.) He avoids giving credit to the many scientists, inventors, researchers, etc. that have made amazing discoveries that have made our lives more comfortable and enjoyable. (Remember, he does not want them to have any semblance of credibility). Second, he speaks against modern education that is espousing evolution, but fails to mention Creation Science, and the many scientists who are Christians and are not advocating evolution. (Again, the pattern of not giving credit where credit is due is repeated. He doesn't want anyone to go looking anywhere else, except to him, for answers.)
In spite of our educational system, God can save anyone, anytime, anywhere. But HWA isn't interested in revealing this to you—his only interest is revealing the gospel as "the only true message that HWA preaches."

Let's imagine for a moment that HWA is truly God's divine messenger. In Matthew 28, Jesus commissioned His Apostles to "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..." Did HWA do as Jesus commanded when he went before the largest nation on earth? Let's see in his own words what he says:

I did not tell them who and what God is, but I did tell two large and important audiences of leaders what God is very soon going to do—and I announced this forthcoming book...

(p. 36)

So God sent HWA all the way to China, not to baptize anyone, nor even teach them about Jesus (or the Holy Days and Sabbath which he insists is vital for salvation), but to promote his forthcoming Mystery of the Ages book. How can these nations be nothing but ignorant if God's very own Apostle doesn't share the gospel with them?

Contrast this with the actions of God's Apostle, Paul. Let's see if Paul was obedient to the Great Commission in Matthew 28 when he enters two great nations at that time. In Acts 17, Paul arrives in Thessalonica. Does he hold back the name of Jesus while visiting this pagan nation?

Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you is Christ. (vs. 3)

[emphasis mine]

And when Paul entered Athens, what did he do?

Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? Other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. (vs. 18). [emp. mine]

How can God's modern day Apostle ignore this, especially in this supposed "end time"? On page 37, HWA says that India and Russia know nothing about God. It is evident that he does not acknowledge Christian missionaries who have taken the gospel to India, nor does he recognize the "underground church" in Russia, or Russian Bible Society (P.O. Box 6068, Asheville, NC 28816; the oldest established mission to what is now called the Commonwealth of Independent States). He claims that, "God is not judging them NOW...neither is he condemning them." He continues to state that ancient peoples (Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, etc.) did not know who/what God is, and neither do they know today. Now let us carefully observe a contradiction in HWA's own writings.

On page 32-33, HWA quotes Rom. 1:18-22 (Revised Standard Version):

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of men who by their wickedness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse; for although they knew [about] God they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and their senseless minds were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools. [emp. mine].

HWA italicized the words "suppress the truth" in order to prove his worldwide conspiracy theory (that Satan controls the whole world's thinking by suppressing the truth through organized religion, education, and government), which will be revealed in later chapters. Right now, HWA is just planting a seed to water later. Without realizing it, he has printed a Scripture that contradicts his own theory that men are ignorant of God!
So let's examine this again: HWA claims that:

1. Billions are willingly ignorant (but God is not judging them now).
2. Mankind is deceived by a super deceiver (Satan, revealed in the next chapter).
3. The most highly educated and scholarly don't know who and what God is.
4. Nobody in the past knew, and nobody today knows.
5. Man is passively hostile against God.
6. Only the small and persecuted church founded by Jesus Christ knows and believes (what HWA says about Him, and His true mission).

The Scriptures reveal that:

1. What can be known about God is plain to them because God has shown it to them. (Billions know.)
2. What can be known about God is plain to them because God has shown it to them. (Billions know.)
3. Ever since the creation of the world (people in the past, people today) His invisible nature, namely, His eternal power and deity has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made.
4. They knew about God (the highly educated and scholarly; in other words everybody), but did not honor Him or give thanks to him.

The Bible says mankind is without excuse, but HWA says they have an excuse. Who are you going to believe?

**WHAT IS GOD'S APPEARANCE?**

On pages 46 HWA says that "God is composed of spirit and not of visible matter," and then goes on to contradict himself by saying, "God nevertheless does have definite form and shape."

In various parts of the Bible, it is revealed that God has a face, eyes, a nose, mouth and ears. He has hair on his head. It is revealed God has arms and legs. And God has hands and fingers. ... God has feet and toes and a body. God has a mind... If you know what a man looks like, you know what is the form and shape of God,... (p. 47)

HWA received this teaching from the Mormons: "I say, if you were to see him today, you would see him like a man in form—like yourselves in all the person, image and very form as a man. .." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 345). HWA is greatly in error. I Timothy says, "Who alone has immortality, dwelling in light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can [dunatai] see to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen." The Greek word, *dunatai* denotes "capability," therefore no man is capable of seeing God the Father, who is invisible.

**THE TRINITY**

On page 40, HWA states, "The word trinity is not found in the Bible, nor does the Bible teach this doctrine." Does the absence of the specific word "trinity" mean that concept doesn't exist? Let's use HWA's own logic to see whether this holds true: Did you know that the words Millennium, wonderful world tomorrow, family of God, and Government of God (or God's Government) doesn't exist either? Yet every one of these is a major doctrine that HWA espouses as "truth." So using his own methods, it would mean that these doctrines or concepts aren't in the Bible because these specific words aren't in the Bible!

Under the subtitle, "God in Prehistory" HWA springs a surprise on the reader by informing them that Genesis 1:1 is not the beginning of the Bible, but that John 1:1-4 is. HWA makes it seem as if he is revealing unique information, when in reality, Biblical Christianity has always understood about Jesus being "the Word [who] was made flesh, and dwelt among us..." This only comes as a surprise to readers who aren't Bible savvy.

On page 41, HWA intentionally avoids using the words "Holy Spirit" when discussing who
"sired" Jesus:

He was made God's Son, through being begotten or sired by God and born of the virgin Mary.

Let's see what the Bible has to say about this:

Mary…was found with the child of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18)

The angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. (v. 20)

In order to construct his "Two Personages" theory, he purposefully omits quoting these Scriptures until he can first convince the reader that the Holy Spirit is merely the power of God, and that God is a Family made up of two persons. This is outright deception. HWA made his followers believe that they were using the "whole Bible" when, in fact, they weren't!

Notice that HWA quickly launches into the personage of Melchisedec (p. 42), which he claims to be Christ. We can see that HWA spends a lot of time talking about God the Father, and Jesus the Son, and plainly omits discussing the Holy Spirit. In doing so, he builds a one-sided picture that there were only two Beings in existence since no Scriptures about the Holy Spirit are mentioned. Talk about "suppressing the truth"!

At this point, HWA begins to introduce the God Family concept, and that humans will be born into that family (and become God, which the reader will discover later). HWA lays down another enticing nugget:

That family is composed, now, of God the Father, and Jesus Christ his Son, and many begotten humans who already, NOW, are begotten SONS OF GOD…forming the Church of God. (p. 43)

Although he uses the correct Biblical wording, "Sons of God," he will later attach the incorrect concept that man's incredible human potential is to "become God as God is God." This elite group of begotten humans is, of course, forming the Church of God (but not just any Church of God, as the reader will later discover. It must be the one HWA founded).

Now notice carefully the pattern used in the upcoming text. The word "two" or "Two Personages" will be emphasized, while the word "three" or "Trinity" will be cast in negative terms. Let's look at these quotes from HWA:

1. So here we find revealed originally two Personages (p. 41)
2. Long before anything existed, there did exist two Supreme Beings (p. 43)
3. Two Persons – not three. (p. 43)
4. …God's Word reveals….two supreme Personages – coexisted always…(p. 44)
5. …those two Personages coexisted and NOTHING ELSE did. (p. 44)
6. Is God, then, limited to only two Persons? (p. 45)
7. Two can't together except they be agreed….Also, two can't walk together in continuous peace except one be the head, or leader, in control. (p. 48)
8. …and each of these TWO Persons is God (p. 50)
9. Finally, in briefest summary: God is a FAMILY composed at the present of TWO Persons of John 1:1-4…. (p. 57)

Now observe what HWA says about the Trinity:

1. But the generally accepted teaching of traditional Christianity is that God is a Trinity...(p. 40)
2. The word trinity is not found in the Bible, nor does the Bible teach this doctrine. (p. 40, and repeats this on page 54)
3. Two Persons—not three. (p .43)
4. No third Person is mentioned – no "Ghost." (p. 44)
5. The false Trinity teaching does limit God to three Persons. (p. 45)
6. The Trinity doctrine limits God to a supposed three Persons. It DESTROYS the very Gospel of Jesus Christ! (p. 51)

7. The Trinity doctrine, by contrast, is the doctrine of the great false religion called in Revelation 17:5 "Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." (Once entering HWA's church, the reader will be enlightened that this mother is the Catholic religion, and the harlots are the Protestant religion). (p. 51)
8. By that doctrine, along with others, Satan has DECEIVED all traditional Christianity. (p. 51)
9. The generally accepted teaching of traditional Christianity is that God is a Trinity—God in three Persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (p. 51)
10. How did this "Trinity" doctrine enter traditional Christianity? (p. 51)
11. God has not limited himself to a "Trinity" (p. 54)
12. The very first idea or teaching about God being a Trinity began the latter half of the second century—a hundred years after most of the New Testament had been written. (p. 54)
13. There is only one small passage in the Authorized Version of the Bible that is generally used by Trinity adherents to support the Trinity doctrine. (p. 55)
14. The Trinity doctrine completely does away with the gospel of Jesus Christ. (p. 56)

Can you begin to see how you were set up to believe that the Trinity is tainted? If you had no background in Scripture, can you see how easily one can become influenced by his negative representation of the Trinity? 

Here is another area where HWA contradicts himself. Notice the argument in point No. 11 above. HWA bases the idea of the Trinity as being false because it was taught 100 years after the NT had been written. If this is how we are to judge false doctrine—by the amount of time that they appear after the NT was written—then what about doctrines that appear 1900 years after the NT was written? Yet, HWA, in his own words, declares that his teachings are true, and we are to believe him, even though his teachings came centuries after the NT was written!

Read: Coping With the Holy Trinity (Don't Reject Things Because They Are Hard to Understand) and Is the Trinity Pagan? [offsite articles]

Now let's examine point No. 12. HWA grossly misrepresents the number of Scriptures about the Trinity by making the reader think that there is "only one small passage" that Trinity adherents use to support this doctrine. If HWA was sent by God, then would it stand to reason that he would tell us the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth? Check out the article: Is the Holy Spirit Only the Power God? to see whether there is only ONE Scripture, or are there literally dozens of them? Once again, this demonstrates how HWA clearly misleads the reader.

II Timothy 3:16 states, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:" HWA openly violates this by giving the reader "certain Scriptures" about the Holy Spirit (the ones that prove that the Holy Spirit is merely "the power that responds," the doctrine he promotes). Would God's true messenger hold back any Scriptures? If the Bible says "all scripture is given by inspiration of God," then His messenger would have nothing to fear by giving the reader all of them. That would include all the Scriptures that would depict the Holy Spirit as a Divine Personage. Why would "deceived traditional Christianity" display all the Scriptures concerning the Spirit? Who is doing the deceiving here?

CHURCH HISTORY AND THE QUARTODECIMAN CONTROVERSY

HWA is banking on the fact that most readers of his literature are not familiar with church history. He knows that anyone who is knowledgeable of church history will instantly spot his errors and go no further into his book. But that doesn't bother him, because his focus is on those who are inexperienced in biblical history and are unable to substantiate his claims. He
also knows that most people don't have ready access to lexicons, Bible dictionaries, Bible Commentaries, etc., which hinders further research, and that many are easily intimidated by the vast volumes of ecclesiastical references, and probably will not bother to look up the facts themselves, especially if the information he presents looks convincingly authentic. Once HWA convinces readers that these "mysteries" are "truths," he will then convince readers that their lack of historical knowledge is "proof" that these "truths" have been suppressed! It is a very clever set up to the unwary reader. We have seen how HWA exclusively quoted scriptures to support his beliefs about the Trinity, while omitting those that didn't. He resorts to the exact same methods when representing church history.

Before looking at the historical facts, the reader needs to understand that there is an underlying reason for HWA to bring up history in the first place. One of the characteristics of a false religious leader is their "sacred roots," and all Bible-based cults use church ancestry (or apostolic succession) as "proof" of their divine appointment. Once a person enters the group, they will be taught that they can trace their church origins to the day of Pentecost. From there, they will claim to be direct descendants of the original apostles, traceable through history up to this present day. This also positions HWA as the "unbroken lineage" of the apostles, equal to Peter and Paul and, like the apostles, above reproach, and one to whom complete trust is given.

HWA paints a dire picture of early church history. He does this in order to provoke an emotional response. He knows that once a person invests their emotions in a cause, they begin to care and want to take action. He misguides and exaggerates Satan's influence in the church, and paints a picture of cosmic war and ultimate sacrifice—the big, universal, "false church" raging against the innocent "little flock." HWA evokes feelings of fear; i.e., You must be sure this brand (Mark of the Beast) is not upon YOU—lest you suffer the consequences! You better join the small flock and you better do it SOON! HWA is engaging in typical sales tactic: Buy it NOW or it will be gone forever—you don't want to miss out on this once in a lifetime opportunity! Only he ups the ante with, "Your very life depends on it!"

What really did happen in church history? Paul was commissioned to preach the gospel to the Gentiles (Romans 15:16; Galatians 2:7-8), while Peter and James concentrated on the Jewish nation. (However, Peter was the first one to go and preach to Gentiles.) But HWA made us believe that Peter was the chief or "head" apostle and all the other apostles reported solely to him. Peter supposedly made all the "final decisions" in the church whenever there was a dispute. This is simply not true, even hundreds of years later in early church history. There was no single ecclesiastical "leader" who made exclusive doctrinal decisions and enforced them on the others. In his journeys, Paul ordained leaders (who were later called "bishops") to care for converts. There were bishops in Rome, Smyrna, Syria, Antioch, Alexandria, Ephesus, etc., and the churches in each area were autonomous. When a bishop had held any primacy, it was over other bishops in his particular region. He deserved the authority because of his age and experience, and he was usually taught directly by an apostle. We will see this more clearly when we look at the writings of early church fathers and historians. So we see the gospel was being spread throughout the known world just shortly after the death of Christ.

It will be worth the reader's time to go through the historical documentation to prove for themselves that HWA omitted large portions of history in order to piece together his contrived theories of the early church evolving into the great false church, Mystery Babylon. It will prove what a charlatan HWA was. The early church fathers actually praised the Trinity—not Sabbaths and Holy Days—as they were being martyred for Jesus Christ. This is quite a testimony, yet HWA wouldn't acknowledge it! Since this is too lengthy to add to this review, be sure and read my research article: Did Herbert W. Armstrong Distort Historical Church Documents.

Only HWA and his authoritarian offshoots make a big deal out of the Quartodeciman Controversy, using it as "proof" that the early apostles were commanded to keep the Passover on the 14th. They do this in order to "prove" that their churches are direct descendants of the early apostles, from which their authority is derived. They intentionally misquote and misrepresent the facts to make their claims seem true. The Passover is the shadow of the reality and that reality is Christ Jesus, our Lord.

The majority of the early church observed the resurrection on Sunday, while a minority in Asia
observed the Passover on the 14th. My research on the Nicene Council Concerning Easter is in the research article, Did Herbert Armstrong Distort Historical Church Documents?

HWA claimed he was commissioned by God to bring the "only true gospel" but instead he resorted to misquoting and misrepresenting facts, twisting both scriptures and history in order to deceive innocent people into his organization.

COUNTERFEIT GOSPEL

Who is this fearless and noble "Dr. Arius"? Let's observe the glowing remarks HWA has made about this valiant man:

About the same time another controversy was raging, between a Dr. Arius, of Alexandria, a Christian leader who died A.D. 336, and other bishops, over calling God a Trinity. Dr. Arius stoutly opposed the Trinity doctrine, but introduced errors of his own. (p. 54)

The bracketed words [in I John 5:7-8 in the KJV] were added to the Latin Vulgate during the heat of the controversy between Rome and Dr. Arius and God's people. (p. 55)

So we clearly see from HWA's own words that this Arius:
1. Was a doctor from Alexandria
2. A Christian leader
3. Opposed the Trinity doctrine
4. Introduced "errors" of his own
5. Had God's people on his side as he went against Rome

Is this true? What does history have to say about this man? Believe it or not, this "Dr." Arius is none other than Arius of Alexandria, who is the father of Arianism, a heretical teaching that not only opposes the Trinity, but opposes HWA's doctrines as well! Arius believed the Son (Jesus) was created out of nothing and is a finite being and that He was created before everything else. In other words, Arius contradicts everything HWA stated on page 43:

The only point of the difference in that analogy is that the Word, at the time of John 1:1, was not, yet the Son of God. But he was with God, and he also was God.

Long before anything else existed, there did exist two Supreme Beings, immortal, who ALWAYS had existed.

Herbert Armstrong tells us that God and the Word always existed, and that the Word also was God. But Arius taught that God had always existed, but then created the Word, who didn't exist until God created him! Arius taught that Jesus was not God the Son, but God's first and greatest creation, and that he was used in creating everything, including the Holy Spirit. Arius' teachings completely contradict HWA's teaching, and yet HWA calls him a "Christian leader" (implying that Arius was the true servant of God, while the other bishops who opposed him were instruments of Satan)! Notice how HWA casually admits that Dr. Arius introduced "errors" of his own. Did you catch that? Why would a true servant "introduce errors"? Did Peter, Paul, James and the other apostles "introduce errors" of their own? Yet, HWA paints a heroic picture of this Arius, whose teachings were condemned as heresy at the Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. Ironically, the Nicene Creed says in part, "We believe...in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten from the Father, only begotten, that is from the substance of the Father..." So the Nicene Creed that HWA vehemently opposes, actually agrees with his teachings more than Arius did!

As an interesting side note, Arius never held the title "Dr."; HWA got this errant title from the Church of God 7th Day (Dugger/Dodd) from which he was disfellowshipped. Arius was merely a priest from Alexandria, under Bishop Alexander at the time. When Alexander died, Arius openly promoted his heretical doctrines. It was Athanasius who succeeded Alexander and held the title Bishop and Doctor. He opposed Arius' false teachings and brilliantly argued against them. HWA insinuates that "God's people" supported Arius' anti-Trinitarian views against Rome. There is no record of a Sabbath-keeping, O.T. Holydays, Jewish-law observing group or sect that supported this "Dr. Arius." If Arius had been keeping these ordinances, then he would
have been a staunch supporter of them during the Council of Nicaea, where HWA says the "Easter-Sunday doctrine" was made law. But there is no record of this ever happening. His only crime was promoting a false doctrine of the nature of the Godhead.

This is another instance where Herbert Armstrong bends, not only the Bible, but history, in order to mislead readers.

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Footnotes for Chapter One:

1 To understand how effective repetition is simply observe how TV commercials are repeated throughout the day. Most people can all sing a variety of TV commercial jingles by heart even though they don't purchase the products.

2 Herbert Armstrong was notorious with using upper case letters to emphasize and imprint information in our minds. You will see this tactic clearly used throughout the book.

3 HWA belittles higher education for teaching the theory of evolution as fact, while being guilty of the same. He teaches many of his contrived theories as "Truth."

4 The late J. Vernon McGee stated that evolution is actually a philosophy and not a science. It's philosophy being that "there is going to be improvement." (Dr. McGee's edited messages on Isaiah 34)

5 The word "Trinity" may not be in the Bible; however, the Triune God is proclaimed throughout the Bible. Refer to: The Holy Trinity by H. A. Ironside (Uses key verses from both Old and New Testaments showing the Trinity is clearly taught in Scripture.) Also see our article, "Is the Holy Spirit Only the Power of God?" which references many scriptures. There are scores of other words that show biblical truth, but which are not in the Bible; i. e., omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, Holy Bible, etc. (See chapter one, "The Fatal Flaw, Rejection of Christ's Deity," Jesus Christ IS God by Robert L. Sumner.)

6 At this point, the reader is made to believe that "nobody understands" and that includes "traditional Christianity." Once in the organization, anything labeled as "tradition" is considered "an unquestioned practice passed down through generations, and is inspired by Satan, the god of this world." This includes birthdays, holidays, and any religious ceremonies.

7 HWA carefully positions and repeats this sentence immediately after declaring that Satan has deceived all traditional Christianity.

8 Herbert Armstrong's teaching on the denial of the Trinity is very similar to what Jehovah's Witnesses taught. Read: The History of the Trinity: What the Watchtower Doesn't Want You to Know. [offsite article]

9 HWA uses fear to move his readers into Sabbath observance by calling Sunday observance the Mark of the Beast. The Scriptures say that people will worship the image of the Beast and False Prophet instead of Christ. This has nothing to do with what day one worships the Lord Jesus. Read: What is the Mark of the Beast and how do we keep from being afraid?

10 HWA understands the psychology of building desire and commitment. The more effort a person makes to gain something, the more they will value what they gain. He will also be completely committed and totally submissive to the organization and this is exactly what HWA wanted. Read: How Did Herbert W. Armstrong Recruit People?

11 "The first Greek manuscript found which contained the verse was minuscule 61 which dates to the late fifteenth century. However, three other Greek minuscules contain the verse, 88 (twelfth century), 629 (fourteenth century), and 635 (eleventh century). It is, nonetheless, supported by the Old Latin manuscripts, such as m and r, supporting the reading." (Manuscript Evidence, Less.10, Dr. Thomas Holland) Much more information on the external (and internal) evidence for I Jn. 5:7-8 can be found in the book Crowned by Glory by Dr. Thomas Holland. (read an excerpt from his book) Passages where Father, Son and Holy Spirit are treated as equals include Eph. 2:18; I Cor. 12:4-6; Eph. 3:14-17; Heb. 6:4-6; Eph. 4:4-6; II Thes. 2:13-16; I John 3:21-24; Jude 20,21; I John 4:1,2. (Benjamin B. Warfield, Biblical and Theological Studies, p. 32; quoted in Apostles of Denial, p. 110.)
Chapter Two - Mystery of Angels and Evil Spirits

Mystery of the Ages promises to reveal 7 mysteries that have plagued mankind for millennia. The unsuspecting reader thinks he is getting age-old questions answered, when in reality he is being indoctrinated to accept HWA's false teachings. Let's take a quick review of his methods:

1) The Preface chapter introduces the "seven" mysteries, but at the same time, the notion that clergy and theologians don't understand the Bible is cleverly planted. He plants the false belief that the Bible is a coded book that only "those He (God) has chosen" can understand.

2) In the Introduction chapter HWA promises to reveal these mysteries. Instead the reader is being infused with the false idea that HWA is special—God's unique end time messenger—and he, only, has the "truth." He cleverly shifts these mysteries into the category of "truth."

3) In Chapter One he promises to reveal the mystery of who and what God is, but in reality, he is planting the concept that all outside authorities are blindly following Satan, and cannot be trusted. Tearing down all outside authorities, he then introduces the only institution that can be trusted—his church, of course. He misquotes and misrepresents church history to construct the illusion that his church is directly descended from the early church, henceforth "proving" his apostolic authority.

Now we are able to identify the pattern used in HWA's book. First he baits the reader with intriguing questions, then he discredits all outside authorities for not knowing the answers to these questions. He then makes the reader think he is revealing "Bible knowledge" while cleverly switching to his false beliefs, which he calls "Truth." He speaks with "authority," giving the impression that God has divinely commissioned him to bring this unique gospel message to the world. He jumps around from topic to topic to create a confusing smokescreen, introduces irrelevant information, and keeps the reader off balance while guiding them to false conclusions. Now let's see this same method used in Chapter Two.

HWA starts off the chapter with Ephesians 2:2 (a well worn verse among Worldwide Church of God church members and offshoots): "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:" He states that:

People simply do not realize that there is an invisible spirit power injecting into their minds these hostile attitudes. (p. 59)

The pattern of discrediting continues as he states, "Even to professing Christians, these scriptures have been a mystery." He announces that "the time of UNDERSTANDING has come," making it seem that all this knowledge about the spirit world was "revealed" to him, when, in fact, Christianity has always understood Biblical concepts of Satan and the demons. But for those readers who aren't acquainted with the Bible, HWA can make it seem as if this information has been "hidden" (suppressed), and that he will now "open your mind" to understand doctrines that you weren't familiar with in the first place.

On pg. 61 HWA decides to quote Hebrews 1:8 from the Moffatt translation:

"he says of the Son, 'God is thy throne for ever and ever, thy royal sceptre is the sceptre of equity:'"

Now why would HWA quote from the Moffatt for this verse? Could it be that this verse in the Moffatt translation doesn't reveal the deity of the Son, something HWA did not want to admit? Notice what several other versions say (all emp. mine):

"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." (KJV)

"But of the Son He says, YOUR THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM." (NASB)

J. Vernon McGee said of this verse: "This is God the Father calling God the Son God! Do you want to deny that Christ is God manifest in the flesh? If you do, then may I say that you are
contradicting God Himself. God called the Lord Jesus God. What are you going to call Him?..."
(notes on Heb. 1:8-9, Volume 5, p. 512)

While describing the various functions of the angels, HWA skillfully introduces the notion of "personal guardian angel protection" and "angels reporting to God":

And God has angels specifically assigned to look after his begotten children.

He has angels who continually walk through the earth to observe and report back to him the overall conditions on earth (Rev. 5:6; Zech. 4:10; II Chron. 16:9) (p. 68)

These verses he picks do not say God has angels assigned to look after His children; neither do they say there are angels who "walk through the earth and report back to God." Rev. 5:6 says: "...stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." This verse does not say these "seven Spirits" are angels. Zech. 4:10 says: "...they are the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth." 2 Chron. 16:9 says: "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth,..." Once more HWA deceives his readers into thinking the Scriptures say something they don't.

And God has angels specifically assigned to look after his begotten human children (Acts 12:15; Matt. 18:10). (p. 68)

Michael is the archangel specifically assigned to protect and minister to the 12 tribes of Israel and to the true Church of God today. (p. 69)

HWA makes it clear that one has to be in his church to obtain this privilege. An adept salesman, HWA offers "perks" in order to persuade the reader that there are benefits for being in his church. However, these Scriptures do not say what HWA is trying to make them say.

Acts 12:15 does not say that Peter has an angel assigned to look after him, as HWA would want us to believe. It was a common opinion among the Jews at that time that everyone had a guardian angel that looked like them or that angels could assume the shapes of men. [For info on this, refer to Adam Clarke's Commentary, Vincent's Word Studies, Gil's Exposition of the Entire Bible and Wesley's Explanatory Notes.]

Matthew 18:10 is talking about little children's spirits that go to heaven when they die and that behold the face of Jesus. HWA doesn't even say "little children" for this verse, but instead says: "his begotten human children."

M. F. Unger has said, "Angels appear most frequently and conspicuously in connection with the coming and ministry of our Lord." (Unger's Bible Dictionary)

Angels were always associated with the nation Israel and will be used by God in the coming judgment of the world. This would not look like they are as involved in the life of the church as HWA has claimed.

As HWA continues to expound upon the reason God created angelic beings, he leads the reader into his "personal experiences" of their divine intervention in his life as "proof" of their existence. Every religious cult has its "sacred myths" and the angel interventions in HWA's life are nothing more than that. HWA uses these myths to make his readers believe that he has some "special connection" to the spirit world, further validating his authority. In reality, the story of the man with the crippled spine is nothing more than an introduction to HWA's healing doctrine.

I had learned, in studying the Bible on the subject of healing, that there are two conditions that God imposes: 1) we must keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in his sight (I John 3:22); and 2) we must really BELIEVE. (Matt. 9:29).

Of course I realized that many people might not have come into the understanding about keeping all of God's Commandments—he does look on the heart. It is the spirit, and willingness to obey. And therefore some who really BELIEVE are healed, even though they are not strictly "commandment keepers." But once the knowledge of the truth comes, they must OBEY. In this case I felt sure that God wanted me to open the minds of these people about his Commandments and that SIN is the transgression of God's LAW. (p. 65)
I told them that, since they were unwilling to obey God and comply with God's written conditions for healing, I could not pray for him. (p. 65-66)

HWA stated that there are two conditions that God imposes before someone can be healed—keeping the commandments, and believe [notice the words "believe," "obey" and "law" are in upper case lettering]. HWA uses the words "obey" and "willingness to obey" eight times while relating the story of the cripple that suffered from blood poisoning (pages 65-67). He wants the reader to believe that God would have healed this man's crooked spine—but only if he was willing to obey HWA's doctrines.

Now carefully think about people you knew in "the Church" that "complied with these written conditions for healing" and still died!¹ Now think about people you know outside of the church who didn't comply with these conditions and lived. So it is evident that obeying these two conditions does not guarantee healing, as HWA tries to make the reader believe! Notice how HWA has to backtrack his healing doctrine in order to justify why God would heal this cripple, who wasn't a "commandment keeper." But right in this very paragraph, the "apostle" states that people can be healed just by "believing," even though they are not "strict commandment keepers"—a clear contradiction. Let's carefully summarize this: One can be a "strict commandment keeper," complying with God's written conditions by giving tithes and various offerings, losing their job over the Sabbath, using up their hard earned vacation time to keep the Holy Days, etc., in order to receive healing, OR—one can simply believe [in God's ability to heal], and not be a strict commandment keeper, in order to receive healing. It appears that one comes out way ahead by obeying HWA's latter conditions.

The story about the cripple is a clever masquerade used to nudge the reader toward another carefully laid trap. "But once the knowledge of the truth comes, they must OBEY." So far it can be seen how these seven "mysteries" have progressed into "truth," and now, merely reading the MOA has progressed into "knowledge of the truth," and now "knowledge of the truth" has progressed into "obedience" of these "truths," which of course, are nothing more than HWA's contrived doctrines. This is a set up to get the reader to feel responsible for "knowing too much truth."² HWA will build on this, informing his readers that by rejecting these "truths," he has not only turned down an opportunity to be one of the elite, handpicked, "called out and chosen" ones, but he has turned his back on God by being unwilling to obey His government and choosing to be "part of this world" instead. The reader can't win and HWA can't lose!

This kind of character must be DEVELOPED, by the CHOICE and the INTENT of the one in whom it comes to exist. (p. 69)

HWA expounds continually on "developing character." However, the old man (our old nature) cannot be improved; that is why God gives us a new nature when we place our faith in Christ, trusting Him as our Savior.

Matthew 9:16:17: "No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old wineskins: else the wineskins break, and the wine runneth out, and the wineskins perish: but they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."

In the last chapter HWA admitted that when he went to the Gentile country of China, he did not share the gospel of Jesus with them. Again, we see HWA in a position to share the gospel of the saving grace of Jesus Christ with the cripple and his wife. Instead, he wanted to "open the minds of these people about the Commandments and that sin is the transgression of the Law." I hope by now the reader can begin to identify these doctrinal "shifts" throughout HWA's writings.

According to HWA, God had a purpose for creating the angels in the first place:

What was God's ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE for the angels? Beyond question it is that which, now, because of angelic rebellion, has become the transcendent potential of humans! (p. 70)

HWA informs his readers that Lucifer and the sinning angels had "disqualified" themselves as
future rulers of the Universe because they rejected God’s government on earth. Earth was their supposed "testing ground" where they had to "qualify" before they would be allowed to rule the universe. Doesn't one find it very curious as to why God would create "physical" matter to test "spiritual" beings?

Let's closely examine the following statement made by HWA:

Evidently if the now fallen angels had maintained the earth in its original beautiful condition, improved it, carried out God's instruction, and obeyed his government, they would have been offered the awesome potential of populating and carrying out a tremendous creative program throughout the entire universe. (p. 88) [emp. mine]

Did any of us ever think to question how do angels "populate"? Do they marry and reproduce? Jesus said they didn't. What was HWA talking about? Could it be that he formulated his theory that man's potential was to inherit the universe, beautifying and populating planets, etc. and then worked backwards to incorporate the angels' rebellion into his "human potential" plan, not realizing that he contradicted the Bible? From where did he get this idea? Let's examine the Mormon teachings about man's incredible human potential and see whether these doctrines were "revealed" to HWA, or whether his "in-depth research" time at the library was spent reading LDS (Latter Day Saints) literature:

1. After the resurrection, Mormon males (those counted "worthy") will become a God. They prove themselves worthy by obeying the government of the LDS church.
2. They refer to themselves as "Gods in embryo" until they are reborn in the resurrection.
3. "Man Becoming God" is known as "Exaltation"—man progressing to the status of Godhood—this is actual "salvation" for the Mormon.
4. Obeying the commandments of God and keeping the whole law are requirements for salvation.
5. After the final resurrection, man will become a God of his own planet or planets throughout the Universe.

Don't these teachings sound vaguely familiar? It seems that God has been revealing these "truths" to the Mormon Church long before HWA arrived on the scene nearly 100 years later.

HWA informs us that God created the angelic beings with "MINDS—WITH POWER TO THINK, TO REASON, TO MAKE CHOICES AND DECISIONS!" (p. 69) (Interestingly, HWA says that God allows the angels the freedom to make choices and decisions, have individuality and character, but he never allowed church members this kind of freedom.) He insists that God "could not create instantly by fiat—the same perfect, holy righteous CHARACTER inherent in both God and the Word!" He tells readers that, "such perfect character must be developed." (p. 69). With the Holy Spirit out of the picture, the believer is expected to "work" for his salvation. This term is also known as "qualifying for the Kingdom." This is the false belief that a person can make himself holy by developing "holy, righteous character" through works, thereby "qualifying" himself for salvation (eternal life as a God). HWA doesn't want his readers to know that the Holy Spirit sanctifies them (2 Thes. 2:13; Rom. 15:16) since it is impossible for man to sanctify himself. Without this pertinent piece of knowledge, he is able to enslave the convert with his "works-based" rules.

HWA wants us to believe that the earth was created millions of years ago, that the angels dwelled on it before man did, and that their rebellion brought cataclysmic destruction to the earth and throughout the universe. This is another teaching that HWA has usurped, but pawned off as "God revealing Truth" to him. This doctrine is widely known as the gap theory. The gap theory is also known by other names as the ruin-and-reconstruct theory, the pre-Adamic cataclysm theory, and the restitution theory. It was popularized back in the 1920s—1930s, when HWA began forming his eclectic doctrines. Nowhere in any of his publications does he give credit to the original authors of this theory (Thomas Chalmers), nor does he call it by name. He wants readers to believe this "mystery" about Lucifer and the fallen angels was personally revealed to him by placing this theory under the subtitle: "A Surprising Truth."

Now another surprise for most readers. Here is another bit of the missing dimension in
knowledge, actually revealed in the Bible, but unrecognized by religion, by science and by higher education.

From verse 2 of Genesis 1 on the remainder of this first chapter of Genesis is not describing the original creation of the earth. But it is describing a renewing of the face of the earth, after it had become waste and empty as a result of the sin of the angels. (p. 75) [emp. mine]

Now for the clincher: Thomas Chalmers was a 19th century Scottish theologian! In fact, the Scofield Reference Bible, which was first published in 1909, began to publish the "gap theory" in its footnote to Genesis 1:2 by 1917. If you have a Scofield Bible you can look it up yourself. Contrary to HWA's claims, it appears that "religion" had openly recognized this theory by 1917—ten years before HWA began to be personally taught by Jesus Christ in 1927 (p. 24-25, MOA). Remember, God supposedly blinded the world from these "truths" for 1900 years until HWA began proclaiming "the true gospel" around 1934. It is apparent that the world wasn't as blind as HWA wanted us to believe, and that HWA didn't get this information straight from God's mouth, either. The facts speak for themselves. I hope our readers are beginning to question why would "God's Apostle" tell an outright lie?

While pretending to reveal these mysteries about angels and evil spirits, HWA will progressively transfer his government in place of God's authority. The reader will think he is being given interesting knowledge about angels, when in fact HWA is shifting focus away from the angels and onto a cleverly hidden agenda of adopting his government structure. Once the reader is convinced that rebellion against "God's government" is the ultimate sin one can commit (since Satan himself committed it against God), he has unwittingly fallen into another carefully laid trap. A master at progression, HWA knows this, and will later introduce the government structure enforced within his church. He leaves little doubt in the reader's mind that his church is the only one executing "the government of God on earth today." (p. 86)

The words "government of God" and "government" are used 31 times in this chapter, which is supposed to be about the spirit world. Even though this chapter says it's about angels and evil spirits, one can begin to see that it is actually a set-up to infuse the concept that "rebelling against the government of God" is the highest sin anyone can ever commit. HWA understands that once this idea is internalized, the convert will fear leaving. Once the convert has been emotionally exploited, HWA can then begin to financially exploit him. This heavy financial burden will be required of the convert throughout his membership until he is either put out, or he voluntarily exits the group.

After reading this chapter, one would be led to think that the "government of God" must be a very important Bible doctrine. When they enter the church, they will hear sermon after sermon about it. Yet, believe it or not, there are only four verses in the Bible that use the word "government," (Isa. 9:6, Isa. 9:7, Isa 22:21, and 2 Pet 2:10) and three of them are speaking about Jesus—not about angels, not about "the Church" or it’s internal structure or policies. The verses that contain the word "government" are used in Isaiah's prophesy about the coming King, which Jesus fulfilled. Can one begin to see how HWA, once again, shifts focus from Jesus and onto his church?

HWA insists that the government of God was administered on earth while one third of the angels dwelled upon it. Let's see HWA's definition of the government of God:

Bear in mind the government of God is based on the LAW of God, which is the way of life of outflowing LOVE, cooperation, concern for the good of the governed. (p. 50)

Since sin is the transgression of God's law, these angels rebelled against God's law, the basis of God's government. (p. 72, repeats p. 73)

God intended him [Lucifer] to rule the earth by administering the government of God over the earth. And the government of God was administered on earth until the rebellion of the sinning angels. (p. 73)

So this "government of God," which HWA says is based on the Law of God, is what Lucifer and the angels rebelled against. The truth is that HWA performed a bait and switch on the reader.
He first explains that the "government of God" is based on the Law of God, which his sums up as "love"—outgoing concern, the way of give—which produces "peace, happiness, prosperity and well-being." (p. 92) Once the reader takes the bait, this "law of love" will be switched to "keeping the Commandments." The reader will discover later that these commandments require Sabbath keeping and other O.T. laws. Now one must "qualify" through "strict commandment keeping," and one must obey the government "administered" by "Headquarters." Apparently, the angels had to abide by one standard and humans had to abide by a different standard. Why? This is nothing more than redefining the "spiritual" law into a "physical" law in order to suit HWA's purposes.

Now let's go back to Chapter One of MOA, where HWA first introduced God's government and compare what was said:

The very fact of law presupposes GOVERNMENT. Government is the administration and enforcement of law by one in authority. This necessitates authoritative leadership—one in command. (p. 48)

...there was GOVERNMENT, with God in supreme command. The government of God is of necessity government from the top down. It cannot be "government by the consent of the governed." (p. 49)

Bear in mind the government of God is based on the LAW of God, which is the way of life of outflowing LOVE, cooperation, concern for the good of the governed.

Even though HWA describes God as "one in command," there is no question that HWA positioned himself as the God-ordained, unquestioned "one in command" within his church. He wants the reader to believe this form of government was given to him by God to administer on earth. Notice the capitalized words "government," "law" and "love." HWA is indoctrinating the reader to believe that "love" is equated to obedience of the government and laws (practiced within his church), instead of close, personal fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Notice carefully: Is the description of government outlined in the above paragraphs a picture of love—or of a dictatorship disguised as love?

So we can readily conclude that HWA has emphasized this "government of God" as the pinnacle of importance, when in fact, the lack of Scriptures in the Bible on this central topic should make one question "why" HWA would emphasize something the Bible does not, while de-emphasizing what God emphasizes—the saving grace of Jesus Christ, and the government being established on HIS shoulders. (Isaiah 9:6)

Did the angels inhabit the earth before man was created? HWA quotes Job 38:4, 7 to prove that angels were created before the earth.

1. It will come as news to most readers that angels were created before the earth and the physical universe were brought into existence. Job 38:1-7 shows the angels shouted for joy when God first created the earth. (p. 62)

2. It will come as a surprise to many to learn that angels inhabited this earth BEFORE the creation of man. This passage from Job implies it. (p. 72)

3. Angels inhabited this earth before the creation of man. (p. 73)

4. … over the angels who inhabited the whole earth. (p. 84)

5. What God gave them was THIS EARTH as their abode…(p. 92)

Let's examine these verses in Job 34:

Verse 4: "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?..."

Verse 7: "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?"

These verses plainly show that the angels shouted for joy when the earth was created, but where does it say that the angels dwelled upon it? It doesn't. But if you are already leaning in the direction that HWA is God's messenger, then you will readily believe his interpretation of Scripture. He states that this passage implies it, but it doesn't. For example, if you build a new
home and show it to me, and I shout, "Wow! What a beautiful house!" I hope my reaction doesn't imply that I'm going to inhabit it! Notice how, in the first sentence above, HWA introduces the correct concept that the angels shouted for joy when earth was created, but plants the false belief that the angels inhabited the earth in the second sentence. By the third, fourth, and fifth sentences, he authoritatively states it as "fact" and will continue to do so throughout the remainder of this book.

HWA taught that the angels were placed on the earth to finish it:

> What had been created was perfect as far as it existed up to that point. But it was not yet a finished or completed creation. God intended the angels to add their own workmanship to the earth's surface. He intended them to work over the surface of the earth, to improve it, to embellish it, beautify it—in other words "put the icing on the cake."

(p. 77) [emp. mine]

Now let's go back a few pages and see what HWA says about the earth:

> This first verse of the Bible actually speaks of the original PHYSICAL creation in its entirety—the universe—including the earth, perhaps millions of years ago—as a perfect creation, beautiful and perfect as far as its creation was a finished, completed work. God is a perfectionist! (p. 71) [emp. mine]

So which is it—finished or unfinished? Besides this contradiction, there is a clear lack of Scriptures to support this "icing on the cake" idea. Apparently, the angels didn't enjoy their earthly assignment and took matters into their own hands.

HWA describes the process that Lucifer used to turn the angels against God. He ponders the length of time "it must have taken the soured and embittered Lucifer to turn millions of holy angels into resentment, bitterness, disloyalty, and finally open and vicious rebellion. It could have taken hundreds, thousands or millions of years." (p. 86). There is no Biblical basis for this statement, either. There are no Scriptures to support his hypothesis, which he tries to pawn off as "revealed knowledge." Why would God allow this kind of wickedness to go on for such an extended length of time? How can an omnipotent, omnipresent God be oblivious to what was going on? Do we really believe this? But this is exactly what HWA is saying! Ironically, HWA wants us to believe that God allowed untold "years" for the angels to stew in their rebellion before "doing something," while church members who are identified as "rebellious" are swiftly put out of his church. See HWA's quote about throwing the rotten apples out early on page 86 of MOA. Apparently Herbert is wiser than God when it comes to rebellion in the ranks.

HWA also wants us to believe that "universal sin brings universal destruction." (p. 72). He uses Noah's flood, and Sodom and Gomorrah as examples. Let's say his hypothesis is true. According to HWA, "all flesh was corrupted, so God destroyed the whole earth" during the time of Noah. The "sins of Sodom and Gomorrah spread over the territory of those two cities," so "their entire area" was destroyed. Let's see if this holds true. Using HWA's formula, one could understand why the "whole earth" would be destroyed because of the sin of the angels, but remember he says the destruction was "universe wide" (p. 73). The "rebellion/destruction ratio" of one-third of the angels doesn't follow HWA's formula. Why would God destroy the whole universe for the sin of only one-third of the angels? What about the other two-thirds that remained loyal? This formula is simply man-made logic, and not Biblical revelation.

The word "rebellion" is used 13 times in this chapter of MOA. On an interesting note, the words rebel, rebelled, rebellion, and rebellious are never used in the New Testament. These words are used in reference to ancient Israel, and are never used when speaking of angels or fallen angels for that matter. I realize that this does not negate the fact of the angelic rebellion anymore than the lack of word "Trinity" in Scripture negates its existence, but it is apparent that HWA has emphasized the use of this particular word "rebellion" to further his objectives.

I want to draw the reader's attention to sentences on pages 85 and 86. While describing the rebellion of Lucifer and the fallen angels, HWA craftily inserts the idea that anyone who rebels against God's government (which readers will learn in later chapters he is speaking of his church), is being used by Satan himself to stir up rebellion within the ranks.
He [Satan] uses the same method still today in leading deceived humans into disloyalty, rebellion, and self-centered opposition against God's government... And as each rotten apple rots those next to it until the whole crate is rotten, so Satan proceeds. (p. 85)

What happens to this member, who is labeled as "disloyal, self-centered, rebellious"? (also called "dissidents," "Laodiceans," etc.) On page 86, HWA clearly describes the process:

If, in the government of God on earth today, the "rotten apples" are not thrown out early enough, they would destroy the whole government. But once thrown out of the crate, they cannot do any more damage to those in the crate. (p. 86)

What the uninformed reader doesn't understand is that he is being groomed to accept HWA's disfellowshipping policy. Observe again, the method of appealing to the reader's sense of right and wrong. HWA paints an idyllic picture or a perfect earth, filled with complete joy and happiness, as long as the angels were obeying God's government.

As long as Lucifer continued in this perfect way, there was happiness and joy unspeakable over the whole earth. There was glorious peace—beautiful harmony, perfect love, cooperation. The government of God produced a wonderfully happy state—as long as Lucifer was loyal in the conduct of God's government. (p. 85)

Contrast this with HWA's description of the sinning angels and the result of their actions:...

[Lucifer] had resorted to wrong reasoning and made a diabolical perverted decision....He worked on the angels under him until he turned their minds to rebellion also.

When Lucifer allowed thoughts of vanity, jealousy, envy, lust and greed, then resentment and rebellion, to enter and occupy his mind, SOMETHING HAPPENED TO HIS MIND! His mind became perverted, distorted, twisted! His thinking became warped. God gave him and the angels control over their own minds. They can never straighten them out—never again think rationally, honestly, rightly. (p. 93)

In other words, the earth, originally created perfect and beautiful, had now become chaotic, waste and empty...(p.75)

HWA paints a frightful picture here. The reader becomes convinced that he must obey God's government and not be part of this world's system and be in alliance with Satan. He feels that God is justified in tossing out the rotten apples in order to prevent destruction of God's right way of life. So the reader subconsciously adopts the idea that obeying God's government is for the betterment of mankind. It would not only fill his life with peace and happiness, but he wouldn't be furthering Satan's evil agenda either.

Once the convert enters the church, he will soon discover that God's government does not produce the heavenly peace and happiness portrayed in its literature. He will quickly become familiar with "marked from the pulpit" announcements. He hears about "bitter dissidents" or "Laodiceans" and is admonished to avoid them, lest he become contaminated. He is reassured that "putting them out of the church" is actually good for them and protects the Body. An example of an erring child being sternly, but lovingly, disciplined is used. What he isn't told is that nobody locks the child out of the house and tells his friends and relatives to shun him! This isn't discipline—it's emotional cruelty!

HWA says that "The penalty for the sin of the angels is not death, as it is for a man." (p. 74) But the reader must go all the way to page 92 to find out what their penalty is: "...DISQUALIFICATION—and forfeiture of their grand opportunity..." Where are the Scriptures that support this? Can you begin to see the gradual shift in who has the final authority? The reader doesn't realize that he is beginning to believe HWA's speculations over what the Bible actually says.

HWA relentlessly preached to his members about "qualifying" for the Kingdom. Over and over again, he admonished his followers to "qualify" for their salvation.4 One would expect that he is emphasizing a major Bible doctrine, correct? I want to challenge the reader to open their Strong's Concordance and find how many times the word "qualify" is mentioned in the Bible. Now look up the word "grace." Can you find "license to sin" as its Biblical definition? (Remember, HWA says the Bible interprets itself). Why would HWA misrepresent and taint the
word "grace," which is found in the Bible, while magnifying the word "qualify," which isn't
found in the Bible? [Note: more is covered on Grace and "license to sin" in Chapter 6, Pt. 4]

HWA tells us that because of the angels' rebellion, God had to switch to his contingency plan. He says:

God saw that nothing less than himself (as the God family) could be absolutely relied
upon to carry out that supreme purpose in the entire universe. (p. 94)

God then purposed to reproduce himself, through humans…. (p. 94)

And that is why God put man on the earth! That is what caused God to do this most
colossal, tremendous thing ever undertaken by the supreme, almighty God—to reproduce
himself! (p. 95)

Now one would expect "God's chosen Apostle" to know Scripture better than anyone on earth
today. After all, he enlightened us to the fact that the Bible is a coded book, and he is the only
one that can decode it properly, because everyone outside of his church is deceived. So after
much decoding, HWA informs us that God is reproducing himself through humans. Unfortunately, he missed one very important piece of the jigsaw puzzle:

"Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may
know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God
formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no
saviour." (Isaiah 43:10-11)

God plainly says that there will not be any gods formed after Him. HWA says the opposite.
Who are you going to believe? HWA or the Word of God? Can you begin to identify HWA's
pattern of omitting Scriptures in order to paint the picture he wants to paint? There's a word
for this. It's called "deception."

Let's pretend for a moment that HWA's theory is true—that God's purpose for making man
was to reproduce Himself. Let's look further into HWA's ideas on this:

…it left God himself as the only being who would not and cannot sin. (p. 94)

God saw that no being less than God, in the God family, could be certainly relied on
never to sin—to be like God—who cannot sin. (p. 94)

God then purposed to reproduce himself, through humans…. (p. 94) [emp. mine]

According to HWA's own writings, God is reproducing Himself because He is the only Being
who would not—could not—ever sin. So he creates humans to replace the disqualified angels.
Now if we follow HWA's reasoning to the letter that God's purpose was to reproduce beings
that were like Him—that could never sin—then God has already proven Himself incompetent,
because humans did indeed SIN! It appears that in HWA's manmade scenarios, God has no
control over His creation! HWA's contrived doctrines, once again, has undeniably proven to be
filled with errors.

What does the Bible say about the real purpose that God created man? The Apostle Paul tells
us that God's purpose is to adopt His people as His own children:

"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to
himself, according to the good pleasure of his will," (Ephesians 1:5)

We cannot exit this chapter without mentioning the wily tactics used by HWA, following the
same pattern used in the previous chapter. Beginning on page 78, HWA starts out discussing
Lucifer's transformation into Satan, but diverts the reader's attention onto the "soon-coming
Holy Roman Empire." He covertly introduces his British-Israelism doctrine and entices the
reader about the identity of Israel—"if you know who Israel is today, and I do not mean Judah,
known as the Israelis today." Of course, he offers his free book The United States and Britain
in Prophecy that will develop on this false doctrine. He lets the reader know that these
prophecies will come to pass "in the years very shortly ahead of us." Curiosity, fear, and a
sense of urgency are used to motivate the reader to write in for the book, which will further
poison the mind of the unwary reader.

All Bible-based cults delve into "extra-Biblical revelation" and this second chapter of MOA is nothing more than that. HWA pieces together a few Bible passages about Lucifer, while stealthily promoting his doctrines of healing, disfellowshipping, the government of God, man's "God potential," and the gap theory. This mishmash of ideas is known as "eclecticism"—and since HWA brags that he didn't get his teachings from any "theological seminary," it would stand to reason that he is free to make up whatever doctrines he desires. Jesus said that a good tree doesn't bear bad fruit, and so far, we've seen nothing but bad fruit coming from this tree.

Updated February 8, 2012

Footnotes for Chapter Two:

1 Craig Winters' son, Jacob, age 25, died of Addison's Disease on January 13, 2002. His death could have been prevented with life-saving medicine. No doubt he complied with these "written conditions." Read: Run From Death That Resides in PCG!

2 This is the step-by-step process used in most Bible-based cults. Read: How Did Herbert W. Armstrong Recruit People?

3 The words, "government of God" are not mentioned in Scripture. In fact, there is no military model of government even found in the New Testament. (See chapter 9 of Damaged Disciples by Ron and Vicki Burks. Note: This book is now out of print. Check your library, used book stores, or an inter-library loan.) While the Scriptures testify that Jesus is King of Kings and Lord of Lords and will rule over all, the emphasis is always placed on Him and what He has done for us through His grace. Although HWA used 2 Peter 2:10: "...despise government..." to try to correlate this somehow with "God's government" (which translates in members' minds to the leader and headquarters), the verses 10 through 16 are describing false teachers in the first century of the church. The word "government" in 2 Peter 2:10 really means "dominion" and occurs few times in the Bible.

4 HWA did teach that members had to qualify for the Kingdom of God. Read: I heard HWA say that we aren't saved by works.

5 Herbert Armstrong gave over 200 false prophecies and these are listed on the Internet.
"It seems incredible indeed!...They [higher education, universities] do not know WHAT man is or WHY he came to be! That is the great Mystery Number 3 that has never been understood by humanity." (p. 96)

Thus begins this lengthy third chapter of MOA. HWA begins his usual bombardment of questions about this mystery of man, which "has baffled higher education." I hope our readers are beginning to see the pattern and can guess what is coming next—the discrediting of all authorities!

Right from the outset, HWA's book begins to date itself. He states that, "higher education...with virtual unanimity...no longer considers the possibility of a designed and planned creation by a God of supreme mind, perfect intelligence, and limitless power." Untrue. Not all scientists are atheists. Many, in fact, are Christians. Since the discovery of DNA, scientists have unlocked the code of life. Scientists are awed by the complexity and design of the gene, and there are scientists who are considering the "intelligent design" theory. Even some secular scientists are abandoning the theory of evolution, stating that there hasn't been any clear evidence to support this theory over the last 150 years. Although they do not acknowledge God, they are at least honest enough to admit that evolution is inconclusive, and that they need to start looking in other directions for answers. So in spite of HWA's dour observations, humanity has considered the possibility of a designed creation, and Creation Science believes in a "designed and planned creation" by a Creator. But this matters little to HWA. His goal is to paint the world in black and white, draw a line of demarcation, and push the reader to stand on one side or the other. This is the method used by HWA to sift out his sheep.

HWA continues to trash education for being "utterly helpless to solve its problems of mounting and continually escalating evils." Education can "give no purpose for human existence." It has become "entirely materialistic," a "combination of agnosticism of evolution, the politics of Karl Marx, and the morals and social patterns of Sigmund Freud." HWA intentionally selects what he considers the dregs of society to represent the evil empire that he is constructing in the minds of his principled readers. While it may be true that education gives no purpose for human existence, it certainly does give human existence a purpose! Where would the world be without doctors, inventors, engineers, etc. who have made our lives more enjoyable? How many of us have broadened our lives through education? God has given us all gifts and talents, and it is not sinful to use them nor is it sinful to want to improve upon them through further education. There is an underlying purpose for HWA to stain "education" as we will later see. But HWA must stir up feelings of discontent and helplessness over a "society gone wrong." He can't introduce a better product if the reader is already satisfied.

Amusingly, the politics of Karl Marx do not match the politics of capitalism (i.e., "the civilized world today" as HWA claims), but they certainly bear a close resemblance to the government of HWA's church! Although HWA's doctrines seem specific, many of them are very vague, but he does promise prosperity living for following his tithing doctrines. He claims sole, authoritative command in his organization, which he insinuates is for the good of all. He gives the illusion that there are no class distinctions in his church, making members address each other as "brethren" and ministers as "Mister" (the Communists addressed each other as "comrade"), but in reality there was a social caste system in his top down government. The individual was unimportant, and members were all expected to "give all" to the Work.

HWA doesn't stop at demonizing higher education. Not only have the "custodians of KNOWLEDGE" failed to know the mystery of man, but:

"Religion does not reveal, for it also doesn't know! Yes, incredible—but TRUE!" (p. 98) [emp. mine].

Once again, another profound statement by HWA that has been declared by his own mouth as "truth." HWA will spend an inordinate amount of time hammering away at religion and education in this chapter. It is imperative that he destroys all vestiges of credibility before he can begin to construct a whole new belief system in the minds of his readers.

Even though he wants the reader to think that he is revealing the mystery of man, in reality
he will continue to use this opportunity to induce fear, doubt and mistrust toward respected establishments, namely education and religion. He fully understands these institutions influence the hearts and minds of men.

In this third chapter of MOA, HWA will continue to magnify Satan's sway, and most notably, he will bring his church into the forefront as a net to catch those who are fleeing the corrupt society he has designed. He will also use this chapter to draw sharp lines through traditional Christian doctrines, forcing the reader to stand on one side or the other, thus sifting out his "sheep." Also of note is his usual modus operandi of calculated confusion. This consists of topic introduction, discrediting, reiterating past doctrine, irrelevant arguments, reintroduction of the original topic several pages later, and ending with a faulty conclusion.

[NOTE: Through the rest of this chapter all capitalized headings are by the author in order to organize the subject matter better.]

**IGNORANCE DUE TO SATAN BEING GOD OF THIS WORLD**

Now let's take a look at something called an "inconsequential argument." On page 98, HWA tells us that Satan sits on the throne of the earth and has "blinded the minds of intellectuals as well as other levels of society." His proof? Let's follow this colorful illustration:

> Consider for a moment, the most highly trained mind with several letters of advanced degrees following his name. He is highly trained in certain specific areas in which he has extensive, complicated and intricate knowledge. But ask him about some area of knowledge outside his specialized field and he is as much in ignorance as those who are lacking in the more advanced labyrinths of education." (p. 98)

According to HWA, a man who spends his whole life learning about and performing intricate brain surgeries is absolutely clueless when it comes to piloting a 747 Jumbo jet. And the professional airline pilot who spent countless hours in training doesn't know a hill of beans about gene mapping. Why, all this ignorance absolutely proves that Satan sits on the throne of this world!

All sarcasm aside, can you begin to see these inconsequential arguments are nothing more than smokescreens designed to bring the reader to HWA's faulty conclusions? Carefully examine the closing statement by HWA following this smokescreen:

> This ignorance cannot be explained except by the invisible and unaware influence of the supernatural evil power of Satan the devil and the unseen demoniacal spirit beings. (p. 98)

Is this true? Shouldn't God's apostle also be measured by the same standards he is willing to dole out on others? Let's try it: God's man knows the Bible like the back of his hand—he's the only expert on earth today that can decode the Bible—but he can't pilot his own Gulfstream III Lear Jet. What ignorance! And this ignorance cannot be explained except by the invisible and evil power of Satan! But wait a minute! Let's back up and rethink this using HWA's own logic. Since HWA *isn't* blinded by the devil, *then he should know how to do everything* from brain surgeries to gene mapping! Can you begin to see the fallacy in HWA's empty arguments?

Come to think of it, why does HWA spend so much time illuminating the devil? All Bible-based cults know that in order to *unify* members toward a common purpose or goal, there must be an "enemy" to fight against. This keeps the members distracted so they can't focus on the actions of the leadership. Yes, the Bible says that the devil does influence the world, but he has no hold over the saved believer. HWA made members believe that if they weren't careful to follow all the rules of the government of God, the devil would blindside them, and cause them to be "disqualified," thus terminating their salvation process. The member's salvation was conditional upon obedience and total submission to the organization.

Here's another interesting blunder in HWA's vast arsenal of knowledge:

> The primary divisions of this world's civilization—government, religion, education and science, technology, industry—all shy away from God. ...The mention of God
embarrasses them. (p. 98)

HWA carefully lumps "religion" in with the different sectors of the world's civilizations, stating that, "the mention of God embarrasses them." Religion embarrassed by the mention of God? Perish the thought! How would they stay in business? In his zeal to mix religion in with everything else gone wrong in society, God's apostle plainly goofed.

Even though HWA says God isn't judging mankind, let's examine some of the judgmental remarks he has made concerning the learned of the world:

They are smugly ignorant and unaware of the TRUE VALUES and the incredible but real human potential. (p. 105)

Real truth is revealed. Unless revealed it remains a mystery, utterly unknown to the deceived and vain intellectuals. (p. 105) [emp. mine]

But why all this contempt toward intellectuals? Could it be that HWA is leading the reader to another calculated destination of wrong conclusions?

Jesus Christ thanked God that the real truths are hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed to those who are babes in materialistic knowledge. (p. 105)

The pattern is repeated over and over. Nobody knows anything, everyone is ignorant, but "real truths" that are "hidden are "only revealed" to HWA and his church. His proof? Because they are "babes in materialistic knowledge." But HWA has a deeper reason for trashing education and the worldly "educated." He wants his readers to believe that "experts" are Satan's puppets, perpetuating worldly "lies" and they should never be listened to unless they want to fall into deception. Once in the church, pursuit of higher education will be discouraged, under the guise of positioning oneself in the continual influence of Satan through these "worldly" institutions. Of course, HWA leads his members into believing that Ambassador College is God's divine institution and members need to send their children to AC for a "godly education" to recapture "true values." The next generation will be further indoctrinated in HWA's faulty doctrines and sent out into the world to support his growing empire. This is how a sly and calculating religious cult leader isolates his members and dominates their lives.

And if the reader had any dreams of furthering his education, HWA will stamp that out in a hurry:

The psychology taught in our day is self-reliance. Rely on the innate powers within you, they teach. An atmosphere of self-reliant professionalism pervades most modern university campuses. It is the spirit of vanity. The university student is induced to think of himself as becoming a professional—that is, he considers himself elevated above those who have not had his brand of education. Through basic concept of evolutionary theory, he feels himself completely above those who believe in God and the Lord Jesus Christ. He regards them with disdain. (p. 122)

There are some interesting comments made in this paragraph. It's clear that HWA is bearing some kind of grudge toward anyone who pursues an education. Could it be because he never completed an education? The university student is training to become a professional in the field of his choice. He is deserving of the title of "professional" because of the years of training he must undergo to become an expert in his field. You wouldn't want a surgeon with three months of training to operate on your loved one, would you? All unbelievers regard believers with disdain, but HWA wants us to believe that this attitude exists exclusively with the "educated." Of course, I've already covered HWA's true purpose for perpetuating this idea.

**BIBLE A HIGHLY CODED BOOK**

Under the subtitle "Earth's Face in Devastation," (p. 99) HWA quickly jumps to the sinning angels and reiterates his version of the gap theory. He then introduces a "biblical principle" and quotes Isaiah 28:9-10 "...precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little." Now let's observe another clever set up. HWA states:
But most who try to apply this principle in biblical understanding take each "little" verse out of its context, to "interpret" their own ideas into it.

The very fact that its truths are revealed here a little, there a little means it is a coded book, not to be understood until our present time of the end…

…the Bible is like a jigsaw puzzle. Until the various pieces of a jigsaw are put properly together, the true picture does not emerge. (p. 100)

Need I point out the hypocrisy in HWA's first statement? The next two statements confirm the hypocrisy of the first statement. We are not to "interpret our own ideas" into Scripture, but HWA tells us that only he can put Scripture together properly in order for a "true picture" to emerge (after all, he is special). One can see, over and over again in MOA, how HWA interpreted his own ideas into Scripture, and how he plainly lies and deceives through misquoting, misrepresenting, and grossly omitting information so the "true picture" of what he wants you to believe emerges—and now he wants you to take his word for it that everybody else "interprets their own ideas into Scripture and takes the Bible out of context"! HWA claims that the "educated" and "those of advanced intellect" are willfully ignorant. If anyone was willfully ignorant, it was HWA—he willfully ignored what the Bible taught! And for all his scorn toward education, why did he want to represent himself as "highly educated," buying himself a "doctorate" from Angeles University of the Philippines? How many old timers remember hearing HWA being addressed as 'Dr. Armstrong'? Isn't this absolute hypocrisy?

Another line of demarcation has been drawn by HWA. Those who challenge this exclusive claim will cease to go any further, no longer buying into the idea of blindly following this man's self-proclaimed authority to interpret Scripture properly. The rest who didn't notice the shift in final authority accepted this claim because they didn't perceive or recognize this transfer of power. They were too inexperienced and trusting, believing that this man, who seemed to hold the Word of God with such high esteem, would ever take advantage of them. They felt he had taught them more about the Bible than they ever knew, so they begin to put their trust and belief in him, and his claims of "being sent by God" to reveal hidden Scriptures. Quite frankly, they were intrigued by what he had to say and wholeheartedly wanted to gain "UNDERSTANDING." They were so mired in this mystery that they entirely missed the wolf in sheep's clothing.

Do the verses in Isaiah 28 really "prove" that the Bible is a coded book? In Isaiah 28, the major prophet begins the chapter by pronouncing woes to Ephraim and Jerusalem. Verses 7-8 discuss how the priests and prophets became infected with the sin of drunkenness, unable to adequately guide the nation—pathetic leadership indeed. Verse 9 in full context is a rebuke from Isaiah.

Whom will he teach knowledge? And whom will he make to understand the message? Those just weaned from milk? Those just drawn from the breasts?

Here Isaiah questions the "leaders" ability to teach since he compares them to toddlers "just weaned from milk." HWA discarded this part of the verse between the dot-dot-dots "...", a method he employs throughout his literature. The response to Isaiah from the leaders is in verse 10 (precept upon precept...here a little, there a little). They are scornfully mocking Isaiah by returning a child's "nyah, nyah, nyah!" Transliterated, the Hebrew monosyllables are Sav lasav, sav lasav, Kav lakav, kav lakav, Ze'er sham, ze'er sham. These imitations of a young child's babbling ridicule Isaiah's preaching. In verse 13, God returns their mockery, repeating it back to them. Because of the leaders' obstinacy to heed Isaiah, he continues to prophecy of their coming defeat by the Assyrians. When read in context, this verse does not prove that the Bible is a coded book. When one believes the "coded book" myth, he has unconsciously given HWA permission to be the final authority in Bible interpretation, which is exactly what HWA wants.

HWA was a master at "cookie cutting theology." He would cut out a verse from one chapter, cut out another from another chapter, and present them together to create doctrines that support his beliefs. He would omit portions of Scripture to "prove" whatever he wanted to prove. This is how a religious cult leader is able to deceive his followers into thinking the "truths" in the Bible are hidden and God has given him the ability to properly interpret
"confusing" (or hidden) Scriptures. The reader thinks they are "proving" what the Bible says because he tells them to read these Scriptures themselves. But these Scriptures don't make sense unless the person reads them in the order that HWA teaches they should be read, and if you believe his explanations of them. One doesn't see that they are only reading partial Scriptures, jumping around from here to there to piece the Bible together, Armstrong-style, arriving at the conclusions he intended.

Beginning on page 100, HWA introduces the concept of the Bible being a coded book and a jigsaw puzzle. Seven pages later, we find the adjective "highly" added to this "coded book," and stated as "fact." Let's carefully think through this illogical statement. If God "reveals and instructs" with the Bible, why would he code it? When you are given an instruction manual with your new lawn mower or computer, is the manual "coded"? What would be the point? If you give first-time parents an instruction book on newborn baby care, how does it help the parents if the instruction book is highly coded? How can a highly coded book "reveal and instruct"? Why would a loving God do such a thing? Does Scripture support this idea?

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (II Tim. 3:16-17)

Can the reader begin to see that HWA fabricated this false belief so he could place himself as the one who can decipher the Bible? The reader's lack of training in Scriptures is not "proof" that Satan has withheld this knowledge from him. If one opened up an aviation electronics manual, could he fully understand the schematics if he's never been trained in aviation electronics? What about a manual on dentistry or human anatomy? What about industrial chemistry? Like any other profession, one must be trained in order to have better understanding of what he is reading. Lack of thorough understanding in these fields does not point to society suppressing "truth." Acquiring biblical knowledge is no different. The fact is that many people are weak in culture, history, foreign languages, and Bible eschatology, which makes the Bible difficult in many places (especially the Old Testament), but not completely impossible to understand, as HWA would want the reader to believe. This is why we have Bible reference materials to help us have a more in-depth understanding of certain Scriptures, and as we keep on reading the Bible, God will open up our minds and hearts to understand it.

MAN HAS MORTAL SOUL

HWA informs us that the "soul is mortal" and quotes Genesis 2:7 which says "man became a living soul." He states that, "this verse does not say 'man is, or has, an immortal soul.'" True, it doesn't say that, but using his own arguments, this verse doesn't say man is a "mortal soul" either. It simply says that Adam came to life when God breathed the breath of life into him (a living soul). This is another clever, but invalid argument.

HWA expounds on the word "nephesh," and states that the soul is physical and can die. He pronounces his teaching as "TRUTH" and "believed by very few denominations." He emphatically pronounces this as "another PROOF that identifies the one true Church of God!" Once again, HWA validates his own doctrines by his own pronouncements! Naturally, he fails to mention that the "very few denominations" are Bible-based cults. The Jehovah's Witnesses use these very same arguments to support their mortal soul doctrine, and since the JW's have been around longer than HWA, then it appears that God has been revealing this "truth" to another denomination, and a cultic one at that! Of course, if we use HWA's own reasoning—that belief in this mortal soul doctrine is "proof that identifies the one true church"—this would qualify the Watchtower Society as part of the one true Church! Interestingly, HWA doesn't trace his church lineage through them!

It is no secret, even to the present leadership of the various Church of God organizations, that HWA pilfered most of his doctrines. It was already observed in the previous chapter, his borrowing from Mormonism (man is God in embryo/future God beings). Here is an interesting little comparison to see whether HWA spent his "research time" ingesting literature from the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society. Let's compare the paragraphs in his MOA with paragraphs quoted from a small book published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society entitled, "You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth" (1982, 1989).
HWA says in his MOA:

But God made MAN of MATTER! This was necessary for the supreme accomplishment
God willed.

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into this
nostrils the breath [air] of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7). Man,
formed from material dust of the ground, upon breathing air, BECAME a living
soul. It does not say man is, or has an immortal soul. What was formed from
material ground BECAME a soul.

The word "soul" is translated from the Hebrew in which Moses wrote, from the word
nephesh. The Hebrew nephesh here means a breathing animal. Three times in the first
chapter of Genesis animals are called nephesh: Gen. 1:20, "moving creature"…. Gen.
1:21, "great whales, and every living creature"….; Gen. 1:24, "living creature"….The
translators in translating into the English language used the English "creature," but in
Genesis 2:7 they translated the same nephesh into the English word "soul" – man became
a "living soul" (nephesh).

Therefore the SOUL is physical, composed of matter, and can die. (pgs. 103-104)

Compare that to the Watchtower Society's publication:

God created man from the earth to live on the earth, as the Bible says: "Jehovah God
proceeded to form the man out of dust from the ground and to blow into his nostrils the
breath of life, and the man came to be a living soul." (Genesis 2:7) From this we can see
that man was a direct creation of God. In a special act of creation, God made man a
complete, whole person. When God blew into man's nostrils the "breath of life," man's
lungs were filled with air. But more than that was accomplished. God thereby gave life to
the man's body. This life-force is sustained, or kept going, by breathing.

Notice however, that the Bible does not say that God gave man a soul. Rather, it says that
after God started man breathing "the man came to be a living soul." So the man was a
soul…(p. 72)

Some persons have said that what makes man different from the animals is that man has a
soul but the animals do not. However, Genesis 1:20 and 30 says that God created "living
souls" to live in the water, and that the animals have "life as a soul." In these verses some
Bibles use the words "creature" and "life" instead of "soul," but their marginal readings
agree that the word "soul" is what appears in the original language…

Since animals are souls, when they die their souls die…What about human souls? As we
learned in the previous chapter, God did not create man with a soul. Man is a soul. So, as
we would expect, when man dies, his soul dies. (pp. 77-78)

HWA continues with this argument:

…Scripture plainly reveals that when you die you are dead. According to the Bible, the
dead don't hear anything, see anything, think anything or know anything. The dead have
absolutely no awareness of any kind: ‘For the living know that they shall die; but the
dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is
forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished…" (Eccl. 9:5-
6) (p. 125)

Scripture warns us to make the most of life now while we have the opportunity:
"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or
knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going (Eccl. 9:10 Revised
Authorized Version). (p. 126) [Note: The NKJV is known in Great Britain as the
Revised Authorized Version]

Notice the similarities with the Watchtower's publication:
Simply stated, death is the opposite of life. The Bible shows this at Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10. According to the Authorized or King James version, these verses say: "For the living know that they shall die; but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Whatesoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."

This means that the dead cannot do anything and cannot feel anything. They no longer have any thoughts…(p. 76-77)

Take special note of what HWA says in the second paragraph, which is repeated in the third paragraph:

I have explained earlier that the spirit in man of itself does not see, cannot hear, cannot think….At death, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. (Eccl. 12:7)

The departed human spirit at death is in fact a spiritual mold, of itself unconscious, yet in the resurrection bringing into the resurrected body all the memory, knowledge and character as well as form and shape of the person before death. (p. 110)

The spirit is the depository of memory and character. The spirit is like a mold. It retains even the human form and shape of the deceased, so that in the resurrection to judgment those who have died shall look as they did in life, retain whatever character they established in life, remember everything that was stored in their memory. But in the meantime, in death, there is no consciousness – they "know not any thing" (Eccl. 9:5) (p.127)

Now carefully observe the wording in the third paragraph of the Watchtower's book:

As we have seen, the "spirit" is something different from our soul. The spirit is our life-force. This life-force is in each of the body cells of both humans and animals. It is sustained, or kept alive, by breathing. What does it mean, then, when the Bible says that at death "the dust returns to the earth…and the spirit itself returns to the true God who gave it"? (Eccl. 12:7) (p. 79)

At death man's spirit, his life-force, which is sustained by breathing, "goes out." It no longer exists. So man's senses of hearing, sight, touch, smell and taste, which depend upon his being able to think, all stop working. According to the Bible, the dead enter a state of complete unconsciousness. (p. 77)

The resurrection is indeed a wonderful miracle. The person that died may have built up a great amount of experience and knowledge and many memories over a lifetime. He developed a personality that made him different from any other person that ever lived. Yet Jehovah God remembers every detail, and will restore this complete person when He resurrects him….Humans can record voices and pictures of people, and play them back long after the people have died. But Jehovah can, and actually will, bring back to life all persons who are living in his memory! (p. 174)

HWA clearly derived his mortal soul (and other) teachings from the Watchtower Society. More noteworthy though, are HWA's bootlegging of the Watchtower's explanations. These teachings have been around since the early 1900s. It appears that it is actually the Watchtower Society, and not God, that had been revealing these "truths" to HWA all along. It is also interesting to note that Charles Taze Russell (founder of the Jehovah's Witnesses), wrote a book entitled Divine Plan of the Ages. His successor, J. F. Rutherford wrote one entitled, The Finished Mystery. The similarity between the titles of those two and HWA's Mystery of the Ages should be evident. [emp. mine]

Now I want our readers to examine another gross misrepresentation by HWA:

Much supposed "Christian" teaching has been that God created the first man a perfect
immortal being, but that when God was not looking Satan stole in and wrecked this wonderful handiwork of God. Salvation is then pictured as God's effort to repair the damage, and to restore mankind back to a condition as good as when God first created him. (p. 125)

It seems to me that it was HWA who taught that God created Lucifer a perfect immortal being, but when God wasn't looking for all those millions of years, Lucifer rebelled and wrecked this wonderful handiwork of God and destroyed the whole universe. Salvation is then pictured as God's effort to repair the damage by sending Adam to dethrone Satan and restore the government of God on earth back to the condition as it was before God first created him. You see, HWA engages in gross misrepresentation of the Christian gospel, but will scream "persecution" whenever anyone returns the favor!

Notice how HWA supports his mortal soul teaching using his own writings as a credible source to back up his claims ("I quote now from an article in The Plain Truth March 1985..."). (p. 125). It seems he didn't want to use the Watchtower Society's literature as one of his sources since he derived this teaching from them. He wouldn't want his readers to get suspicious, would he?

Let's continue to examine each of HWA's arguments concerning the immortal soul. He quotes Acts 13:22 and Acts 2:29 to support his beliefs that David, a man after God's own heart, didn't ascend into the heavens. He also quotes John 3:13, stating that Jesus, himself, said that, "no man hath ascended up to heaven." These arguments seems pretty convincing, until the Scriptures are read in context, something that HWA has repeatedly failed to do. Let's examine them:

Beginning in verse 22 of Acts 2, we see Peter, filled with the Spirit, boldly giving his notable sermon to the Jews. He begins by declaring that Jesus of Nazareth, who performed many miracles in their midst, was crucified by their hands, but that God raised him up. Peter quotes Psalm 16:8-11, showing from David's own writings that he was speaking of the Messiah and not of David, himself:

"For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will you allow Your Holy One to see corruption."

In verse 29, Peter is reminding the Jews that David's body had never been raised, so this prophecy could not be speaking of him. Peter continues to give proof after proof that Jesus was the Messiah. When Peter spoke that David "did not ascend into the heavens," he was correctly testifying that Jesus, only, was the first who had been bodily resurrected. Remember, Jesus is the Firstfruits—the first One raised with both body and soul together to immortality! [Note from ESN: Also see Matthew 27:52-53 where it says many bodies of the saints "came out of the graves after his resurrection"]). He ascended bodily into the heavens—that's why His body was not found in the tomb. This is precisely what these Scriptures are saying. In context, the focus of these Scriptures is proof that Jesus is the Messiah by His fulfillment of the prophecy uttered by David in Psalm 16—not "proof" that David didn't go to heaven, as HWA tried to make it seem. Read Peter's entire sermon in context and you will easily understand this.

There are several books on ESN's booklist, plus the online book, Reasoning With Jehovah's Witnesses, which will objectively and soundly refute these false doctrines with Scripture.

HUMAN SPIRIT IMPARTS INTELLECT TO THE BRAIN

The next area where HWA identifies another "truth" has proven interesting as well.

Now we come to another truth, so far as I know, exclusive to the one true Church. (p.104)

HWA goes through a series of discussions about "how the human mind functions," describing it as superior than that of animals even though they may be equal or greater in size. Of course he must throw in: "Few indeed know WHY!" I hope our readers are beginning to see who those "few" are and the set-up here. Believing what HWA says is how he defines "truth," and those
who believe him gain the elite status of being part of the "one true Church."

HWA continues with the question, "What is the real value of human life?" contrasting a newborn babe and an elderly person (p. 106). He asks the reader, "Could you supply the correct answer?" Of course you can't, and HWA knows that. This question was designed to make the reader feel insecure for his inability to answer it, while producing a sense of "awe" toward HWA for knowing the answer. One has to go all the way to pages 110-111, slogger through a long and confusing dissertation about the human brain, in order to find the answer to this question proposed on page 106. The true answer is simple: God values ALL human life, but HWA doesn't mention that. Instead, he launches into the word "UNDERSTANDING" deflecting the reader's attention toward his profound wisdom, which he wants you to believe came from God.

It is worthy to note here that HWA also attempted on page 6 to make the reader think that he is "wise" because he agrees with HWA's writings, and now "understands." This is why HWA capitalizes the word "UNDERSTANDING" throughout his literature. By carefully extracting the phrase "none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand" he once again sets up a "reader-can't-win-Herbert-can't-lose" scenario. If the reader chooses to believe him, he is pronounced "wise" for "understanding truth" (HWA's doctrines). If he chooses not to believe him, he is "wicked" and the rejection of HWA's doctrines is "proof" of the reader's lack of understanding. He is immediately cast into Satan's camp of the "blind and deceived" (and he definitely doesn't get invited to church!).

HWA informs the reader that there is a spirit in man, which he dubs the "human spirit." He claims that this human spirit cannot see, hear, taste, smell, or feel, nor can it think. It's supposed to "impart intellect to the brain." He repeats this phrase at least ten times between pages 105-111. Did HWA get this idea from Scripture? Believe it or not, in every instance where he used this phrase, he failed to give a single Scripture to support it! Look this up yourself! Start on page 104, under the subheading, "How Human Mind Functions" and read clear to the fourth paragraph on page 111, where HWA completes his thoughts. There are only two Scriptures quoted, neither of them having to do with the human mind! The first Scripture listed is on page 105 (Matt. 11:25), a repeat quote speaking of Jesus "revealing truth to babes." This is a clear set up for the reader to believe everything that he is told in the following pages. The next Scripture reference is on page 108 (Gen. 2:7), which is about God breathing into man the breath of life. And that's it! Like a good TV commercial, HWA repetitiously chants what he wants the reader to believe, and omits the facts. Say it—repeat it—it's fact—believe it. Advertising experience has served him well.

So one can correctly conclude that this idea that "the human spirit imparts intellect to the brain" did not come from Scripture since the apostle himself could give no Scripture to back it. I hope our readers by now understand that whenever HWA repeats certain words and phrases and uses capital letters, this is a "red flag" that needs to fall under careful scrutiny.

SWITCHING ALLEGIANCE—BECOMING A TRUE BELIEVER

How was HWA able to get his readers to switch their allegiance away from God and onto himself, without the reader noticing? It was very subtle indeed, and worth a closer look.

And can he [the human] instruct his Maker? Should he not, rather, open his mind, and listen when his Maker reveals to him the very reason for his being? (p. 107)

Real translation: "Stop disbelieving what I am telling you. Open your mind and listen to what I am telling you. I will reveal to you the very reason for your being, and I will speak directly for God." Here is a major shift in ultimate authority. This is where HWA begins to blend himself with God. He has stopped quoting Scripture, but he speaks as though he is speaking directly for God, making it seem that these very words are coming from God's own lips. HWA is carefully escorting the reader into the category of "true believer". He initially broke down the reader's resistance by getting the reader to disbelieve all outside authorities. He then introduces his doctrines in easy to understand terminology, making the reader feel that he is finally understanding the Bible, all the while gaining the reader's trust. He now challenges the reader to open their minds and listen to him, subtly transferring himself in God's place, positioning himself as one who speaks for God.
Its [the Holy Bible] profound message is opened to human understanding through the presence and in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit injected into the human mind that has surrendered and yielded completely to the revelation in belief and obedience. To such one the TRUTH is made plain….

Real translation: "You must completely surrender yourself, wholly believe my revelations of the Bible, and be obedient to what I say. Once you are completely yielded to my teachings, the Holy Spirit will be able to inject understanding into your human mind and the "TRUTHS" in the coded book will finally be made plain to you." This is where the reader takes the plunge. He is told that in order for him to have the Holy Spirit "inject" his mind to understand these mysteries, he must let go of any doubts, believe what HWA tells him, and obey. Wanting to know and "understand" more, the reader makes a conscious decision to "believe." This theme will be repeated a dozen pages later. These are repeated attempts to break down the resistance of the reader.

The next attempt is disguised as Adam rejecting God's Law and Government (which, in reality is HWA's law and government). I want the reader to carefully observe that this chapter was designed to bring the reader into total submission to HWA. Let's now examine the phrases HWA uses in this section:

But instead Adam chose a different kind of knowledge—he took TO HIMSELF the knowledge of good as well as evil. He wholly relied on himself—both for the KNOWLEDGE as well as power of performance of good as well as evil. He REJECTED reliance on God and chose the course of SELF-reliance. The only righteousness he could acquire was SELF-righteousness, which to God is like filthy rags. (p. 119)

[Adam and Eve] Taking of its fruit was taking to themselves the knowledge of what is good...deciding for themselves...This, of course, means rejection of God's LAW, which defined for them the right and the wrong. (p. 119)

With her, he [Adam] took to himself the determination of what is right and what is wrong—thus DISBELIEVING what his Maker had said, REJECTING God as Savior and Ruler—rejecting God as the source of revealed BASIC KNOWLEDGE. He believed and followed Satan's WAY! (p. 119-120)

Look at the subtle (and not so subtle) message in these paragraphs. HWA introduces the notion that "thinking for oneself" is outright rejection of God's Law (and ultimately God). Carefully examine the words in CAPITAL LETTERS. What is the message HWA is trying to get across? Here is another set-up. By thinking for yourself, you are REJECTING reliance on God (HWA), and by doing so, you have become SELF-reliant and SELF-righteous, which makes you nothing but a "filthy rag" in God's (HWA's) sight. By REJECTING and DISBELIEVING God (HWA), you are cutting yourself off from the source of revealed BASIC KNOWLEDGE. By doing this, you are following Satan's WAY. The reader can't win—HWA can't lose. This is called "learned helplessness" that Bible-based cults employ to create a dependency in members upon the organization. Members give up their right to think for themselves, believing that this pleases God, because the leader, who now speaks for God, "says so."

HWA is subconsciously mind-controlling his readers, and if the reader has already surrendered final authority to HWA, he stops looking for scriptural proofs and simply believes what he is told. This is faith—in the religious cult leader as final authority. This is how subtle the transferal of faith in God to faith in a human leader as God's sole representative who speaks for Him happens. Once the reader becomes a convert, he will never see the world through the same eyes again. Everything that proceeds from Armstrong's mouth will be regarded as "fact," and any differing information will be categorized as "Satan's lies." HWA has sifted out his sheep.

ANTI-TRINITARIAN

HWA knows he has deceived his readers into thinking that God is a family, and not a Holy Trinity [i.e., the Father is fully God, the Holy Spirit is fully God and Jesus is fully God—but they are united in the fullness of one God], so he must continue to flail away at this core belief. Let
us see another instance where he misquotes Scripture to "prove" his anti-Trinitarian views (p. 112-113):

"But God hath revealed them [spiritual things] unto us by his Spirit...." (I Cor. 2:10) Notice particularly spiritual knowledge is not revealed by a Person called the Holy Spirit.

"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?..." (verse 11).

But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (verse 14).

Now let's read the whole verse in context. The print in bold lettering is what HWA omitted from these verses:

But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit. For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. (v. 10) [emp. mine]

For what man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. (v.11)

Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (I Cor. 2:10-14)

Why would HWA extract these verses out of context? Is it because he doesn't want the reader to see that the Holy Spirit "searches," "knows," and "teaches"—verbs that could disprove his doctrine that the Holy Spirit is just a mere "instrumentality"? 6

HWA throws out the question, "If the Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity, then is not the spirit in man also another man?" Another question designed to make the reader come to a faulty conclusion. If you agree that the second half of the question is false—that the spirit in man doesn't mean there is also another man—then you are set up to believe that the first half of the question must be false. HWA knows that most people's knowledge of the Trinity is on shaky ground, and he capitalizes on this by asking these kinds of questions. Just because the spirit in a man is not a separate man or person does not prove or disprove the Holy Spirit is or is not a person. The two are unrelated in this matter. HWA uses a sophistic argument here to disprove the Holy Spirit is a person; an entity, without examining other relevant passages of scripture. Is this Biblical? Is this the methodology of a true servant of God?

And just in case the reader continues to hold dear any Trinitarian views, HWA will pronounce the sin of blasphemy upon him:

That, also, explains why, on reading in the New Testament of God the Father, and also of Jesus being God, they [theologians] came up with the false theory of the Holy Spirit being a "Ghost" or third Person of a Trinity, thus blaspheming the Holy Spirit and LIMITING God and doing away with all knowledge that converted humans can become members of the very divine God FAMILY...(p. 129)

Accusing one of blaspheming the Holy Spirit is accusing one of committing the "unpardonable sin." This is a very serious accusation, not to be taken lightly, and deserving thorough examination. Does the Bible teach that belief in God being a Trinity, or saying that the Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity, is the sin of "blasphemy"? Interestingly, HWA omitted any scriptural references to shed more light on this repugnant sin. Why would something as serious as this not have a scriptural back up? Could there be a reason?
Let's examine Matthew 12:24-32 and Mark 3:22-30 where the "unpardonable sin" is committed, and read this in context. Here, the scribes and Pharisees accuse Jesus of using the power of Beelzebub to cast out demons. The scribes and Pharisees knew this wasn't true, but deliberately slandered Jesus—deliberately rejected—and denied what the Holy Spirit did through Him. Jesus pronounces a stern and irrevocable judgment upon them for attributing to Satan the unmistakable works of the Holy Spirit. These Scriptures do not say that belief in the triune nature of God is blasphemy, or that believing the Holy Spirit being is a Divine Personage, or the third Person of the Trinity, is committing blasphemy.

So once again, you have HWA twisting Scriptures, speaking with authority, and giving no scriptural support to his claims. HWA used this argument to induce readers to shed what remaining beliefs they had regarding the Trinity. He stoops to fear tactics, making the reader believe that he had been committing a grievous sin against God. He knows that many of his readers know nothing about blaspheming the Holy Spirit—they only know that "blasphemy" is something "bad" and that one "shouldn't do it." He, of course, does this to evoke emotions—a technique he uses repeatedly. The reader feels frightened that he may have been committing this particular sin, although unknowingly. He feels anger, and begins to believe that his lack of knowledge on this subject is "proof" that pertinent information had been withheld from him by "deceived Christianity." His foundational trust in orthodox religion continues to crumble, which is precisely what HWA wants. HWA quickly offers a better alternative—membership into the God Family. I hope our readers can see the set-up.

The final area in this chapter where HWA dates himself can be found on page 130:

For the first 6,000 years—now almost completed—all but the predestined FEW were cut off. [emp. mine]

HWA exhausted his followers by beating them around "the Gun Lap." He repeatedly prophesied that the 6,000 years was almost complete and the end was near. Let's look at the math of this Master Plan theory:

First few days of time—Adam messes up

4,000 years later—Jesus comes to earth (page 38, 132)

1,927 years later—God calls HWA to begin "the Work."

4,000 + 1,927 = 5,927 years have passed

1985—MOA written. "The most important book since the Bible."

1985 subtracting the 1,927 above = 58 years

5,927 + 58 of "doing the Work" = 5,985 years passed, only 15 more years to go to equals 6,000 years of man's inept "misrule" on earth.

6,000 + 1,000 (millennium) = 7,000-year Master Plan!

Add 15 years to 1985 and the 7,000 year plan expired in the year 2000!

Of course, HWA died in 1986 and this prophecy did not come to pass. Even if one added 25 years onto the 1985 date, it would bring the end of the 6,000 years of man's misrule in 2010. Ten years have passed since the expiration of man's rule, and this prophetic calculation has proven false. It appears that this 7,000-year plan has been a human concoction.

Now let's compare what HWA says about his 6,000 theory to the Watchtower Society's publication:

Now that time has passed, what has been the result? Well, what would you say? Have the past 6,000 years of history shown that humans have been successful in governing themselves without God's guidance? Have humans provided good government for the blessing and happiness of all?...(page 102)

However, a person might ask, "Why has God permitted so much time, about 6,000 years now, to settle this issue? Could it not have been settled in a satisfactory way long ago?
Not really. If God had stepped in long ago, the charge could have been made that humans were not given enough time to experiment. But as it is, humans have had plenty of time to develop a government that would satisfy the needs of all its subjects, as well as make scientific discoveries that could contribute to the prosperity of all....And their progress in the field of science has been remarkable. They have harnessed the atom and traveled to the moon. But what has been the result? Has it brought a grand new system for the blessing of humankind?

Far from it! Instead, there is more unhappiness and trouble on earth than ever before. In fact, crime, pollution, war, family breakdown and other problems have reached such a dangerous stage that scientists believe man's very existence is threatened. Yes, after about 6,000 years of experience in self-rule, and after reaching a peak in scientific "progress", humankind is now facing self-destruction!...(p. 104) ("You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth," WT Society, 1982, 1989)

Let's see what Deuteronomy 18:22 has this to say about all this:

"When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor comes to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him." (emp. mine)

It is plain to see that Herbert Armstrong borrowed the idea of the 6,000 years of man's misrule from The Watchtower Society. This is not the first instance, nor the last, of his doctrinal plagiarisms extracted from the WTS. According to God, you shouldn't be afraid of any of HWA's doomsday prophecies coming true, since the date for them to occur has expired. Don't spend your life hanging on to a false prophet's presumptuous sayings—you are free to go.

THE RESURRECTION

HWA claims that "traditional Christianity" "says nothing about the future resurrection of the billions who have died in Adam." (p. 124) This is false. Every Christian reference resource acknowledges the resurrection because it is a Biblical teaching. The reader's lack of Biblical knowledge on this topic isn't "proof" that Christianity doesn't say anything about it. Look at the footnotes of any Reference Bible. In John 5:25-29 the theme of these verses is resurrection. It appears that "deceived traditional Christianity" fully understands and teaches a future resurrection of all men. There are countless Christian resources that thoroughly explain the resurrection. In the book The Great Doctrines of the Bible (William Evans, Moody Press, 1912-1979), is a quick rundown of this topic on page 245:

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

THIS DOCTRINE CLEARLY TAUGHT IN THE SCRIPTURES

1. In the Old Testament
2. In the New Testament

THE NATURE OF THE RESURRECTION

1. Literal resurrection of the bodies of all men
   2. Resurrection of the body necessary to complete salvation
   3. The nature of the resurrection body
      a. In general
      b. The Body of the Believer
      c. The Body of the Unbeliever

THE TIME OF THE RESURRECTION

1. Of the righteous
2. Of the wicked

According to the copyright date of this book, this particular doctrine has been understood by "deceived traditional Christianity" since 1912—a full two decades before God supposedly gave this truth to HWA to preach to the world. But, as usual, HWA will not give credit where credit is due because it is not in his best interest to do so. Here is another resource that speaks of the Resurrection (*International Bible Encyclopedia*, 1915; "Immortality," by James Orr):

The Resurrection

The fullness of the blessedness of immortality implies the resurrection. The resurrection is a cardinal article of Christ's teaching (Matthew 22:29-32; John 5:25-29; 11:23-26). He Himself is the Lord of life, and life-giver in the resurrection (John 5:21,25,26; 11:25, "I am the resurrection, and the life"). The resurrection of believers is secured by His own resurrection. Jesus died; He rose again (see RESURRECTION). His resurrection carries with it the certainty of the resurrection of all His people. This is the great theme of 1 Corinthians 15. As Christ lives, they shall live also (John 14:19). The believers who are alive at His Parousia shall be changed (1 Corinthians 15:51; 1 Thessalonians 4:17); those who are dead shall be raised first of all (1 Thessalonians 4:16). The resurrection body shall be a body like to Christ's own (Philippians 3:21)—incorruptible, glorious, powerful, spiritual, immortal (1 Corinthians 15:42,53). This is not to be confused with sameness of material particles (1 Corinthians 15:37), yet there is the connection of a vital bond between the old body and the new. This is the hope of the believer, without which his redemption would not be complete.

Look up "Resurrection" in *Nave's Topical Bible*. Look at any study Bible's footnotes. Look through *any* religious resource on the topic of "resurrection" and you will find it. HWA had access to all these resources, but he falsely accuses Christianity for not believing in the Resurrection. He purposely diverted the reader to graphic depictions of heaven and hell (p. 124), making the reader believe that the doctrine of the Resurrection was exclusively revealed to him. HWA emphatically tells the reader that, "deceived traditional Christianity, in doctrine after doctrine, teaches the diametric opposite of the truths revealed in the Bible!" (p. 125) In this case, it appears that he *is in agreement with Christianity* concerning this particular doctrine. Even though he morphs his own version of the Resurrection, it is interesting to note his *complete silence* concerning Christianity's teaching about the Resurrection. If he had read all the Bible encyclopedias, historical records, lexicons, etc., that he claimed to have read, then how could this core doctrine have escaped his attention? He didn't even bother to attack Christianity on this particular doctrine, which should make one immediately suspicious. Undoubtedly, he was afraid to draw any undue attention to the fact that Christianity embraced this teaching long before God revealed it to him. Wouldn't a true apostle of God give some credit to a "deceived religion" for having at least one doctrine right?

FEW CALLED AND CHOSEN

HWA will continue to smash away at Christianity, leaving any form of credibility in shambles. Feeling confident that he has stirred up considerable confusion over cherished doctrines, he will point the way out of this mess toward his church. Let's see how he offers the bewildered reader a carefully calculated alternative:

...you have chosen the 'GETTING,' 'TAKING' way of Satan. Therefore I sentence you and the world ....to 6,000 years of being cut off from access to me and my Spirit—except for the exceedingly FEW I shall specially call. And that FEW shall be called for special service preparatory for the kingdom of God. (p. 120)

Those few called during this first 6,000 years...shall sit with me in my throne, and have power under me to rule all nations under my Supreme Rule. (p. 121)

...God CLOSED OFF THE TREE OF LIFE...except in the case of chosen prophets for the writing of the Bible, and of the Church called out of this world by Jesus Christ. (p. 122)
The most universal false teaching, believed by virtually all churches...except the one and only true and original Church of God...(p. 127)

Few UNDERSTAND this basic master plan of God. (p. 127)

...all but the predestined FEW were cut off. (p. 130)

...[a] counterfeit gospel ABOUT Christ was being proclaimed by all but the persecuted FEW who loyally remained as the small and persecuted true original Church of God. (p. 131)

Meanwhile the Holy Spirit has been closed to all but the prophets and the called-out-ones of the true Church. (p. 132)

...and those specially called out for training to become rulers and teachers under Christ…(p. 132)

Those very few called...have had to do what Adam refused to do... (p. 133)

According to HWA, God is calling "the few, the BRAVE, THE MARINES!!!!" HWA offers the reader the lofty position of elite status, a tremendous "perk" for choosing his church. After his dreadful representation of "traditional Christianity," is there any wonder why the reader would gravitate toward HWA's alternative? Once again, the skillful salesman leads the reader to choose his product.

Once in the organization, the convert will learn that he is part of the 144,000 elite "chosen ones" who will rule with Christ during the Millennium. From where did HWA get this idea? Below are excerpts taken from the Watchtower Society's publication entitled, "You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth" (1982, 1989):

How small a number will that class of Kingdom rulers be? Will it include only the apostles and other early followers of Jesus? No, the Bible shows that the "little flock" will include more. At Rev. 14:1, 3 the Bible says: "And I saw, and look! The Lamb standing upon the Mount Zion, and with him 144,000...who have been bought [or taken] from the earth."...So rather than all good people going to heaven, the Bible reveals that only 144,000 tried and faithful persons will be taken there to rule with Christ. (p. 124)

But why does God choose these rulers from among humankind? Why not have angels rule with Christ? Well, it was here at the earth that Jehovah's right to rule was challenged. It was here that the faithfulness of men to God could be put to the test under opposition from the Devil. It was here that Jesus proved his full loyalty to God under test and gave his life as a ransom for mankind. So it was from the earth that Jehovah arranged to take a "little flock" of persons to be associated with his Son in the heavenly kingdom. They are the ones who, by their faithfulness to God, proved false the Devil's charge that men serve God only for selfish reasons...(p. 125)

Also, think how wonderful it will be to have as rulers persons who proved faithful to God on earth, many of them even sacrificing their lives in behalf of the Kingdom. Angels have not faced such kind of testings. Nor have they experienced the problems common to humankind...But the 144,000 will understand because they have had these very problems...Therefore they will deal with their earthly subjects in an understanding way. (p. 125)

...In all, only 144,000 persons finally make up the "congregation of God"...The Bible also refers to this congregation of 144,000 members by such terms as "the bride, the Lamb's wife," "the body of the Christ," "the temple of God," "the Israel of God," and the "New Jerusalem."

Jehovah God did not change his purpose for the earth and mankind on it after Adam started the human race down the path of sin and death. Had God done so, it would have meant that God was not able to carry out his original purpose. His purpose from the beginning was to have an earth-wide paradise filled with happy, healthy people, and that
purpose still stands. The only new thing that God introduced was his arrangement for a new government to carry out his purpose. As we have seen, his Son, Jesus Christ, is the main ruler in this government, and 144,000 persons will be taken from among humankind to rule in heaven with him.

These rulers in heaven will make up the "new heavens" of God's new system. Yet it is clear that if there are to be such righteous rulers over the earth, then there must be those over whom they rule.

Even though the Watchtower Society believes that the 144,000 go to heaven, one cannot help but notice the similarities in wording and concept. HWA undoubtedly borrowed the main idea and modified it to suit his agenda.

HEAVEN AND HELL

HWA, like all Bible-based cults, paints the "worst case scenario" when it comes to the doctrines of heaven and hell, making Christianity seem "cruel" at worst and "unfair" at best. HWA must stir up feelings of repulsion to get the reader to reject his previous beliefs. He depicts heaven as "eternal idleness, freedom from responsibility and bliss in ease and laziness." (p. 124) In his other publications, he depicts an elderly retiree sitting in a nursing home playing cards, and makes vindictive remarks about the righteous "sitting on clouds, plucking harps, shuffling through harp music, and looking up into the face of the Master for ALL ETERNITY!" This description is laughable and an outright misrepresentation of the facts. For a man who claims to know so much about the world's various religions, he has yet to accurately represent what orthodox Christianity truly taught and believed. This is quite intentional on his part, no doubt. Sadder still, is the Subject Index on page 376 of the MOA under the topic of heaven. HWA makes two small references to heaven—that it is the "headquarters of the universe," and that "no man, except Jesus, has ascended to it."

Could there be a reason for Biblical Christianity to promote heaven as the final reward of the saved? Can they back it up with Scriptures, or are they merely promoting the traditions of men? Let's see if the Bible has anything to say about heaven:

Heaven is a definite place where God the Father dwells (Matt. 6:9) "Our Father who art in heaven." The Lord's throne is in heaven (Psalm 11:4), and so are His angels (Mark 13:32). Christ came down from heaven (John 6:38), and ascended to it (Acts 1:9-11) to sit at the right hand of the Father (1 Peter 3:22). The Holy Spirit was sent down from heaven (1 Peter 1:12). That is where the believer's hope is found (Col. 1:5), his inheritance (1 Peter 1:4), his reward (Matt. 5:12), his treasure (Mark 10:21), and where his name is written (Luke 10:20).

Its size is inconceivable, because from it the New Jerusalem descends, described as 1500 miles square (Rev. 21:10-16). It is "up," above the atmospheric and starry heavens (Gen. 7:23; 22:17), possibly in the north (Isa. 14:13; Ps. 75:6, 7). It is called the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:2; Eph. 4:10), and is thought to be a sphere (Job 22:14).

Believers go to be with Christ in heaven at death, (Phil. 1:23), and according to Paul, it is far better than life on earth, being a place of joy and pleasure, (Ps. 16:11). From heaven believers will descend with Christ when He returns to earth, (1 Thes. 3:13; 4:13-16). The calling of Christians is heavenly (Heb. 3:1). Evidently because of the poverty of language, the eternal state is described in terms of the absence of sorrow, pain, death, and other "former things," (Rev. 21:4). (Excerpted from The Great Doctrines of the Bible, Evans).

The Nave's Topical Bible on "heaven" has the following Scriptures listed:

THE FUTURE DWELLING PLACE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

• Called a garner (Matt. 3:12)
• The Kingdom of Christ and of God (Eph. 5:5)
• The Father's house (John 14:2)
Did our readers notice that after every thought there is a Scripture to back it up? Now pull out your Strong's Concordance and look up the word "heaven." There are five full columns of references. Even after removing all the words that refer to the expanse of the sky, there are still more than the two Scriptures besides the ones represented in the Subject Index of the MOA. Why would God's apostle not bring these verses to our attention? Is he trying to hide something? Why would he do that? If HWA is telling his readers the "truth," then the Scriptures would prove him right, wouldn't they? Truth doesn't disturb truth—truth only disturbs error.

In conclusion, "deceived Christianity" seems to have a biblical basis for their claims of heaven, while HWA makes claims without giving a single Scripture to back them. In this case, we need to take HWA's advice: Don't believe him—believe your Bible!

Now let's look at HWA's representation of the hell of "traditional Christianity." He describes it as "a definite place of eternal continuous burning fire where they [the unsaved] shriek and scream in indescribable pain and agony forever and ever without hope." (p. 124) On page 125, HWA gives another example of "saved mothers" who have "gone to heaven" and are "conscious of their lost sons who are shrieking and screaming in indescribable torture of hell fire." Given this shallow view, is it any wonder that we are revolted by this description? Naturally, you won't find the word "hell" in the Subject Index of MOA.

From where did HWA get his teachings of hell? Under the subtitle "Devil-Inspired Teachings" we read:

It was the Devil who told Eve: "You positively will not die." (Gen. 3:4, Rev. 12:9) But she did die; no part of her lived on. That the soul lives on after death is a lie started by the Devil. And it is also a lie, which the Devil has spread, that the souls of the wicked are tormented in a hell or purgatory. Since the Bible clearly shows that the dead are unconscious, these teachings could not be true...

We have seen that hell (Sheol or Hades) is a place of rest in hope for the dead. Both good and bad persons go there, to await the resurrection. We have also learned that Gehenna does not mean a place of torment, but is used in the Bible as a symbol of everlasting destruction. In the same way, "the lake of fire" is not a literal place of fire, but represents the "second death" from which there will be no resurrection. Hell could not be a place of torment because such an idea never came into the mind or heart of God. Additionally, to torment a person eternally because he did wrong on earth for a few years is contrary to justice. How good it is to know the truth about the dead! (p. 89, "You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth," Watchtower Society, 1982, 1989).

He got them from the Watchtower Society!

HWA, like all Bible-based cults, stirs up feelings that God is somehow "unfair"—that a "loving God" would "never do such an awful thing." He gives his readers a candy-coated version of justice—that people wouldn't be evil if only they've been "given a fair chance." He develops a better justice system, introducing a salvation plan that fits all. He markets God's solution for wickedness as too harsh—besides, his "new, improved version" has better "consumer appeal."

Let's see from where HWA got his version of "universal salvation":

It is true that this man [the thief on the cross] did bad things. He was "unrighteous". Also, he was ignorant of God's will. But would he have been a criminal if he had known about
God's purposes? To find out, Jesus will resurrect this unrighteous man, as well as thousands of millions of others who died in ignorance. For instance, in past centuries many people died who did not know how to read and who had never seen a Bible. But they will be raised from Sheol, or Hades. Then, in the paradise earth, they will be taught God's will, and they will have the opportunity to prove that they really do love God by doing his will. (p. 171)

What picture does Judgment Day call to your mind? Some imagine a great throne, and in front of it a long line of persons who have been resurrected from the dead. As each person passes before the throne, he is judged by his past deeds, all of which are written down in the Judge's book. Based on the things he did, the person is sent either to heaven or to a fiery hell.

The Bible, however, gives a much different picture of Judgment Day…Contrary to popular opinion, he [Christ] will not judge persons on the basis of their past sins, many of which may have been committed in ignorance…(p. 175)

During Judgment Day those who survive Armageddon will work to make the earth a paradise. Into this paradise the dead will be welcomed back…During Judgment Day all the people will learn about Jehovah, and they will be given every opportunity to obey and serve Him. (p. 177-178)

It is under such paradise conditions that Jesus Christ and his 144,000 associate kings will judge humankind. People who choose to serve Jehovah will be in a position to receive everlasting life. But, even under these best of circumstances, some will refuse to serve God….So even after being given full opportunity to change their ways and to learn righteousness, such wicked ones will be destroyed. Some will be put to death even before Judgment Day ends. They will not be permitted to remain to corrupt or spoil the paradise earth. (p. 178, "You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth," Watchtower Society, 1982, 1989).

So there you have it. Doctrine after doctrine copied from the Watchtower Society. Should one believe a man that derives his teachings from a cultic organization? Is there any wonder why Biblical Christianity teaches the diametric opposite of what HWA taught? Maybe there's a really good reason for this!

HWA ends this chapter with a reminder that man is to "become VERY GOD and "to finish the creation of the unfinished UNIVERSE." HWA is offering irresistible, luscious fruit indeed—and most pleasant to the eyes. He reassures us that by partaking of this fruit we will gain knowledge that will make one wise, knowing all the answers of good and evil, becoming very God.

Footnotes for Chapter Three:

1 Karl Marx ("Manifesto of the Communist Party" 1848), created theories on communism that were very vague but promised a prosperous living for all. In order to accomplish this, Marx ascertained that temporary state control measures were necessary. Communism is based on the theory that the individual is unimportant. For many it represented a utopian society in which there was only one class of people. The problems lie in the regard for individual creativity. [emp. added] (Excerpted from Birth of Communism).

2 Herbert Armstrong stated in a November 24, 1967 Co-Worker letter that he had studied Communism in the 1930s and 1940s and he also made mention of the book, Witness by Whittaker Chambers. (Witness is an autobiographical memoir, written just after Chambers confessed to his earlier affiliation with the Communist Party and testified against his former friend and comrade, Alger Hiss.) For more info on this and to understand how HWA lured people, read: Communism; Fascism; Socialism; Totalitarianism; or Armstrongism from OIU 5, Pt. 3.

3 "ACCREDITATION OR BUST!" (The Wooing of W.A.S.C.), Ambassador Review, June 1976 (AR1)

4 Roots of the Worldwide Church of God
5 Herbert W. Armstrong's Religious Roots (shows he didn't receive his teachings by revelation from God)

6 Is the Holy Spirit Only the Power of God? (shows by many Scriptures the personality of the H. S).

7 The late Bible teacher J. Vernon McGee in his notes on Matthew 12:29-32 stated, "In our day that particular sin cannot be committed because it could only be committed when Jesus was here upon the earth. There is no sin committed yesterday that the Lord would not forgive today because He died for all sin. ... There is no act of sin that you could commit for which there is no forgiveness." (excerpted from Thru the Bible With J. Vernon McGee, Vol. 4, p. 69). Also, see our Q&A on this.

8 Many of Herbert Armstrong's ministers taught that II Peter 3:8 ("But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day") was somehow supposed to prove that "God's Plan" would encompass 7,000 years; i. e., man would be allotted 6,000 years, then Christ would come and reign for 1,000 years, which totaled 7,000 years. In this verse, however, Peter was exposing the ignorance of the scoffers and how what seems like a long time to some is actually short with the Lord. Peter was referring to Psalm 90:4: "For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night."

Chapter Four - Mystery of Civilization

I shall also endeavor, according to my moderate ability, to furnish the means of overthrowing them, by showing how absurd and inconsistent with the truth are their statements. Not that I am
practiced either in composition or eloquence; but my feeling of affection prompts me to make known to thee and all thy companions those doctrines which have been kept in concealment until now, but which are at last, through the goodness of God, brought to light. "For there is nothing hidden which shall not be revealed, nor secret that shall not be made known." (Irenaeus Against Heresies, Book I)

Herbert Armstrong opens this fourth chapter of MOA with his usual stark contrasts of modern society's "progress and degeneration," which naturally leads into another age-old, unanswerable question—"Why, if God exists, does He allow so much violence and human suffering?" Can the reader discern another predictable set-up coming?

How did our civilization develop to our 20-century state? What a mystery that is to thinking people! Of course most are not thinking people and never ask themselves that question. But if one does, he finds the question enveloped in mystery. So let us understand. (p. 137)

And there it is. There is a mystery to be solved, and the reader should, by now, easily guess who is going to solve it with the only "correct" answer. Notice (once again) the win-lose set up. If you are a thinking person (and according to HWA, very few are), then you will open your mind to accept his explanations. But if you are not open to "understanding" this mystery (his explanations), then you are not a thinking person. Time after time, the reader is conned to accept HWA's challenges refusal to do so results in being categorized with an unpleasant title that insults one's intelligence. In this case, one is dubbed as an average, "unthinking" Joe for not pondering this question. These are not the fruits of a man of God, but of a skillful salesman and con artist. By choosing to acquire "understanding," HWA fans the flames of vanity by making the reader feel he is a daring, unique, above-average individual for accepting the challenge HWA lays before him.

On pages 139-140, HWA claims that the "true Church of God was to be set back on the track, restoring the glorious knowledge of the faith once delivered to the saints in the days of the original apostles." Is this true? Read my article: True Original Church/Faith Once Delivered (Proof Herbert Armstrong Lied About the "Lost" Church Century).

HWA begins the isolation process under the subheading "A World Held Captive" (p. 141). He emphasizes "SATAN'S WAY" and defines this loaded term as "one choosing to do his own thing." In other words, by making personal choices and decisions, one is equated with outright rebellion against God. This is where the new convert relinquishes control over his life and hands it over to HWA, thinking he is obeying God directly. Once in the group, he will be specifically instructed in matters concerning food, dress, finances, social life, child rearing, personal development, and any daily life decisions, both significant and insignificant. Materials written by the leader are the only authoritative views allowed within the group. One is no longer allowed to look outside of the group for answers, lest he be accused of following "Satan's way" by looking to "the world." HWA erects a clear, dividing line by defining "the world"—all civilizations—as SATAN'S WORLD (p. 143). Once the unsuspecting convert enters the church, he is informed that anything outside of the organization qualifies as ""the World," and that the member must cut himself off from its influence. This means cutting ties with "unconverted" friends, spouses, families, which causes further isolation and places the convert in the position of continued exploitation and control by the group.

HWA repeatedly emphasizes "the way of GET and the way of GIVE" in order to gain control over the new convert by making him feel shame or guilt for spending money on himself, or his needs. He equates choice-making and freedom to make personal decisions as following "Satan's way," and this includes finances. This is why many who exit the various "COG" groups [Herbert Armstrong groups] feel fear for not being able to tithe, wondering where "God's tithe" should be sent, or else wanting to give their money away to some religious group or cause. They have been programmed repeatedly that they are living "the way of get" and "stealing
from God" if they don't tithe, and that He will curse them for their supposed "greed." This is deeply internalized by the convert. Exiters also experience feelings of shame or guilt whenever they do splurge and buy something for themselves with their hard-earned money. (Read: Getting the Group out of Us for more about this.) (Too bad the leaders of these groups lack any feelings of shame for stealing the widow's mite to finance their elevated lifestyles.) The "Way of Get and the Way of Give" is shoved relentlessly down the followers' throats, so much so, that they fail to see exactly who is living each of these ways: The members lived the way of give—they gave all their money to HWA, and HWA lived the way of get—he got all of it and spent it however he pleased! Fear and shame—these are tactics employed by controlling Bible-based cults and are not the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

In the previous chapter I showed how HWA transferred the reader's allegiance away from God and onto himself. Having successfully achieved this, the fourth chapter is filled with audacious speculations, which will largely go unchallenged by the now "loyal" reader. The first bold claim he makes is the building of the Ambassador Colleges.

HWA describes the three Ambassador Colleges he erected (i.e., in Pasadena, California, Big Sandy, Texas, and Bricket Wood, England), claiming that Jesus Christ Himself commissioned them, through "the Church," to be built. He describes their beauty as being unsurpassed. He cannot resist letting us know that "a royal Queen" herself exclaimed, "I have just been in heaven." (p. 140) Ironically, for one that disregarded heaven—refusing to acknowledge heaven as a beautiful, perfect, blessed place for believers to reside—HWA didn't mind usurping it to promote the image of his headquarters operations! The reader needs to pause here and carefully observe how their tithe money was spent: award-winning, world-class landscaping, purchase and restoration of former millionaire mansions, and entertaining "a royal Queen." HWA justifies this extravagance by making the reader believe that God ordained and commissioned his actions. (p. 140) He further justifies these gross expenditures by declaring that the restoration of the dilapidated millionaire mansions and the slums of Pasadena into a paradise is God's way of showing mankind that obedience to His (HWA's) government results in paradise on the earth. Let's examine this set up.

To question his expenditures is to question God Himself, and he knows any person with a tender conscience wouldn't want to jeopardize their fellowship with God by their insolent "questioning." He cleverly shifts the focus away from his greed, distracting the reader with his solution to the world's poverty dilemma. He name drops "the Queen" so we believe that he is an Ambassador without portfolio (not an Ambassador for Christ).

HWA wants readers to believe that this lushly landscaped, richly restored slum is a result of God's own desire, direction, and personal involvement. Is this true? Was all this greatness achieved because God's hand was in it? Is the establishment of a "wonderful world tomorrow on earth today" proof that God intended man to live this way since the beginning? Let's think about some past civilizations where magnificent, glorious "wonders of the world" were displayed. Ancient Egypt, under the rule of the Pharaohs, was world renown for its impressive structures and advanced civilization. Ancient Babylon had The Hanging Gardens that were legendary, unsurpassed in beauty, and considered one of the "seven wonders of the world." These paradisiacal civilizations—and many like them—are a result of a ruler with a vision, considerable cash flow, and a large pool of laborers.1 If erecting and restoring beautiful buildings, installing and maintaining extraordinary landscaping, entertaining and impressing royalty with these marvelous accomplishments are God's objective—giving us a "modest foretaste of the wonderful world tomorrow" of what mankind "should have done" (p. 140)—then the pagan rulers appear to have had a jump start on HWA. Of course these civilizations in all their splendor—achieving what "man should have done" to the earth—still did not gain any further knowledge of the true God, as can be easily witnessed by their endless plethora of gods. And HWA, basking in all his Ambassador-quality finery, never gained a true understanding of God and salvation, either. His physical empire, like all manmade empires, has declined and crumbled away. On page 146, HWA quotes Matthew 7:24-27—"a house built on a faulty foundation is bound to fall." Precisely.

Now let's examine another contradiction in HWA's own belief system. On page 8 of MOA, HWA spoke about today's society as "the glamour dream world of the three 'Ls'—leisure, luxury, and
license." What a terrible shame that "push-button leisure" was forced upon this humble apostle while he cruised around in his fleet of Rolls Royces, limos, and multi-million dollar jets. Can one warn the world of their sins while partaking of those same sins? Let's focus on the second "L," this disgusting evil called luxury. It seems that God's own apostle has been guilty of wallowing shamelessly in this heinous sin. True to Bible-based cult characteristics, the leaders live a completely different lifestyle than their followers. HWA amassed treasures on earth, living in utter luxury, while his tithe-payers scraped to get by. Even widows, the underemployed, single parents, and those on welfare were not exempt from his financially oppressive tithing system. These were to benefit from the system—not pay into it! And now the final "L"—license. Drunkenness, incest, sex-addiction, divorce, estranged children, indulgent spending, hypocrisy, fits of anger, contempt toward others (especially those of the faith), unable to take correction, controlling others through fear and intimidation—if anyone had a "license" to sin, HWA was firmly in the driver's seat. "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." Did God really want millions of dollars worth of paintings, antique gold and silver trinkets, and other such nonsense that HWA amassed with tithe-payers' money? Was God pleased when HWA purchased a $65,000 silver soup tureen while refusing to give financial help to the widows and orphans? How many times have members heard in services that "third tithe assistance isn't a retirement program" and to seek "outside financial assistance first"? How many people, already in dire straits, were asked to pay back what was given to them, making their situation even worse than before?

The next bold claim that will test the loyalty of the new believer is HWA's racial segregation doctrine. [Note: Also see the 1963 Plain Truth. (found online)] HWA paints a dismal picture of the earth filled with violence during the time of Noah. He informs his readers that Noah was not only righteous, but racially pure. (p. 147) HWA states that God selected him due to his heredity and ancestry being "perfect" and "unblemished (in his genetic heritage) among his contemporaries." Let's examine Genesis 6:8-9 and read these verses in full context in different translations:

But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect (footnote states: "wholehearted") in his generations, and Noah walked with God. (KJV, Nelson)

But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. These are the records of the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, [a]blameless in his [b]time; Noah walked with God. (footnotes state: a. Genesis 6:9 Lit complete, perfect; or having integrity b. Genesis 6:9 Lit generations) (NASB)

But Noah found grace (favor) in the eyes of the Lord. This is the history of the generations of Noah. Noah was a just and righteous man, blameless in his [evil] generation: Noah walked [in habitual fellowship] with God. (AMP)

It is clear that these verses, read in context, concern the spiritual character of Noah, and don't have anything to do with his racial heritage. Noah, only, was not corrupt. Like Enoch, he walked with God. Chapter 6 of Genesis is clearly concerning the spiritual condition of mankind, but HWA twisted this to suit his purposes. HWA begins his set up by asking what "this universal evil and corruption" was that God considered "exceeding wickedness." (p. 147) Of course, his answer is "rampant and universal interracial marriage." Once again, he partially quotes Matthew 24:38 as "proof" that Jesus himself confirms this. Let's look at this verse in context and see if this is what Jesus was saying. Backing up to verse 36 of Matthew 24, Jesus is speaking concerning the time of His return. In verses 37-39, Jesus states:

But as in the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark. 39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

The remainder of Matthew 24 continues with further details of Christ's return. These verses clearly show that the people in Noah's time were caught off guard when the flood came. Jesus
used this example to show that the same situation would occur at His return. They were oblivious to what was going on, even up to the very moment that Noah entered the ark, and they will be oblivious right up to the Second Coming. There is absolutely nothing in these verses condemning interracial marriage because that *wasn't the topic* Christ was discussing in the first place. This is another example of sloppy scriptural interpretation on HWA's part.

From here, HWA will openly claim Noah to be of the "original white strain." (p. 148) Now this is where things begin to get interesting. HWA claims that Noah was "perfect in his generations"—all his ancestry back to Adam was of the one strain, and undoubtedly that happened to be white. (p.148) Carefully notice that there is not one single Scripture that the "apostle" could give to back this claim. If maintaining racial purity was that imperative to God, why would He bother creating Eve with ovaries that contained different colored genes? It certainly would have spared Him a lot of trouble. Why don't we see any instructions to mother Eve to keep her different colored children separate from each other? If the truth be told, *nobody* knows what color Adam and Eve were—nor what color Noah was—and apparently it wasn't important enough for scripture to be explicit concerning this matter. God cares about the condition of the heart, not the color of the skin. (I Samuel 16:7)

Now let's observe this next statement HWA makes:

If you are a livestock breeder, planning to enter your prize animals in a livestock show—perhaps at a state or county fair—you will be sure to enter only thoroughbred or pedigreed stock! Mixing the breed alters the characteristics. (p. 148)

What an incredibly callous misrepresentation of God's relationship to mankind! Did God really create man as a type of "livestock" to be used in some sort of experimental breeding program with the sole purpose of creating a perfect, unblemished race? Is the name "Adolph Hitler" going through your mind? Can the reader see how blind loyalty to this human leader puts one in the position of accepting everything that issues from his mouth, even though there is *no biblical basis* for it? Let's look at this paragraph to see how HWA purposely misquoted scripture in order to make the reader believe that racial separation was ordained by God:

God originally set the bounds of national borders, intending nations to be SEPARATED to prevent interracial marriage. Notice, "When the most high divided to the nations their inheritance [speaking of land or geographical boundaries], when he separated [notice—he separated] the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people..." (Deut. 32:8) (p. 149)

HWA is employing his deceptive methods. Notice the use of CAPITAL LETTERS, brackets [where HWA emphasizes the unimportant and redirects the readers attention away from what Scripture actually says], and the notorious ellipses "...," which is a clear indication of quoting partial information.

Now let's look at the whole verse in context:

> When the Most High divided to the nation their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. (Deut. 32:8)

It really changes the meaning when the "rest of the verse" is not omitted. This verse is located in the 32nd book of Deuteronomy, which is the Song of Moses. Joshua had been ordained Israel's new leader in the previous chapter. Moses is getting his final business squared away just before his death and Israel's imminent entrance into the promised land. Verse 8 is speaking about the boundaries *within the nation of Israel* that God had established in the promised land. Once Israel entered the promised land, they would settle into the areas that God had ordained for each tribe. Deuteronomy 32:8 is clearly speaking about the nation of Israel, but HWA *altered the verse*, making it sound that it was speaking of Adam and the supposed "sin" of interracial marriage.

Now let's closely examine another contradiction in HWA's logic. On page 148, he states:

Mixing the breed alters the characteristics.
HWA says that mixing livestock results in a different breed (altered characteristics). But on page 149, he makes this blundering statement:

But the people wanted to intermarry—until there would be only ONE RACE!

Mr. Confusion strikes again! First he states that God intended for the races to stay "pure," and that interracial breeding altered that pureness (creating mixed races). But then he turns around and says that interracial breeding creates one race. Think about it—the whole world turning into one race? That's about as "pure" as it gets. Man wouldn't have to worry about the sin of interracial marriage anymore since everyone would be the same race. Now ponder this for a moment: Does interracial marriage create one race, or does it create more races? Is there anyone alive today that isn't a mix of different ethnic backgrounds? Can anyone really claim to be "pure" all the way to Adam or Noah?

But HWA doesn't stop there with his ludicrous speculations. He informs us that Noah, his wife, and three sons were of the same white strain, but that one of Noah's sons married an Oriental and another a Black woman. He begins this thought on page 149, but one must go all the way to page 154 for HWA to continue with the "rest of the story." In the meantime, HWA must keep the reader off balance by mixing in Satan's sway, enormous world evils, the soon-coming annihilation, and of course, the ever predictable "way out" by being part of the "elect." On pages 150-153, HWA quotes his own sources (C. Paul Meredith) in order to prove his own doctrines concerning ancient civilization. C. Paul Meredith was under Armstrong's employ. How unbiased can this information possibly be?

Continuing on page 154, HWA confidently explains that God wiped out the entire corrupt world by the great flood, and spared only Noah and his immediate family. Previously, HWA informed readers that Noah, his wife, and his three sons were of the pure "white strain." But HWA stated that two of Noah's sons married interracially! Please think carefully about this. HWA defined this "universal and evil corruption" as interracial marriage, but then states that God spared Noah's family from the flood, and starts the human race over again with two mixed marriages. Now why would God wipe everyone off the face of the earth because of interracial marriage, and then start civilization over again with two interracially married couples? Does this make sense? Why didn't God simply spare Noah, his wife, and Shem, and find a pure Asian couple and a pure Black couple to place on the ark, and leave Ham and Japheth behind with their wives? Shouldn't God have punished them along with everyone else that had committed this gross "sin"? Once again, another major blunder in HWA's logic. Simply put—God loves all peoples and all races—a fact that seems to escape HWA's myopic heart.

On page 157, HWA depicts God as a cold, vindictive and emotionally detached being. Mankind must suffer while God stands off in the distance, watching and waiting with a scornful attitude:

Mankind is nearing the end of his rope. But even now, God will not intervene to save this defiant humanity from itself until man is finally brought to the point where, if God delayed longer in intervention, man would annihilate himself.

HWA has missed the whole point of Jesus coming to this earth. God loved mankind so much and hates to see His creation suffer. Man is spiritually dead, and in bondage to sin. Man simply can't save himself, and God knew this. This is why God sent His Son to set us free from spiritual bondage and give us eternal life. But HWA doesn't want us to focus on the Redeemer. He wants us to focus on the "Revealer of Mysteries"—himself—and his man-made solutions.

Now for the final bold claim strategically placed at the end of Chapter 4 [bolding mine]:

These are the very last days of Satan's evil world. God's utopian civilization will be started with the present generation.

HWA continues to frighten his readers with an impending nuclear holocaust. Like Charles Taze Russell of the Watchtower Society, who claimed Christ's return would occur with the "present generation of 1914," HWA declared that "this present generation" would see Christ's return. When Jesus didn't return in 1914, Russell changed his doctrine and said that Jesus returned "invisibly" in 1914. Did Jesus return during HWA's lifetime, since he postulated for decades
that he was God's chosen "end-time prophet," and that God would personally reveal these things to him just as He had done with the prophets of old?

When HWA wrote the MOA, he was quite aged in his final years of life. Members knew he wouldn't live too much longer and anticipated fleeing to "the place of safety" at any moment. The distribution of MOA during the 1985 Feast of Tabernacles was a clear "sign" reaffirming that the end was near. HWA had written "the most important book since the Bible" as a "final witness" to the world. In it, HWA had declared in writing:

This gospel now has been preached into every nation. (p. 158)

After decades of waiting, HWA finally pronounced "The Work" as "finished" and long time members were both relieved and ecstatic. Their long-awaited journey to Petra was just around the corner. That was almost twenty years ago. Herbert Armstrong did not take the church to the place of safety, but met his death in 1986. Joseph W. Tkach met his untimely death in 1995, and the church still did not fulfill its destiny with Jordan. The Great Tribulation didn't happen, but the Velvet Revolution did, and the threat of worldwide nuclear destruction crumbled as the Cold War ended. HWA's apocalyptic scenario did not come true as he had prophesied for decades. False prophets make false prophecies. Jesus himself said: "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders;" (Matt. 24:24a) HWA has "qualified" himself as a false prophet.

Footnotes for Chapter 4:

1 HWA also had his considerable cash flow and his own laborers. One 30 year ex-deacon of WCG said he helped scrape the hole for Loma Lake on the Big Sandy AC campus until his hands were cut up. In addition, how many knew their tithes and offerings went to help build a 76 acre golf course on the Big Sandy campus? (Read this in OIU 3, pt. 4)

2 In his booklet, 1975 in Prophecy, Herbert Armstrong uses the three L's to scare people into believing that Americans are lazy and the Germans are still working hard to take over the world. This booklet is filled with false prophecies and obvious errors. If you came into the church after the booklet was dropped from printing, it would be worth your time to read it online. This book was hidden from the new members for obvious reasons. It is entirely outrageous, and clearly proves that HWA was a false prophet. Note: Basil Wolverton (a comic artist and WCG elder) was behind the grotesque and horrifying pictures in 1975 in Prophecy and other WCG literature. Read on our site more about Basil Wolverton.

3 Herbert W. Armstrong: The Rich Apostle (Is requiring accountability of finances wrong?)

4 All these sins have been mentioned in the book, Herbert Armstrong's Tangled Web by David Robinson.

5 Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916) was founder of Zion's Watchtower Tract Society (today known as the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society or Jehovah's Witnesses).

6 The Berlin Wall fell by the hands of its own people in 1989, and shortly afterwards the shackles of the oppressive Communist government were removed, without firing a single shot. The Soviet Union dissolved overnight, and because there was no war at all, it was called the Velvet Revolution.

Chapter Five - Mystery of Israel

For error is plausible, and bears a resemblance to the truth, but requires to be disguised; while truth is without disguise. (Irenaeus Against Heresies, Book III, Chapter XV, v. 2)
HWA begins this chapter with his usual glut of dramatic, attention-grabbing questions, calling them "paradoxical facts." Advertising has taught him how to quickly get the customer's attention with excitement and uses such words as, "And here's another shocker!" "The truly amazing truth..." "It is an intriguing story!" The reader—anticipating another chapter of mesmerizing "mysteries"—is quickly hustled into the seat of a departing train, no longer realizing that the track is headed in the wrong direction.

Let's examine some of HWA's "paradoxical facts" on p. 159:

1. God says he is not a respecter of persons. Is he, then, a respecter of nations? Does he have a favorite?
2. Did you ever realize that God denied his chosen people salvation—save only their prophets? That the chosen nation was given only material and national promises—that God's Holy Spirit was inaccessible to them?
3. Did it ever occur to you that the Holy Bible is the book of and concerning only that one people Israel? And that other nations are mentioned only if and as they came into contact with Israel?

These rhetorical questions are designed to entice the reader to investigate these "facts" and satiate his curiosity. HWA was confident that his target market—Bible illiterates—wouldn't have the faintest idea how to refute him. If one doesn't know the Bible, one certainly wouldn't have a thorough knowledge of the history of Israel, since they are intertwined. HWA knew that most Americans' knowledge of Israel and the Jews doesn't extend beyond the Holocaust and the endless Middle Eastern conflicts broadcasted on TV. He was banking on our ignorance and was amply rewarded.

This fifth chapter of the MOA should be appropriately re-entitled, "Sensationalism Sells!" Noteworthy are the "factual statements" made without any detailed proof to back them, the unveiling of "The master KEY" [Israel's modern identity], the word "PURPOSE" [HWA's personal spin], and the frightening apocalyptic details placed at the end of the chapter. HWA will successfully divert the reader's attention with authentic-sounding details, interspersed with melodramatic phrases, all designed to dupe the reader into believing that the British-Israel doctrine came from the Bible. Let's observe this technique used below (p. 159-160):

And here's another shocker!—almost totally unrealized today by Christianity—even by Judaism and not recorded or understood by historians! The northern kingdom of Israel was not Jewish!

The truly amazing truth about Israel is a mystery totally unknown by any religion—by Christianity—be even Judaism!

Yes indeed, HWA promises to dish up some "shocking facts." These facts are "not recorded" and are "almost totally unrealized" by everyone—even the very people these facts concern. We needn't say where this is leading. The reader is expertly hustled along with intriguing details so he doesn't have a chance to pause and ask himself whether he is truly willing to stake his eternal life on unrecorded facts—facts that cannot be verified outside of HWA's organization. Yet this is exactly what these converts do! They are told to "prove all things" but the only thing they have proven is Herbert Armstrong's point of view.

Let's ponder these sensational "facts," which are nothing but disguises to keep the reader distracted from the Bible's true message:

**Fact #1** asks whether God is a respecter of nations and whether or not He has a favorite. The question is set up to make the reader believe that God does indeed have a favorite nation (Israel), and from there, the reader will be informed that the United States and Britain are modern-day Israel, and by believing this privileged piece of information, one will gain "the KEY" to unlock Bible prophecy. He will also be offered the opportunity to become a part of the elite "favorite." Salvation will be found through "national identity" and not through faith in Christ alone. Once the convert is convinced he is an Israelite that is simply "unaware of his true identity," he will be misled into performing Sabbath-keeping and other O.T. laws as "requirements" in order to "qualify" for his salvation.
Fact #2 informs us that the chosen nation of Israel was given only material and national promises, and that God's Holy Spirit was inaccessible to them. This "fact" is a set up that will later use the material prosperity and national dominance of the U.S. and Britain as "proof" that they are Manasseh and Ephraim (descendents of Israel). HWA will successfully downplay and deflect the reader's attention away from the third and most important promise: the promised "seed"—Jesus Christ. HWA's main goal is to emphasize salvation through belief in the modern identity of the nation of Israel, not through belief in the Savior.

Fact #3 states that the Holy Bible is the book of and concerning only one people—Israel—and that other nations are mentioned only if and as they came into contact with Israel. Once again, the focus is shifted away from Jesus, and onto the importance of the nation of Israel, so HWA can build on his British-Israelism dogma. The Holy Bible concerns all of mankind. The first few chapters of Genesis record the beginning of mankind's creation and fall; the remainder of the Bible concerns mankind's redemption by the Savior who would come from a tribe of Israel. As usual, HWA will draw attention away from a person's identity in Christ and onto the importance of finding one's identity in Israel.

By asking these questions, HWA is constructing another set up:

They [Israel] were chosen for a special PURPOSE preparatory to the ultimate establishment of the kingdom of God! (p.160)

Naturally, HWA will set himself up as the one who is preparing for the establishment of this kingdom. He claims that, "One cannot understand the real purpose and incredible potential of man without this vital knowledge." (p.160). Notice as the reader delves into the MOA, he is being led further and further away from salvation through Jesus Christ as the "vital knowledge" and instead, is titillated with yet another mystery. He employs the word "purpose" to pique the reader's curiosity. After pages of building up suspense, HWA finally produces "the master KEY" that will unlock all the Bible mysteries "closed until our present time." (p. 164). The sense of euphoria the reader experiences of finally possessing "the KEY" that is going to "unlock 90 percent of prophecy" is inexplicable. This is exactly what HWA wants. HWA gives the reader the illusion of empowerment, another clever advertising ploy. What the reader doesn't realize is that this "key" is nothing more than extra-biblical revelation. All Bible-based cults engage in extra-biblical revelation, a practice that makes the Bible "come alive" with every private interpretation. Good scholarship is no longer a requirement for proper understanding of the Scriptures—only an ingrained belief that God is directly working through His "appointed prophet" as he divinely interprets Scripture. Salvation through Jesus Christ is tossed to the side. The reader, convinced that the Bible is filled with mysteries waiting to be unlocked by the key now in his possession, is eager to get on with this exciting adventure.

Let's look at a few examples of extra-biblical revelation [bolding mine, comments in blue type mine]:

First, Abraham was a man of very outstanding qualifying abilities. Undoubtedly he, with his sons Isaac and Israel, shall, in the resurrection and kingdom of God, occupy a position next under Christ himself. The kingdom of God will be a spiritual kingdom including both Church and State—earth wide. These, as a team, probably will be next in line of authority under CHRIST—and over both church and state. (p. 171). (No scriptural proof given, just pure speculation.)

Of the nation ISRAEL, Moses, whom God raised up as their leader and lawgiver...in all probability will be under the Abraham-Isaac-Jacob team, but head over the national governments of the world during the coming millennium. And probably Joshua, who succeeded Moses, will be Moses' assistant in that office of worldwide national governments. (p. 171-172) (No scriptural proofs given, more speculation.)

Among them, Elijah probably will be head, under Christ and Abraham-Isaac-Israel, over the Church, worldwide. John the Baptist may be under Elijah. There are indications that the prophet Daniel will be head over all gentile nations, and under Moses and Christ. (p. 174) (No scriptural proofs, continued speculation.)
He [Jeroboam] also changed the holy festivals of the seventh month to the eighth month. There is a strong indication that he also changed the seventh day Sabbath to Sunday, the first day of the week. (p. 180) (First sentence is scriptural, second sentence cannot be verified through Scripture. One must take HWA at his word.) [Read my article: Did Jeroboam Change the Sabbath to Sunday?]

The Assyrians settled in central Europe, and the Germans, undoubtedly, are, in part, the descendants of the ancient Assyrians. (p. 183). (No scriptural proof, no historical references given to back up statements. If the Germans indeed are "undoubtedly" ancient Assyrians, then it wouldn't be difficult to give credible references.) [Read my article: The Origins of Assyria and Germany.]

However, the so-called Lost Ten Tribes—the kingdom of Israel—continued into Western Europe and Britain. We cannot be positive in respect to the various tribal identities today, but probably France or at least the northern French are the tribe of Reuben. Ephraim and Manasseh journeyed on into the British Isles. (p. 183) (No scriptural proof, no historical references. See my research article: Where are the Tribes of Israel Located? If HWA cannot be "positive" then why does he spend a whole chapter revealing these "facts" and calling them "proof"? In the next chapter of the MOA, he will build on these statements, and repeat them as if they were concrete information.)

And in his prophecy for these latter days Jacob said, "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall" (Gen. 49:22). In other words, Joseph—Ephraim and Manasseh jointly and together—was to be a colonizing people in this latter day, their colonies branching out from the British Isles around the earth. (p. 186) (Complete distortion of this verse. Yes, it does say that Joseph would be fruitful, but it clearly does NOT say he would be "a colonizing people branching out from the British Isles around the earth." Read the verse carefully.)

Once the reader has come this far into the MOA, his loyalty will once again be tested through acceptance or rejection of these (and numerous other) "revelations." Notice the use of the words, "probably," "may be," "indication," "undoubtedly"—this is the failsafe vocabulary of a false prophet. When his prophecies fail, he can backtrack and state, "I didn't say 'definitely,' I said, 'probably.' In other words, his prophecies are subject to change. Having been burned by countless false prophecies, it appears that HWA has learned to tailor his language to cover his bases. Remember, HWA spends a great deal of time convincing readers that nobody but him has the Truth, and that God is personally working through him and nobody else. He gives us the impression that God is personally speaking to him and revealing very important facts to him that the world needs to know before it is blown to bits. But under closer examination, we see nothing but the language of speculation knitted between all these "shocking truths."

Just in case the reader isn't convinced of these astonishing facts, HWA will frighten him with "impending worldwide holocaust" at the end of the chapter. HWA must resort to exploitive tactics to help the reader "make up his mind"—believe these truths, and be spared. Disbelieve, and they will be doomed. Once again, HWA scores.

BLIND OBEEDIENCE

The Old Testament story of Abraham is a historical account of how the nation of Israel came into being. It is an inspiring story of the faith of this one man, whom the promise of the seed of the world's salvation would come through. Unfortunately, HWA uses Abraham for his own diabolical purposes. Let's observe what HWA has to say concerning him.

First, HWA uses Abraham's "calling" and will outline his "very special purpose" into the remainder of the MOA. Second, HWA must sever any previous religious beliefs concerning Abraham with scornful remarks toward traditional Christian doctrines (That purpose, HWA says, was not to "give him salvation," or "get him into heaven.") Third, HWA will quote his own writings to verify his own beliefs concerning Abraham. ("I quote now from a book I wrote more than 50 years ago, The United States and Britain in Prophecy...") Of course HWA would quote
his own writings—it's the only source that would agree with his teachings! Tobacco companies quote their own "research" to prove that cigarettes don't cause heart disease or cancer, and HWA engages in the same practice. He certainly can't give the name of the book he plagiarized to verify this information lest one figure out in a hurry that none of this intriguing, shocking information was originally his.2 Once the reader writes away for a "free copy" of the US&BIP book, he will be further poisoned to accept this erroneous teaching as "truth."3

What appears to be a narrated description of Abraham actually is a clever set up. The reader does not realize that he is constantly being disarmed into accepting unquestioned obedience from HWA and his organization. Look at what is emphasized concerning Abraham [bolding mine]:

   God was calling him because he had seen in this man the potentialities of obedience to God and of leadership.

   Here was a command, which a condition and a PROMISE, provided the condition of obedience was met....

   [God's own flesh-born nation]...was started with one man who obeyed God without question, and accepted his divine rule.

Did Abram stop to argue and reason?

Did Abram quibble, resist, argue, rebel? He certainly did not!

There was no arguing with God. There was no human reasoning that God was all wrong. There were no foolish questions...

"Abram departed." Just plain, unquestioned obedience! (p. 160)

Now on page 163, the set up is complete. We see that the unsuspecting reader is being outright manipulated to emulate Abraham in order to gain salvation:

   And we must become like Abraham, and through Christ, one of his children, if we are to inherit the promise of eternal life in God's kingdom.

The same pattern of trickery is used over and over again by this clever con artist. The customer is being led to make the choice that the salesman wants him to make. Once in the organization, the convert will be expected to "obey God's government without question." In his zeal to please God, the transferal of "obeying God's voice" (which Abraham did) to "obeying God's government" (which HWA wants his readers to think Abraham did) quietly takes place without the convert even realizing it. This is why members are compliant and do not engage in any form of "questioning." Converts believe they are imitating Abraham, which they believe is a requirement for inheriting eternal life. What they failed to realize is that Abraham heard God's voice directly. We see in Scripture that there were several personal encounters with God throughout Abraham's lifetime. In some of the encounters, there was a clear, audible voice, which could not be mistaken as anything or anybody else, but God Himself. In other events, angels manifested themselves as men to deliver God's message to Abraham. In either case, Abraham knew beyond the shadow of a doubt, that he was dealing directly with the Creator. This is why Abraham obeyed without question. He knew exactly whom he was dealing with. This is not the same as blind obedience to an organization that claims to run "God's government" on earth. HWA will do his best to confuse the two throughout the MOA. Notice how he places the story of Abraham's unquestioned obedience just before he unleashes his questionable dogma—an undoubtedly calculated maneuver.

2520-YEARS PUNISHMENT

From where did HWA get the mathematical formula for the "2520 Years Punishment"? (It is no secret that HWA plagiarized the false teaching of British-Israelism from G. G. Rupert, J. H. Allen, and John Wilson.4 ) But it might be of interest to known from where HWA and others may have derived their magic "2520" formula.
In 1823, a gentleman named John Aquila Brown, began publishing the 2520 calculation and scheduled Christ's return for 1917. This was over 100 years before God revealed this to HWA. Other men, such as Nelson Barbour and Charles Taze Russell picked up on this, took the numbers from Brown, and concocted their own formula for predicting the Second Advent. 

The following is an article, written by Charles Taze Russell of the Watchtower Society. Notice the early date of 1876—long before HWA began to be "called and commissioned" by God. The similarities are unmistakable [bolding mine]:

**GENTILE TIMES: WHEN DO THEY END?**

BY CHAS. T. RUSSELL


"Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."—Luke xxi. 24.

_Doubtless our Lord intended to communicate to His disciples some knowledge, and possibly it was addressed more to the disciples in our day, than to the early church._

Let us then search what times the prophecy, which was in Christ, did signify. Of course, if it be one of the secret things of God, we cannot find out; but if a secret, why should Jesus mention it? If, on the contrary, it is revealed it belongs to us. Shall we guess and suppose? No: let us go to God's treasure-house; let us search the Scriptures for the key.

Jesus does not does not foretell its treading under foot of the Gentiles, as Rome had her foot upon them at that time. He does tell us, however, how long it will continue so, even the disciples thought, "that it was he which should have DELIVERED Israel."

_We believe that God has given the key. We believe He doeth nothing but he revealeth it unto His servants._ Do we not find part of the key in Lev. xxvi. 27, 33? _"I, even I will chastise you seven times for your sins; ...and I will bring your land into desolation...and will scatter you among the heathen."_ Israel did not hearken unto the Lord, but disobeyed him, and this prophecy is now being fulfilled, and has been since the days of Zedekiah, when God said, _"Remove the diadem, take off the crown, ...I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, ... until He comes whose right it is, and I will give it unto Him."_

Comparing these Scriptures, we learn, that God has scattered Israel for a period of seven times, or until _"He comes whose right" the Government is_, and puts an end to Gentile rule or governments. This gives us a clue at least, as to how long until the Jews are delivered. Further, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, the head of gold, is recognized by God as the representative of the beast, or Gentile Governments. _"A king of kings and wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air, hath God given into his hand."_ Dan. ii. 38. God has taken the crown off Zedekiah and declared the Image, of which Nebuchadnezzar is the head, ruler of the world until the kingdom of God takes its place (smiting it on its feet); and, as this is the same time at which Israel is to be delivered, (for _"Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled"_), we here get our second clue, viz.: these two events, noted of the Scriptures of truth —"Times of Gentiles," and "Treading of Jerusalem," are parallel periods, commencing at the same time and ending at the same time; and, as in the case of Israel, **their degradation was to be for seven times**, so with the dominion of the Image; it lasts seven times, for, when in his pride the "Head of Gold" ignored "The God of heaven," the glory of that kingdom (which God gave him, as a representative of that Image,) departed, and it took on its beastly character, which lasts seven times. Dan. iv. 23, —and, (prefigured by the personal degradation for seven years, of Nebuchadnezzar, the representative) until the time comes when they shall acknowledge, and "give honor to the Most High, whose Kingdom is an everlasting
Kingdom." Dan. iv. 34; for all the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord when He is the Governor among the nations.

Our next question naturally, is, How long are seven times? Does God in his word, furnish us any clue from which to determine the length of that period? Yes, in Revelations we learn that three and one-half times, 42 months, and 1260 prophetic days, literal years, are the same (it has for years been so accepted by the church,) and it was so fulfilled: if three and one-half times are 1260 years, seven times would be twice as much, i.e., 2520 years. At the commencement of our Christian era, 606 years of this time had passed, (70 years captivity, and 536 from Cyrus to Christ) which deducted from 2520, would show that the seven times will end in A.D. 1914: when Jerusalem shall be delivered forever, and the Jew say of the Deliverer, "Lo, this is our God, we have waited for Him and He will save us." When Gentile Governments shall have been dashed to pieces; when God shall have poured out all of his fury upon the nation, and they acknowledge him King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

But, some one will say, "If the Lord intended that we should know, He would have told us plainly and distinctly how long." But, no, brethren, He never does so. The Bible is to be a light to God's children;—to the world, foolishness. Many of its writings are solely for our edification upon whom the ends of the world are come. As well say that God should have put the Gold on top instead of in the bowels of the earth; it would be too common; it would lose much of its value. So with the truth; but, "to you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom."

We will ask, but not now answer, another question: If the Gentile Times end in 1914, (and there are many other and clearer evidences pointing to the same time) and we are told that it shall be with fury poured out; a time of trouble such as never was before, nor ever shall be; a day of wrath, etc., how long before does the church escape? as Jesus says, "watch, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape those things coming upon the world."

Brethren, the taking by Christ of His Bride, is evidently, one of the first acts in the Judgment; for judgment must begin at the house of God.

So we see the concept of the 2520 years was not revealed solely to HWA, nor is he the first to engage in the futility of predicting Christ's return. A. N. Dugger (father of Andrew Dugger, COG 7th Day) also ascribed to this calculation. When HWA started in the religion business in 1934, he knew that Russell's calculations were proven false. Jesus did not return in 1914 as they predicted. HWA was captivated by British-Israelism, which he plagiarized and introduced to Andrew Dugger. Though initially interested, Dugger eventually rejected it. He felt the information was significant, but simply couldn't figure how use it. But HWA did. By taking the 2520 years punishment and adding to the Assyrian captivity date (since the Babylonian date had proven false), he arrived with 1800. He looked for a significant historical event (The Louisiana Purchase in 1803) and from there, applied the British-Israel doctrine. He had his followers so absorbed by the unfolding of prophetic details during the 1800s, that he had hoped nobody would notice and question the formula, which we will look at next.

**WHICH "YEAR" IS USED?**

In the 1967 United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy, HWA breaks down the formula for the 2520 years punishment [bolding mine]:

But did you notice I said that a prophetic "time" is a 360-day year? Why not a year of 365 1/4 days? Why not a solar year? (p. 145)

In ancient biblical times, a year was figured on a basis of twelve 30-day months. Previous to the time, in Moses' day, when God gave His people the sacred calendar, the 30-day month was used. (p. 146)
But the 42 months of Revelation 13:5 is the same amount of time as the 1260 days of Revelation 12:6. So the 42 months were **30-day months**. (p. 146)

...and the whole expression is 3 1/2 prophetic "times," which is a literal 1260 days—or 3 1/2 years of **thirty-day months**. Seven of these "times," then, would be 2520 days—and on a day-for-a-year basis, 2520 years! (p. 146)

A prophetic "time," then, is a **360-day year**—or a plain 360 days. (p. 147)

Observe that HWA plainly stated that the sacred calendar consisted of **twelve 30-day months**.

After entering the organization, converts are taught that the calendar used today is pagan, and the 365-day system descended from the Egyptians. Members were issued a copy of *God's Sacred Calendar* where the Hebrew months are printed alongside the pagan months. The holy days are highlighted so members know the precise days to keep. Why is all this so important? Let's examine what HWA has written concerning God's "sacred calendar" [bolding mine]:

Here is the **true calendar** for all mankind. Its principles go back to the very first chapter of the Bible, where the sun and the moon were appointed to be for signs, seasons, days, and years (Gen. 1:14).

**This is the calendar Israel used** when God led the nation out of Egypt. **It has been in continual use for more than 3,400 years** since. In all major respects except one, it **is the same calendar used from the days of the earliest patriarchs to the exodus from Egypt.**

**This calendar** has been called the "Hebrew Calendar," but it **long antedated the Hebrew peoples—having its origin in the days of Enos, Seth and Adam** when men first determined the average length of the lunar month. (*God's Sacred Calendar, 1985-1986*)

So we see that this "sacred calendar" issued to church members is the "true calendar," it has been in continual use for over 3,400 years, and has its origin all the way to Adam. HWA made sure we understood that this twelve month, 30-day calendar was not a Hebrew invention, but was given directly from God. Now let's see another major contradiction made by HWA [bolding mine]:

The word *month* means moon. A new month begins with a new moon. At first quarter the month is one quarter gone; at full moon half a month has passed. **Months have 30 and 29 days alternately** with a few minor variations on some years. Seven years of a nineteen-year time cycle have a 13th month called Adar II. (*God's Sacred Calendar, 1985-1986*)

**So what happened to the God-ordained calendar of twelve 30-day months?!?** According to the 1985-86 edition of *God's Sacred Calendar*, the months of Nisan, Sivan, Ab, Tishri, Shebat and Adar I have 30 days, while the months of Iyar, Tammuz, Elul, Heshvan, Kislev, Tebeth, and Adar II have 29 days respectively!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Days</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nisan (1st)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iyar (2nd)</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sivan (3rd)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tammuz (4th)</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ab (5th)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elul (6th)</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tishri (7th)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heshvan (8th)</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kislev (9th Month) 29 days
Tebeth (10th Month) 29 days
Shebat (11th Month) 30 days
Adar I (12th Month) 30 days
Adar II (13th Month) 29 days

Add the twelve months together for a total of 354 days! (6 months x 30-days = 180 days, plus 6 months x 29 days = 174 days; 180 + 174 = 354 days). Now add in the 13th month of Adar II (354 days + 29 days = 383 days). Either date is a far cry from the sacred number of 360.

Naturally, this brings us to the next problem—if the "sacred calendar" isn't made up of 360-day years, but of 354 days (give or take a sacred month), then how can HWA calculate the 2520-year punishment correctly? HWA spells out the formula he used to calculate the punishment in The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy:

And on this "year-for-a day principle," it becomes seven 360-day years—a total of 2520 days. (p. 145, 1967)

HWA uses the number of days per year and multiplies it by 7 to gain the total number of years that Israel was to be punished. When applying this calculation to the 12-month sacred calendar (354-day year x 7 years), we end up with a 2478 years punishment. Years containing the 13th month created a 383-day year (383-day x 7 years) giving us a 2681 years punishment.

This problem with the sacred calendar did not escape HWA's attention. Back in 1940, HWA addressed problems with the calendar in a Good News letter. In this extracted portion of the letter, HWA states (bolding mine):

4) These facts prove there had to be an intercalary, or 13th, month ADDED to the year SEVEN TIMES in each 19 years. God has set the sun, the earth, and the moon in motion so that once every 19 years the sun and moon come into conjunction. That is, once in 19 years there will be a new moon on March 21st, for example. There are SEVEN more new moons in each 19-year solar-lunar cycle than there are solar months, (12 to the year). Thus God's great time cycle, written in the heavens, is based upon SEVEN—God's complete number, signifying Sabbath—added to TWELVE, the number of Tribes of Israel, number of Jesus' original apostles, etc! Since this is true, the ONLY POSSIBLE METHOD by which months can begin on new moons, and yet the solar year can be retained, is to add a 13th month every two or three years, 7 times in 19 years. Nowhere do the Scriptures specifically mention an intercalary month, yet these facts of astronomy and these Bible facts PROVE it was used. (GOOD NEWS, 1940, "How to Figure Passover")

HWA informs us that the solution is gained by adding a "13th," or "intercalary" month, seven times in a 19-year time cycle. He clearly and emphatically states that this "is true, the ONLY POSSIBLE METHOD" to correctly calculate the number of days per sacred year. Notice that HWA avoided saying that this calculation resulted in a 360-day year. He also avoided performing the calculations, even though it would have been easy enough for him to do. Once again, we ask, could HWA be hiding something? Let's perform the calculations using the formula HWA outlined:

12 years x 354 days per year = 4248 days
7 years x 383 days per year = 2681 days
4248 days + 2681 days = 6929 total days in a 19-year time cycle
Take 6929 days and divide it up by 19 years and the total number of average days per year equals 364.68, or when rounded off—\textbf{365 days per year}—the exact number that HWA claimed was derived by the pagan Egyptians!\footnote{9}

As if this wasn't amusing enough, trying to figure out these intricate calculations only gets worse! You see, HWA is using a 360-day calendar formula and applying the punishment against a 365-day \textit{Julian} calendar. He has calculated 42 months of 30-days, but if we go by the calendar that he insists was in use since the time of Adam, and isn't Hebrew in origin, then we must use 42 months of either 29 or 30 days. But even if we stick to the 360-day year, our Julian calendar is 5\% days longer per year. After 2520 years, the punishment is off by 36 years! (5.25 extra days \times 2520 years = 13,230 days. Divide this by a 365 \frac{1}{4} day year (13,230 days / 365.25 year = 36 years). The national punishment should have ended in somewhere around 1764-1767, depending on which date HWA makes up his mind to use (1800 or 1803 A.D. minus 36 years) as the correct expiration date of the punishment.

If HWA insists on using the 360-day year, then God's "sacred calendar" must be disqualified since it is comprised of 29 and 30-day months for a total of 354 days (plus a 13th month added in 7 times in a 19-year cycle, and as we discovered, averages out to the pagan 365 days). If HWA insists that the sacred calendar is of divine origin, then he has been silent in pointing out the discrepancies of this system. We see him use the 360-day year to perform the 2520-year calculations, which clearly conflict with God's sacred calendar—the very one that HWA says has been in use since Adam—the very one that he made us believe that Daniel was using for these numbers. The whole 2520 years of punishment cannot be properly calculated nor applied to today's system, which is exactly what he did!

The Jewish calendar that was issued to members in 1985 was not the true calendar used since the beginning of time, as HWA made his followers believe. The whole intricate system of calculating the sacred calendar was lost after the temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. The Jewish calendar that was re-created around 100-150 A.D. was so far off that \textit{the early church fathers} noted that the Jews would keep the Passover twice in some years! (See my research on \textit{The Quartodeciman Controversy}). This was the main reason why the early church quit relying on the Jews for the correct time of year to observe the resurrection on Sunday. HWA was clearly aware of the problem, which he addressed in 1940, and then again in 1968.

Now let's look at some peculiar remarks concerning the Sacred Calendar made by HWA in his 1940 letter [bolding mine]:

\begin{quote}
5) Now, our problem is, WHEN, and HOW OFTEN, DID God ordain these intercalary months should be added?

\textbf{Research reveals} two basic points on this question, 1st, GOD DID NOT RECORD IT IN THE BIBLE, which gives us absolutely NOTHING more to go on that I have stated above. 2nd, History is vague on the subject, shedding little light that can be asserted and trusted. Yet we know God gave HIS PEOPLE a \textbf{FIXED RULE} for calculating TIME PERIODS, and for figuring WHEN to hold the Festivals of Jehovah. \textbf{Otherwise, the prophecies, so full of definite time-periods, can never be understood}. Otherwise God's people could not obey Him!

We learn in the Bible the men of old did have understanding of the times. They knew how to figure time. "Of the children of Issachar, were men that HAD UNDERSTANDING OF THE TIMES, to know what Israel ought to do." (I Chron. 12:32). See Esth. 1:13. (GOOD NEWS letter 1940, "How to Figure Passover")
\end{quote}

Once again, we see HWA resort to contradicting remarks to prove his version of the sacred calendar as being "correct." He admits that this formula of adding the 13th month seven times to a nineteen-year time cycle \textit{is not recorded in the Bible}! But then he turns right around and states that God gave his people a "fixed rule" for calculating "time periods," but doesn't say where God recorded this "fixed rule." He cleverly throws up a smokescreen with an irrelevant statement: "Of the children of Issachar, were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do." What was \textit{that} supposed to mean? He never elaborates. If he's referring to ancient Issachar, then they're one of the "lost ten tribes" which had been taking into
captivity, completely losing their identity—so why would they continue keeping the ancient calendar if they had forgotten they were Israelites? If he is speaking of modern day Issachar, Herman Hoeh has identified them as the nation of Finland.\textsuperscript{10} So we must conclude that HWA should be using a Finnish calendar and not a Jewish calendar since he clearly says Issachar "knew how to figure time"! Like every lie, more lies have to be fabricated to cover the initial lie.

By the apostle's own admission, he states that the accuracy of the calendar is vital to understanding prophecies. Take away the accuracy, the prophecies cannot be calculated, and the whole system falls like a house of cards. HWA deceptively engineered the belief that he was using a divine calendar, even issuing copies to the membership months before his death. He simply could not admit he was wrong because he clearly understood the ramifications of such an admission. He knew it would bring his divine "calculations" under scrutiny—and once proven "false," would bring his apostleship under scrutiny.

In conclusion, there simply was no "2520 years punishment" placed on ancient Israel. There is no biblical basis for this formula, a formula that HWA derived by lifting and combining verses out of context, just as his predecessors did. By applying this supposed "sacred calendar" formula to a corrupt Julian calendar renders it useless. The 360-day biblical year cannot be reconciled with the present Jewish calendar, which averages to 365 days in the 19-year time cycle. HWA knew this, but resorted to deception and half-truths to cover his lies.

**Racially — Nationally — Religiously Separated**

HWA continues with his racial polemics from the previous chapter. The statements made in this chapter have proven to be just as amusing. There is an underlying purpose, as we shall later see. First, we will examine some of the statements made in the current chapter. Concerning the racial purity of Israel, HWA states [bolding mine]

Here was a people of almost clear racial strain, and the God believing heredity of Abraham, Isaac and Israel. (p. 169)

GOD INTENDED TO KEEP THEM PHYSICALLY SEPARATE from other nations—both nationally (racially) and religiously. (p.173)

For them to intermarry with other races would result in two things: It would interbreed into other races, and mix them into other idolatrous religions! (p. 173)

Now let's make some interesting observations at some more major contradictions replete in HWA's writings. [bolding mine]

Israel, however, always did absorb gentiles, who became Israelites through living in Israel's land and intermarrying. (p. 187)

The U.S. has become known as the "melting pot" of the world. Instead of refuting a Manasseh ancestry, this fact actually confirms it.

HWA engages in a whole rigmarole concerning the "racial purity" of the people of Israel, but then turns right around and says that "absorbing gentiles and intermarrying" was proof that the U.S. and British peoples are ancient Israel! Again, we see HWA changing his standards to accommodate his erroneous beliefs. If it wasn't okay for ancient Israel to "interbreed" back then, why would it be okay for them to interbreed today? Didn't HWA teach that God is "the same yesterday, today, and forever?"

Now let's look at the following statements made by HWA [bolding mine]:

He [Abraham] prevented his son Isaac from intermarrying among the dark Canaanites then in the land. (p. 166)

The Promised Land was then called Canaan. Canaanites, racially dark, had settled in the land. (p. 172)
Jacob had six sons by Leah, two from Rachel—all of the same original racial stock, and two each from the maids of Rachel and Leah—12 in all. Even the maids of Leah and Rachel undoubtedly were of pure Hebrew stock. (p. 167)

Jesus Christ was born of the tribe of Judah, and it was necessary that HE be of the original pure racial strain, even as Noah was. (p. 173)

By the learned apostles' own words, he has declared the Canaanites a "racially dark" peoples, while the twelve sons of Jacob were of pure Hebrew stock. Now let's examine the Scriptures concerning Jesus' genealogy through Mary since he was born through her family line. I have skipped through the list to the names that we need to focus our attention on in Luke 3:

Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph...31 the son of David, 32 the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon, 33 the son of Amminadab, the son of Ram, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, the son of Jacob, etc.

Isn't it interesting that HWA failed to mention that Obed's mother was Ruth, a Moabitess. And if all this "interbreeding" among the heathens wasn't bad enough, Perez's mother was Tamar—a "dark-skinned" Canaanite! (Matt. 1:3, Gen. 38:1-30) It appears that Jesus' own lineage is tainted with mixed blood! HWA tells his readers that, "it was necessary" for Jesus to be of pure [white] racial strain but Scripture plainly refutes this. Was a "quality heredity" necessary for Christ to be descended from, or is HWA speaking on his own authority? Was God asleep while all this interracial breeding was taking place in Jesus' lineage? Either God was powerless to ensure that Jesus' genealogy consisted of "pure racial strain," or HWA has botched this one up, too. Either the Bible is wrong or HWA is wrong. By now, I'm sure you know.

God's focus was not skin color, or "quality heredity" (whatever that is supposed to mean)—God's sole purpose for this national exclusiveness was to prevent idolatry. He knew if the Israelites were to intermarry with the pagan nations around them, they would adopt their vile religious practices, which were an abomination to God. We read in Exodus 34:11-16:

"Observe thou that which I command thee this day: behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite. Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee: But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves: For thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God: Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a-whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice. And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a-whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a-whoring after their gods."

This proved true throughout the history of Israel. Notice in the Scriptures below that God commanded them to avoid several other heathen nations as well. HWA partially quotes Ezra 9:2 as "proof" that God was displeased with interracial marriage, but he failed to quote the previous verse, which gives the real reason why:

Ezra 9:1: When these things were done, the leaders came to me saying, The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, with respect to the abominations of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. [emp. mine]

HWA also partially quotes Ezra 10:10-11 as another "proof" of God's distaste for interracial relationships, but once again, fails to show the real reason God did not want them to intermarry. When we back up to the previous verse, we find:
Ezra 9:11: which you commanded by Your servants the prophets saying, "The land which you are entering to possess is an unclean land, with the uncleanness of the peoples of the lands, with their abominations which have filled it from one end to another with their impurity. [emp. mine]

God did not single out the Canaanites because of their "dark" skin. He condemned all of these nations because of their abominable practices. Since HWA is a master at "omission," he naturally fails to bring to the reader's attention that the Ammonites and Moabites descended from Lot, through incest with his two daughters. And since Lot was Abraham's nephew, we can conclude that they came from the same "pure racial strain" that Abraham did. So the heathen Ammonite and Moabite nations were "white," but God commanded the Israelites not to intermarry with them either. Obviously, skin color had nothing to do with this particular command. God promised Abraham that the Savior would come through his family line, and He fulfilled His promise through preservation of Abraham's lineage through the Jewish nation.

It is interesting to note that the Bible defines the Ethiopians as having distinctive colored skin, but not the Canaanites. Jeremiah 13:23a says, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" Since HWA taught that the Bible interprets itself, we can safely conclude from this verse that Ethiopians were racially dark. Now HWA revealed in the previous chapter that God considered interracial marriage "exceeding wickedness"—so grievous was this sin, He wiped out mankind by the Flood. Does it make sense that God would wipe out the world because of this "sin," but allow His greatest servant—the very one who would lead His "racially pure" chosen nation—to marry interracially? HWA conveniently overlooked Numbers 12:1 for his own benefit [emphasis mine]:

And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman.

Yes, indeed, Moses, who was of pure Hebrew stock, married a racially dark Ethiopian! "So important was this fact that it was repeated!" How could something as important as this not catch HWA's attention, especially since it was stated twice? Was Moses punished for this sin? Read Numbers 12 and find out who was punished. God could have easily expelled Moses and made an example of him for committing the very sin that HWA says God had specifically forbidden. HWA conveniently omitted this verse—that's called deception. In his list of "Who's Who" in the Racial Purity Department, we have observed HWA engaging in gross omissions of several individuals for the sole purpose of making the Bible agree with his personal prejudices.

Why was HWA obsessed with racial purity? Let's take a closer look at the statements made by HWA throughout the MOA:

1. It is evident that Adam and Eve were created white. (p. 148)
2. He [Noah] was of the original white strain. (p. 148)
3. Here was a people of almost clear racial strain, and the God believing heredity of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. (p. 169)
4. So now again we come to the question, WHY did God raise up this special Hebrew nation as "the chosen people"?...One point to notice here. The probability is that these people were all—or nearly all—of the white racial strain, unchanged since creation. (p. 166)
5. God's chosen nation Israel was white. (p. 148)
6. Jesus was white. (p. 148)
7. I have my genealogy all the way back to Edward the First of England and a line extending back to King David of ancient Israel. I have been astonished to discover this genealogy and the fact that I am, on one side of my family, actually of "the house of David." (p. 13)

We see HWA establishing his "quality heredity" through these important individuals. This was done purely because HWA wanted to establish his authority through "sacred lineage" all the
way back to David's throne. The unsuspecting reader, at this point, does not realize that HWA will claim that the U.S. and Britain are descended from ancient Israel. Once he convinces readers of this "unknown, unrecorded fact," then he will convince readers that Queen Elizabeth still sits on the throne of David today. HWA wants his readers to believe that he has a special, "sacred connection" by bloodline to this very throne (and to Jesus), which further boosts his position as God's divinely appointed messenger. Now let's see what Paul said about the importance of tracing genealogies [bolding mine]:

I Timothy 1:4: Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do.

The whole British-Israelism doctrine is nothing more than tracing endless genealogies, which Paul states we are not to do. HWA has clearly violated this by tracing his own genealogy back to the house of David; the genealogies of Ephraim and Manasseh and the remaining tribes of Israel; and the genealogies of Assyrians and Babylonians. As Paul said, this information did not bring about godly edification, instead it has brought fear of the ancient Assyrians (modern Germans) and Babylonians (modern Italians), and it certainly ministered questions amongst our friends and loved ones outside of the organization. HWA admonished his converts, "Don't believe me—believe the Bible!" The Bible states that we are not to give heed to these fables and endless genealogies, so we needn't give heed to HWA's historical fabrications. We are free to walk away from them.

HWA channels the reader's focus into the direction of his own racially prejudiced beliefs, even making it appear, through misrepresenting and omitting pertinent information, that God Himself endorsed racial segregation. [Note: Especially see p. 28 of the 1963 Plain Truth. (found online)]

There is a second reason why HWA emphasizes racial purity. Once the unwary person enters "the Church" (i.e., any controlling offshoot today who holds to HWA's racial teachings), he will be instructed on the "racial segregation policies" of the organization. There will be no "dating" between the races. Those who descended from an interracial marriage will "be told" which race they may date according to their exterior physical features. In other words, a person's grandmother may be white, his/her grandfather black, but if the minister thinks the convert looks more black than white, he/she will be racially categorized as black and will be prevented from dating anyone that is from the white or Asian race. This "racial categorization" exerts an enormous amount of control over the convert. He will have to "get approval" from the minister over who he can or cannot date or marry, which can be a monumental task if he is from a church area that has few, if any, people of his own race. Others who entered the organization already "bound" in mixed marriages and had children, were also subject to this abuse. When their children came of "dating age" the minister would inform them of their dating prospects, which could be severely limiting in many church areas. If the convert "questions" this policy, he will be reminded of the Flood and God's great displeasure over the rebellious human race for intermarrying. If the convert does not "submit" to racial policies of the organization, he/she will be promptly put out.

Ironically, this method of racial screening backfired. We knew a woman who was Caucasian and she wanted to marry a Hispanic man. It took over a year to gain "approval" after being turned down twice. Now if HWA insists that there were three major races, then what race was the Hispanic man? He wasn't Asian, nor was he Black (he apparently didn't qualify as "white"). Did it have to take over a year to figure out what he was? What if you were from India? You are neither pure white, pure Black, or pure Asian. What if you're Philippino—are you white, Black or Asian? It is ridiculous to think that after millennia of intermarriage that people can be sorted in three untainted races. This is an insane, unbiblical method of which Hitler would be proud.

STEALING FROM GOD

This section of the MOA is small, but loaded. Now that HWA has gotten his readers to believe they are descendants of ancient Israel, he lays the Law down thick:

God has a financial law for our nations. He says 10 percent of the increase, or gross income of each one of us, belongs to God for his purposes and his work. (p. 190)
The unwary reader is then flogged with Malachi 3 for stealing from God for withholding 10 percent of his income. Now let's see another quote from HWA's own mouth as he repeats the precise amount he says that God requires [bolding mine]:

But God requires only ten percent. (p. 322)

Notice HWA does not say: "10 percent for first tithe, 10 percent for second tithe, another 10 percent for third tithe year, a tithe of the second tithe for covering feast expenses, the remainder of excess second tithe after the feast ends, seven holy day offerings, plus the building fund, S.E.P.11, and a tithe from local church fundraisers." But this is exactly what happens once the person is ensnared by the organization. If God only requires 10 percent, why does HWA (and all the other WCG splinters, such as Philadelphia Church of God, United Church of God-AIA, Living Church of God, et. al.) require more? And why do they not tell anyone this until after they've entered the organization? Can the reader see how truly underhanded this is?

NATIONAL IDENTITY—NATIONAL CURSE

Now let's continue with the next paragraph in this section:

After the year 1800 we prospered because of Abraham's obedience and God's unbreakable promises to him. But now having received such individual and national prosperity, we sin by stealing from God. That has brought our nations under a curse. We have won our last war. Nothing but troubles now lie ahead until we repent. (p. 191)

Either God is unfair, or HWA has performed another major gaffe in his logic. HWA previously informed his readers that nobody, not even Daniel, understood what 90% of Bible prophecy meant. He earlier stated that, "the Bible was a coded book, not to be understood until our day in this latter half of the twentieth century." (p. xi, emphasis mine). Even the MOA jacket cover states:

He [HWA] found that the mysteries that have perplexed humans were long ago revealed by the one supreme authority of all knowledge, but in a coded message not allowed to be decoded and revealed for the world to hear—until now! (MOA, copyright 1985)

On page 294, HWA states:

It [Christ's gospel] had not been proclaimed to the world until the first week in 1953, when for the first time in about 1900 years—a century of time cycles—it went out on the world's most powerful radio station, Radio Luxembourg in Europe.

If HWA's claims are true, this means that the U.S. and Britain didn't know their true identity until 1953, when he began preaching the only true gospel.12 So one must ask whether it was fair for God to curse the U.S. and Britain when they didn't know their true national identity until 1953—a whole 150 years later! Remember, the 2520-year curse expired in the early 1800s, and God had to bless these nations unconditionally because of Abraham's obedience. Now HWA claims that these nations are cursed because they didn't tithe. How could they tithe if they never knew their national identity until HWA revealed it to them, over a century and a half later? Remember, one of the "Eighteen Restored Truths" was Israel's modern identity.13 Isn't this like punishing a child for breaking rules he never knew existed?

This brings us to our next question: To whom were the U.S. and British citizens supposed to tithe, since HWA hadn't been born and commissioned yet? Remember, HWA insisted that all the tithes be given to his organization since he was the only one preaching the true gospel. Why would God require these nations to give tithes since He hadn't commissioned HWA to begin "the Work" until 1934, and, as HWA himself stated, the gospel hadn't been proclaimed to the world until 1953, when it finally went to Europe? The MOA jacket cover plainly states that God "did not allow these mysteries to be decoded—until now!"—that was 1985, thirty+ years past 1953! Which date is the correct date? Can't God's apostle get it right the first time?

Now let's continue. On page 187, HWA states [bolding mine]:
But what about the other tribes of the so-called Lost Ten Tribes? While the birthright was Joseph's, and its blessings have come to the British Commonwealth of nations and the United States of America, yet the other eight tribes of Israel were also God's chosen people. They, too, have been blessed with a good measure of material prosperity—but not the dominance of the birthright.

We lack space for a detailed explanation of the specific identity of all of these other tribes in the nations of our twentieth century. Suffice it to say here that there is ample evidence that these other eight tribes have descended into such northwestern European nations as Holland (Netherlands), Belgium, Denmark, northern France, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway. The people of Iceland are also of Viking stock. The political boundaries of Europe, as they exist today, do not necessarily show lines of division between descendants of these original tribes of Israel.

So in 1953, the lost Israelites all over the world discovered their true identity when they heard it broadcast on Radio Luxembourg. Notice that HWA harps long and loud about the U.S. and Britain being "under a curse," but what about the rest of the "lost ten tribes," now that they know their true identity? Should God only curse Ephraim and Manasseh for "being stiff-necked and not obeying God and his laws"? I don't recall any of the other eight, modern Israelite nations keeping the Sabbath and tithing to HWA, so they must be guilty of committing the same sins as the U.S. and Britain! HWA states that these fellow Israelites "have been blessed with a good measure of material prosperity" (which he wants readers to believe is "proof" of their identity), but they don't share in the curses. Hardly seems fair, doesn't it? (Read my research article, Where are the Tribes of Israel Located?)

In The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy, HWA informs his readers that the Queen of England sits on David's throne. Since Radio Luxembourg has broadcast this fact to the entire world, then it would stand to reason that the "lost ten tribes" should be tithing to the Queen of England if, indeed, she is the legitimate heir to the "Israelite" throne. In any case, if Christ is returning to sit on this very throne, doesn't it make sense that the modern Israelites should be tithing to the heir of the modern Israelite throne—the very throne Christ will sit on? Why would HWA usurp the Queen's, and ultimately—Christ's—tithes? So who here is really stealing from God? Was HWA so delusional that he could remotely believe that all these "Israelitish nations" should send 10% of their gross income to him?

HWA warns Britain and America of forthcoming, divine punishment:

**God will use a United Europe to punish Britain-America.** Then he will use the Communist hordes to wipe out the Roman Empire. (p. 195)

This United Europe is also known as the European Common Market. Although HWA warns the U.S. and Britain of impending invasion, he doesn't inform them of specific nations that the Common Market is comprised of. Could there be a reason for this? Today, the European Common Market is made up of the following nations: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom. Isn't it interesting that the very nations that HWA says are the "lost ten tribes" are also some of the very same nations that make up the European Common Market? Why would God send these Israelite nations (Belgium, Denmark, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, and the UK), which make up half of the Common Market, to attack their own brothers? Now that these nations know their true identity, why would they conspire with the Germans to destroy their own people? Does this really make any sense?

Earlier in the MOA, HWA, speaking of the Common Market, states [bolding mine]:

This [referring to the prophecy in Isa. 14:3-6] is NOT speaking of the king of ancient Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar...It is speaking of the one who will be RULER of the soon-coming resurrected "Holy Roman Empire"—a sort of soon-coming "United States of Europe"—a union of 10 nations to rise up out of or following the Common Market of today (Rev. 17). **Britain will NOT be in that empire soon to come.** (p. 78)
It is clearly evident that Britain (the United Kingdom) is a member of the European Common Market. HWA declared with unwavering certainty that Britain would not be part of the Common Market, but just the opposite has transpired. Would God reveal flawed information to HWA, or was he (once again) speaking on his own authority? [Update: Was Herbert Armstrong Right About Britain Exiting the European Union? [June 24, 2016 ESN article]]

Now let's see another HWA doctrinal faux pas. Concerning the question of salvation being offered in this present age, he states [bolding mine]:

Understand this point, which has been a mystery to the world. When God closed off the tree of life, he closed off the redemption and salvation of mankind for 6,000 years, until the second Adam, Jesus Christ, after 6,000 years, should return to earth in supreme power and glory to unseat Satan from his throne and to rule all nations of mankind. (Under subheading, "Salvation Closed Off," p. 122)

Meanwhile mankind as a whole would not as yet be brought to judgment—neither condemned nor saved. (p. 123)

Now before proceeding further, UNDERSTAND WHY only the minute FEW have so far been called to salvation—WHY the world as a whole has been CUT OFF from God—WHY the world has not yet been judged—WHY neither "saved" nor "lost"! (Under subheading, "Salvation Now Only for Minute Few," p. 234)

Then let's read what he has to say about salvation on page 195:

But, as salvation is given first to Israel, so is corrective punishment!

First HWA informs us that "only a minute FEW so far have been called to salvation," but then turns right around and tells us that salvation was given first to Israel. Now we must think very carefully about this. Exactly how big is modern-day Israel? HWA tells us specifically that:

Together the descendants of these two lads, Ephraim and Manasseh, were to grow into the promised multitude—the nation and company of nations." (p. 185).

Notice that, before dividing the promises, this prophetic blessing indicated plainly that the descendants of these lads should remain together, and together grow into a great multitude…(United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy, 1967, p. 56)

So by HWA's own mouth, we see that the modern Israeliite nations of Ephraim and Manasseh have become "a great multitude." As we observed previously, he also stated that the remaining eight tribes could be traced to the nations of northwestern Europe (Holland, Belgium, Denmark, northern France, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway, Iceland). Now add them together. Does this equal "a minute few" or is this a very large number of people—maybe even a "great multitude"? So if HWA is correct that God is only calling, "A chosen FEW" in this present age, why does he contradict himself by stating that salvation is being given to Israel, which he clearly defines as the U.S., Britain, and eight European nations, which is certainly NOT a "minute few"?

Now let's look at this doctrinal flip-flop by HWA [bolding mine]:

But, as salvation is given first to Israel, so is corrective punishment! (p. 195)

There was no conversion in ancient Israel—no salvation. The 37th chapter of Ezekiel reveals how those of ancient Israel will receive the Spirit of God, if willing, in the Great White Throne Judgment. (p. 239)

At what point was salvation given to modern Israel? HWA never says. He states here that salvation was never offered to ancient Israel, but will be offered in the "Great White Throne Judgment." He jumps ahead and states that salvation was given first to Israel (meaning modern day Israel) but he never says how this was accomplished or when it was accomplished.
HWA taught that redemption and salvation has been closed off to mankind for 6,000 years until Christ returns. He states that the whole world has not been yet judged. Remember, he says only a few are called to salvation at this present time. ("Nobody can come to the Father unless He is called.") HWA taught that the number of true Christians was the 144,000. Converts understand this refers only to those who are members in his church. So if God wasn't calling everyone outside of HWA's church to "understand" these "truths" in the first place, how can HWA turn right around and pronounce divine "corrective punishment" for their "rebellion" when they were never called in the first place? It hardly seems fair that God would punish people (starting first with modern-day Israel) for being "disobedient to His laws" when He's already decided not to open their eyes until after Christ returns at the end of the 6,000-year period. Either God has opened their minds to understand "truth" and has offered salvation to the multitudes, or He hasn't. HWA can't seem to make up God's mind which.

HWA claims that, "The proof that the U.S. is Manasseh is overwhelming." Let's take a closer look at how HWA emphasizes the similarities between ancient Israel and the U.S./Britain as "proof" of their modern day identity:

Could it be mere coincidence that it started, as a nation, with thirteen colonies? (p. 187)

Observe, once again, the "power of suggestion" and no concrete proof. Notice what is NOT said, as much as what IS said by HWA. If, indeed, the thirteen colonies represent the thirteen tribes of ancient Israel, were the colonies divided into their proper tribal origins? For instance, we saw earlier how HWA traced the identity of the remaining eight tribes of Israel to Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, France and Switzerland. So are we to believe that these thirteen colonies were divided by the racial/family origins of the Swiss, Danish, French, Norwegians, etc.? Why would the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, come to the U.S. and divide themselves into thirteen tribes, especially if their brothers already had their own territory in Europe? When ancient Israel went into the Promised Land, we didn't see the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh subdivide their lands into the other tribes, yet this is exactly what HWA is implying. Of course, he doesn't point this out because his whole purpose is to make the reader believe that these similarities are more than coincidence. Today, the United States has grown from thirteen colonies into fifty states, another "fact" that HWA fails to emphasize (a fact that all "deceived, worldly educated" 5th graders know) because it would detract from his erroneous comparisons.

Let's examine the other amazing parallels that HWA uses as "proof."

So this prophecy shows that at the very time we were receiving God's blessings, we were a tremendous BLESSING to the other nations of the earth—for it is our peoples who have rescued the other nations of the world time and again through the Marshall Plan, the Point Four program, the Alliance for Progress, the hundreds of millions of bushels of wheat for starving nations.

The Hoover Program saved up vast food supplies after World War I. It saved millions in other nations from starvation!

Anciently, Joseph saved up the wheat and food and made it available to others. MODERN Joseph did also…(p. 189)

Although this chapter appears to be filled with detailed "proof" that the U.S. is modern day Joseph, HWA, in his usual modus operandi, cleverly omits pertinent information. Once again, we must ask, could there be a reason for this? Remember, the "turning point" was "at the end of 1950" when America did not win the Korean War. (p. 189). Now let's look closely at the dates of these historical events that HWA has listed. The Marshall Plan was instituted from 1948 through 1951. The Point Four program was instituted in 1953, and the Alliance for Progress in 1961. If America was helping these other nations, saving them from starvation—why in the world would God curse America for being generous? Notice that these historical dates fall after the date that God supposedly began His "curse." Could this be the real reason the HWA omitted this information?
HWA made readers believe that The Hoover Program saved up vast food supplies like Joseph did, but in actuality, Americans sacrificed their portion of wheat, sugar and other items so they could be exported to other nations. There were no "vast supplies in storage" and Americans were placed on rations. President Hoover had to resort to purchasing rice from Burma, corn from Argentina, and beans from China, in order to feed these other nations after World War I. Contrast this with Joseph, who stored food years in advance and could feed other nations without the Egyptians making any such sacrifices. This is another distinction that HWA failed to point out. So WHY did the Americans bless other, struggling nations throughout history? HWA refuses to acknowledge that America is a CHRISTIAN nation, built on Christian principles. They gave to the needy—even sacrificing their own needs—because they were believers of Christ! They did so because they knew they were morally obligated.

As usual, the supposed parallel between Joseph and America is nothing more than a set up:

BUT—we are stiff-necked and rebellious toward God and his law, while our ancient forefather Joseph served and obeyed God with a whole heart. (p. 189)

It seems that saving other nations from starvation has qualified America as being "stiff-necked and rebellious" in HWA's eyes. Can't America do anything right? Of course not! HWA can't con people into believing that God is ready to rain down destruction if he shows America's virtues. So if HWA insists that modern day Joseph is rebellious toward God's law—then what law was Joseph obeying while in Egypt? The Exodus was still future, the nation of Israel wasn't founded yet, the Ten Commandments weren't cut in stone, and the laws and ordinances of Leviticus and Deuteronomy weren't committed to papyrus. Are we to believe that Joseph kept the Sabbath and tithed (to who?) while he was ruler over Egypt? Evidently, ancient Joseph was just as guilty as modern Joseph for not living up to HWA's standard of law-keeping.

Immediately following these ancient and modern comparisons, the next section is shrewdly subtitled "Sudden Destruction." Before the reader has a chance to discern whether his "historic" comparisons are viable, HWA will catapult his readers into the next frightening segment. By embellishing Micah 5, he quickly distracts the reader. He will do his best to convince the reader that there are dire consequences for not believing his BI doctrine. Let's examine how HWA gives himself permission to color scripture to his advantage. Below are verses 10 and 11 in plain, unaltered text:

And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots: 11 and I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strongholds:

Let's take a careful look at the words HWA inserted in the brackets:

Yet, in this detailed prophecy, God says, "And it shall come to pass IN THAT DAY, saith the Lord, that I will cut off thy horses" ['war-horses," Moffatt translation]—tanks, ships, rockets—"out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots: and I will cut off the cities [by hydrogen bombs?] of thy land, and throw down all thy strongholds" (verses 10-11).

God says he will do this! God determines the outcome of wars (Ps. 33:10-19). (p. 189-190)

By giving his personal spin in the brackets, and adding his own words (tanks, ships, rockets, hydrogen bombs) he takes a verse intended for Israel (which he says the United States and English speaking nations are) to create fear in the reader's mind. But this awful, "corrective disaster" is not limited to American and British peoples. Five pages later, HWA revealed, under the subtitle, "Punishment on All Nations!" that nobody will escape. Once again, the reader is placed in another no-win situation. HWA backs the reader into a corner, giving him only one choice: Heed the World Tomorrow program and become one of the scattered few who believe this "peaceful pleading." Disbelieve and God will send the sword after him. With options like that, is there any wonder why readers take the better offer?
HWA captivates the reader's imagination with his epoch legends. Now he will captivate the reader's heart with his staunch views against sin and immorality. He becomes a beacon of respectability, one that isn't afraid to speak out in our soft, sin-filled society. He offers *The Missing Dimension in Sex*, a book which promises to unveil another "missing dimension of knowledge." Voicing his disapproval against abortion, promiscuity, etc., his seemingly upright and moral stance strikes a chord in common, everyday people who are concerned about their and their children's futures. Who couldn't respect a man who "tells it like it is"? His credibility takes a giant leap in the eyes of the clientele he wishes to enlist.

The concluding paragraphs of Chapter 5, under the clever subtitle, "*Jesus Foretold It*" are strategically placed at the end. He capitalizes the words "END, SIGN, GREAT TRIBULATION, TROUBLE, RESURRECTION and WHEN?" and italicizes the phrase "*most intense punishment.*" HWA provides plenty of emotional "motivation" to push the reader into making a commitment of the heart and mind. The promise of deliverance and a wonderful, peaceful, happy world tomorrow is waved at the end of the dark corridor. Herbert Armstrong lures the reader into a twisted labyrinth, keeping him deeply preoccupied by the master key's potential. The reader is unaware that he no longer knows the way out.

**Footnotes for Chapter Five:**

1. Herbert Armstrong gave over 200 false prophecies and these are listed on the Internet.
2. Herbert W. Armstrong's Religious Roots
3. British-Israelism--True or False? will link to several references that refute the errors of BI.
4. Herbert W. Armstrong's Religious Roots
5. A Prophet Was Among Them [offsite article]
6. Gentile Times: When Do They End? [offsite article]
7. HWA used the "year-for-a-day" and the "day-for-a-year" principle interchangeably.
8. The 19-year time cycle was devised by an Athenian astronomer by the name of Meton in the 5th century B.C. Meton, it appears, noted that there were 235 lunar months in 19 solar years. But according to Paul Benware (*Ambassadors of Armstrongism*, 1984, p. 65) "Astronomers have since recognized a slight error in the Meton system." He gives a footnote which references Harvey W. Lowe's book *Radio Church of God*, 1970, p. 135. Joseph Hopkins, author of *The Armstrong Empire*, 1974, states that Herbert Armstrong "fixed the date of Christ's crucifixion at A.D. 31, two years later than the generally accepted date" in order to come up with his two 19-year time cycles. (p. 56)
10. LOCATION OF THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL by Herman Hoeh
11. Controlling WCG offshoots and splinter groups also have formed youth camps; i. e., Philadelphia Youth Camp (PCG), United Youth Camps (United Church of God-AIA), Living Youth Camp (Living Church of God), etc.
12. "But GOD was determined to get His message to the British! So, the first week in 1953, God's message started getting into Britain from Europe...on the superpowered voice of Radio Luxembourg!" *The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy*, Herbert W. Armstrong, 1967, p. 208.
13. Truth #14 was "The Identity of Modern Israel," and Truth #15 was "Prophecy can be understood only if you know that we are Israelites."
15. HWA presents a long dissertation in the US&BIP that neither ancient Israel nor the Jews of today could be the inheritors of Abraham's unconditional blessing because their national populations weren't large enough to qualify.

Chapter Six - Mystery of the Church
Redefining common religious terms into a Bible-based cult's unique dialect is known as "loading the language." HWA will spend the next 96 pages—the longest chapter in the MOA—redefining Christian terms into these new "loaded" terms—words that sound Christian but, as early church father Irenaeus observed, mean something completely different. Once HWA lured his readers into his web, he knew they could never find their way back out of this confusion-filled mess. They would have to stumble along and blindly follow his lead, putting their complete trust in him.

In this sixth chapter of the MOA, we will observe HWA pull off the ultimate con—getting the reader to buy into the belief that his church is the only true church that preaches the only true gospel. First, he will convince the reader that the gospel proclaimed today is a false gospel and that the true gospel was not proclaimed from A.D. 50 until the year 1953. (p. 198) HWA begins each doctrinal discussion with misrepresentations of "traditional Christianity" used intentionally to stir up feelings of outrage and discontent. Confident that he has secured the reader's sympathy and loyalty, he offers what seems to be the "correct" biblical explanations to these seemingly "illogical" doctrines. HWA will quote history to establish his organization's sacred roots, painting a legendary epic of a "small, faithful flock" being persecuted by institutionalized Christianity. HWA reassures the reader that this "passing of the baton" from one faithful group to the next has continued throughout the ages to this present day. He will claim to be carrying the baton of the Philadelphian Era. Having successfully immobilized this "small flock" against this formidable "false Christian" foe, the size and scope of HWA's "Work" will be used as evidence that God is supernaturally backing this "end time messenger." The appeal to the reader's conscience for help puts him in a precarious position—either be one of the few, faithful elite that God is calling to proclaim these "truths" to the end, or join the ranks of the bloodthirsty deceived "whore." The scam is on while the options are narrowed: partner with God, or partner with the devil—which will the reader choose?

One clever (and very effective) tactic used by con artists is to make the customer/victim believe that he/she is in control and can walk away at any time when, in fact, the opposite is true. We will observe numerous examples of limited choices followed by the heaping of "guilt and bad feelings" if one chooses to go against HWA, as in the example above. Let's revisit HWA's usual methods to disarm and influence the reader. He will begin with a false premise—that the "truth" about the church is being withheld from the general public [bolding mine]:

The real truth about the Church, the reason for its origin, is as little understood as the Bible itself. The revelation of that mystery must come as a shocking truth. The real truth about the church...and its purpose has remained hidden from even the professing Christian world. (p.198)

Millions have read over this passage (II Cor. 4:3-4) without grasping its real meaning. (p. 198)

But is the Church a building? Many assume it is, which assumption reflects their ignorance of the purpose and meaning of the Church. (p. 199)

Yet almost no one has ever known that meaning. (p. 199)

What has been hidden from even the professing Christian world is the real purpose of the Church... (p. 199)

Again, the set up becomes increasingly transparent. HWA utilizes social pressure against the reader by placing him in the category with the "assuming and ignorant" masses for not knowing the true purpose of the church. But for those who are interested in finding the "hidden" purpose and meaning—one that "almost" no one has ever known, HWA will gladly initiate the reader into his secret society—his organization.
HWA confidently gives the unscholarly reader a short lesson on the Greek meaning of the word "church":

> The word church is an English-language word translated from the original Greek of ekklesia. Ekklesia means called-out-ones. (p. 199)

From where did HWA get this definition? He doesn't say. When HWA doesn't quote the Strong's Concordance, then that should be our clue to see what he may be hiding. In the New Testament, the word "church" is assigned number 1577 in the Greek. Strong's defines ekklesia as "a calling out, i. e., (concr.) a popular meeting, especially a religious congregation (Jewish synagogue, or Christian community of members on earth or saints in heaven or both)—assembly, church." Once again, we witness the purposeful omission of information that contradicts his teachings. We do not see the term "called-out-ones" as part of this definition. Obviously, the "assumptions of the many ignorant" have been correct. There is nothing erroneous with today's definition of what a church is—a gathering or meeting of believers assembling together for worship. The type of building they meet in is irrelevant, but HWA wants to make issues out of non-issues to keep the reader suspicious and distracted.

In duplicitous mockery, HWA spewed all over the mainstream church for acquiring "worldly" real estate, telling members over and over that the "church building isn't the church," but then he went out and acquired buildings and expensive real estate for himself. So here again, HWA holds a double standard. He spared no expense to lavish himself with the best, while the members footed the bill and went without.

When a new recruit attends a Sabbath Service for the first time, he/she will question the unappealing surroundings of the "rental hall," which is usually a school auditorium, Masonic or IOOF buildings; a basement of an office complex, or hotel conference room. Many of the buildings are musty, or run-down, with little or no heating or air conditioning, few or no windows, and many of these rentals are located in unsafe neighborhoods. More than a few elderly persons went home ill from the stifling heat, and many a child received "discipline" (spankings) for their inability to "sit still and be quiet" during services under these very difficult conditions. The new recruit—who mentally visualized "God's Church" as being something exceptionally extraordinary—will be puzzled at the disparity. He has seen the lovely photos of the Ambassador College campus and the breathtaking pictures of the millennial paradise in the church's literature. He has read about God's love for "quality" and that inequality, squalor and poverty are against His desire for mankind. He was led to believe that God's Church was restoring His government on earth, and portrayed this ultimate "Way of Life." Yet, this initial observation begins to raise a red flag. Unable to resolve this discrepancy, he will be reassured by the ministry that: "All of God's tithes are being utilized to preach the gospel and finish the Work. We don't waste His money on worldly things like carpet, padded pews, etc. just for our personal comfort. We're going to go to Petra soon, so we don't need to acquire buildings that do little more than swallow up resources that could be better spent on more important things. We're not like those worldly churches that have fancy buildings and major upkeep expenses." What the new convert perceives as frugality is nothing more than a con.

Once HWA has poisoned the reader into believing that the real PURPOSE for the church has been withheld from him, he now has a free reign to define that purpose to his benefit and to the detriment of the reader.

"GOSPEL NOT ABOUT JESUS"

Herbert Armstrong hammers throughout the MOA that the gospel "ABOUT Jesus" is a false gospel. The loaded term, "the gospel OF Jesus" will be substituted as the correct definition of the gospel, which HWA has free reign to pervert to his benefit. This gospel OF Jesus is supposedly the "kingdom message"—the message he brought concerning the coming future kingdom of God to earth. (This will be covered more thoroughly in the Chapter 7 review).

HWA announces that the church isn't used by God to save souls, nor did Jesus come as a personal savior:
It [the church] is not the instrumentality by which God is trying to "save the world." Few may realize it, but Jesus made no attempt to gain converts or to invite people to "give their hearts to him" or to "accept him as their personal savior." (p. 200)

The inexperienced reader, who has heard these familiar terms without fully understanding them, was easily tricked by this clever presentation. In the first sentence, HWA is speaking of the purpose of the church, and flatly denies that God is using it as an instrument to save the world. Without providing any proof for this particular statement, he simply announces that Jesus made no attempts to gain converts, negating his role as a personal Savior to the world. Instead, he introduces a twisted version of predestination—that those who are in the true church are drafted—handpicked and chosen by God Himself to be part of an elite force.

Christ came also to call out selected and chosen ones from Satan's world to turn from Satan's way into the way of God's law, and to qualify to reign with Christ when he comes to replace Satan on the throne of the earth. Those called into the Church were called not merely for salvation and eternal life, but to learn the way of God's government and develop the divine character during this mortal life in the Church age. (p. 201)

This seductive offer to be part of something unique is hard to resist. Since HWA loves "hidden meanings," he knows that the inexperienced reader doesn't fully comprehend the hidden meaning of the phrase "learning the way of God's government and develop the divine character," which is nothing more than enslavement to the works-based rules of his organization. In his usual cunning style, HWA ingeniously sidetracks the reader by quickly mentioning the seven annual festivals and their hidden meanings. All this distraction is designed so the reader never goes back to the question of why traditional churches teach Jesus as personal Savior and that one must "believe on Him" to be saved. Could there be some truth to this? Since HWA can't be depended on to give an unbiased view, we will let the Bible speak for itself: [bolding mine]

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. (John 1:12)

That whosoever believeth on him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:15-16)

He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (John 3:18)

Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. (John 6:29)

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. (John 6:35)

And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up in the last day...Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. (John 6:40, 47)

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. (John 11:25)

But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name. (John 20:31)

Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus...And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he [the eunuch] answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is
the Son of God. (Acts 8:35, 37)

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (Rom. 10:9-10)

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. (I John 5:13)

If HWA was speaking for God, then why does he have trouble quoting these Scriptures, and many others just like them (which are so numerous it would be lengthy to quote them all)? Is it because they plainly don't say, "Believe in the kingdom message about the government"? Look up the word "believe" in the Strong's Concordance and prove it to yourself. It appears that traditional Christianity's belief in the gospel ABOUT Jesus wasn't a deception derived from the devil, but taken straight from Scripture. Modern vernacular such as "give your heart to Him" or to "accept Him as their personal savior" is simply another way of saying that one believes with all their heart that Jesus is Savior, as described in the verse with Philip and the eunuch above. Any honest person would not have twisted the meaning, nor withheld such important information. The key to eternal life is Jesus Christ, and believing with all our heart that He is the Son of God, the Savior of the world. (See: How Do I Receive Eternal Life?) This is pure, straightforward salvation. The gospel is not a complex concoction of "eighteen restored truths," various "mysteries," lost identities, sacred rituals and total submission to a hierarchical government. Is there any wonder why Paul marveled at those who turned away from the grace and simplicity of the gospel to these complicated, burdensome beliefs? (Gal. 1:6-7; II Cor. 11:3)

Throughout this whole chapter of MOA, we will observe HWA underhandedly avoiding Scripture whenever it dispels his doctrines. Observe that whenever he makes blatant statements against Christian doctrines, he doesn't reveal any of the Scriptures that Christianity uses to back their beliefs. Instead, he will only give information that proves him right. Like any good salesman, he can't let anyone know that the competition has a better product.

RELIGIOUS ASSUMPTIONS/SALVATION BEFORE JESUS

Grabbing the reins, HWA will launch into deep theological questions, putting the reader on the spot:

If the Church came into existence as an instrumentality for "getting people saved," then, I ask, by what means did God try to save people prior to Christ's founding of the Church? (p. 202)

Again, HWA resorts to social proof that most people assume, or don't know why the church exists, or its purpose: [bolding mine]

But when we ask, why do churches exist, how did the Church as an institution come into being?—what is its reason or purpose for its existence?—does it make any difference whether, or to which church you belong?—then, indeed, it becomes a mystery. The average person has no answer. (p. 203)

I was led to take it for granted that I was an immortal soul and that when I died I would not really die, but rather pass away into heaven where I would have no responsibilities but only a life of idleness and ease in sublime glory forever and ever. (p. 204)

Like millions of others, I assumed that "good people" went to church and so ought we. (p. 205)

Most people think of the CHURCH as a building with a sharply sloping roof, a steeple pointing heavenward atop and a cross on its face. (p. 205)

Back in early part of 1927 when my intense Bible study was bringing me toward
conversion, I asked myself such questions. I supposed questions of that sort never enter the average mind. (p. 207)

HWA knew where to shoot his fiery arrows. The reader will readily nod his head and say to himself, "Yes, this man is right. I carelessly assumed these things." Now that the reader has admitted that he is like all "assuming" people and these questions never entered his "average mind," he will look to HWA as the all-knowing authority.

Of course HWA knew that his target market—Bible illiterates—would not know the answer to his tricky questions. That's why he asked them. He quickly surmises the situation into another of his faulty conclusions: Since the reader couldn't answer the questions, then it's proof positive that Satan has blinded him. As the reader becomes more and more suspicious of the world surrounding him, he becomes more and more open to HWA's teaching. The pattern is repeated over and over. From here we need to make a note of two things: 1. HWA, himself, did not answer these questions, but used them as a springboard to show that he was right about Satan deceiving the world, and, 2. HWA did not give anybody else's answer to these questions—he never quotes any outside religious authorities, theologians, etc. He does not want any opposing opinions that may give legitimate answers to these questions—although he asks the questions with a tone of incredulousness, as if nobody out there had an answer! If HWA had the real truth, then he wouldn't be afraid to show that there are other answers to the questions he proposed. His truths should easily stand against falsehoods. Let's see what Dr. J. Vernon McGee had to say concerning this: [bolding mine]

Now let me answer our critics who say that we who hold the dispensational view of Scripture teach that there are two or more ways of being saved, No, God has never had more than one basis on which He saves men, and that basis is the cross of Christ. Every offering before Christ came looked forward to the cross of Christ, and every commemoration since He has come looks back to the cross of Christ. (Thru the Bible With J. Vernon McGee, Vol. 4, p. 127)

To illustrate this, let's go back to Gen. 4 and look at the offering which Abel brought to God. He brought a little lamb. If you had been there, you could have asked Abel, "Why are you bringing this little lamb? Do you think that a little lamb will take away your sins?" He would have said, "Of course not! I'm bringing this little lamb because God told me to do so. I am bringing it by faith." Then you could have asked him, "Well, if it won't take away your sins, why would He ask you to bring it?" Abel's answer would have been something like this: "This little lamb is pointing to One who is coming later, the seed of the woman, my mother. That One will take away our sins. I bring this little lamb by faith, recognizing that I am a sinner and need a substitute." You see, Abel was looking forward to the One who was coming. (Ibid.)

John the Baptist...also said, "...Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world" (John 1:29). John identified Him. Before the coming of Christ everyone who had come to God on His terms was saved on credit. And they were forgiven on the basis of the death of Christ. In the O.T. God never saved anyone by Law. At the heart of the Mosaic system was the sacrificial system. They brought a lamb to God because the Law revealed that they were lawbreakers, that they were not obeying God, and that they did need to have a substitute to pay the penalty of their sins. ... (Ibid)

Thank God, He saves by grace today. In fact, grace has always been His method. In the Old Testament He never saved anyone by Law. They were saved by His mercy and grace to them, looking forward to the coming of Christ to die on the cross to take away their sins. (Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 561.)

A great many people...feel that their denomination or their little group are the only saints there are. My friend, God has a pretty big family. In the Old Testament He had Old Testament saints. The nation Israel were called saints; the Gentiles who came in as proselytes were called saints of God. That's a different company from New Testament saints today who are in the church. Don't get the idea that your little group is the only
group that will be saved or even the idea that believers in this dispensation of grace are the only ones to be saved. God saved people before the Day of Pentecost ... (Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 574.)

So men were saved before the Cross—by grace through faith in Christ (Eph. 2:5-8). God has always saved, and will always save, by grace through faith in Christ. Can we see how true ministers of Christ focus on Him, giving Him due credit, and have confidence and assurance in Him? They don't launch into conspiracies, elite status, British-Israelism, and other such nonsense that shines the limelight over His specialness and supernatural wisdom. If HWA were truly being honest and forthright, he wouldn't have withheld information. All Bible-based cults engage in "milieu control" and the doctrine of grace and salvation through Jesus alone is one major piece of information that will remain tightly controlled. HWA knows he cannot enslave those who know they are free.

Moving right along, HWA gives his personal story concerning his religious experiences as a youth, convincing the reader that he can "relate" to their own situation. ("I am reminded of my own personal experience, probably typical of many others.") He tells of his religious "assumptions" concerning the immortal soul and heaven, taking "churchgoing and a religious phase of life for granted." He also reveals that he stopped attending church after becoming a legal adult because other pursuits became more interesting and/or important. He still believed in God, but took His existence for granted. How many of us could easily relate to this scenario? Probably all who have made it this far into the MOA. HWA gained a stronghold into our minds through the use of trust. Once we trusted him, we believed anything and everything he said no matter how farfetched it could be.

**IMMORTAL SOUL/MISREPRESENTING BIBLICAL CHRISTIANITY**

Earlier, HWA planted seeds of doubt in the immortal soul teaching by misrepresenting Biblical Christianity.

The teaching has been that man is an immortal soul and already has eternal life. It denies (Rom. 6:23) that the penalty for sin is death and that man can have eternal life only as the gift of God. (p. 124)

I was led to take it for granted that I was an immortal soul and that when I died I would not really die, but rather pass away into heaven where I would have no responsibilities but only a life of idleness and ease in sublime glory forever and ever. (p. 204)

Again, HWA gives a false view of Christianity's "immortal soul" doctrine and paints an unpalatable picture of heaven. From where did HWA learn to make disparaging remarks about heaven? Let's compare his remarks with that of the Watchtower Society's:

And what is this? Bliss in heaven sprawled out on the billowy cloud, twanging a harp as you float along in space and eternity? No! It is not that vain and useless existence that idle dreamers have conjured up as heavenly life. (*The Watchtower*, 01/06/1981, p. 3)

All Bible-based cults use the same tricks—don't quote any Scriptures of heaven, but make it out to be a boring place where nobody wants to be!

Observe, however, HWA's clear avoidance of quoting any sources to back up his allegations against Christianity. In his other literature, he poses the following familiar question:

And if the saved go to heaven when they die, what need is there for a resurrection from the dead? Why a resurrection if they have already "gone to their reward"? (*The Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course*, Lesson 7, p. 3)

HWA capitalizes on the inexperience and lack of knowledge of the Scriptures by the average reader. HWA will do his best to give one-dimensional information while making it seem that he is divulging complete information, which we will later show. So what about the question proposed by HWA? Does Christianity teach that man has an immortal soul, already possessing eternal life? Why, if the saved go to heaven, is there a need for a resurrection from the dead? Is Christianity's teaching redundant?
First we will examine whether pagan philosophers introduced the immortal soul teaching into Christianity as HWA claims, then we will touch on other teachings of the resurrection, the soul and spirit espoused by HWA.

**DID PAGAN PHILOSOPHERS INTRODUCE IMMORTAL SOUL TEACHING INTO CHRISTIANITY?**

Biblical Christianity understands that man consists of a physical body, soul and spirit (I Thess. 5:23). Though the body is mortal, the soul continues to live after the body is dead. (Rev. 6:9). The early church fathers understood that even this continued existence of the soul was "conditional existence" or "conditional immortality"—conditional upon the grace of God, for they knew that God could "destroy both body and soul in Gehenna" (Matt. 10:28) if He chose to do so. If HWA was as widely read in religious materials as he claimed, then it is certain that he fully understood this, but chose to misrepresent it anyway. HWA made his members falsely believe that Plato and other pagan philosophers, in cahoots with powerful religious leaders, were responsible for introducing the immortal soul teaching into Christianity. This is simply not true. Plato and the pagan philosophers believed that the soul was always immortal, pre-existing before it entered the physical body; and even after leaving the body, the soul was inherently immortal and indestructible. There was no dependency upon God for one's previous or continued existence. Let's look at some resource material that supports this: [bolding and italics mine]

It was hinted that one use which the Greeks made of the metaphysical argument was to prove the indestructibility of the soul—its immortality in the sense of having no beginning and no end. This is not the Christian doctrine. The soul has no such inherent indestructibility. It is dependent on God, as everything else is, for its continued existence. Were He to withdraw His sustaining power, it would cease to exist. That it does continue to exist is not doubted, but this must be argued on other grounds. (Immortality: "Soul not Inherently Indestructible," International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, 1915)

So here we plainly see that Christianity does not embrace the pagan version of the "immortal soul" doctrine as HWA claimed. Let's look at another source (Philip Schaff), one HWA frequently quoted from: [bolding mine]

**HISTORY of the CHRISTIAN CHURCH, Schaff, Philip, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1997.** This material has been carefully compared, corrected, and amended (according to the 1910 edition of Charles Scribner's Sons) by The Electronic Bible Society, Dallas, TX, 1998.

**CHAPTER XII: 155. Eschatology. Immortality and Resurrection.** Plato, viewing the human soul as a portion of the eternal, infinite, all-pervading deity, believed in its pre-existence before this present life, and thus had a strong ground of hope for its continuance after death. All the souls (according to his *Phaedon* and *Gorgias*, pass into the spirit-world, the righteous into the abodes of bliss, where they live forever in a disembodied state, the wicked into Tartarus for punishment and purification (which notion prepared the way for purgatory)... Heathen philosophers, like Celsus, ridiculed the resurrection of the body as useless, absurd, and impossible.

(Footnote: Preliminary—Need of Definition and Distinction: In hardly any subject is it more necessary to be careful in the definition of terms and clear distinction of ideas, especially where the Biblical doctrine is concerned, than in this of "immortality." By "immortality" is frequently meant simply the survival of the soul, or spiritual part of man, after bodily death. It is the assertion of the fact that death does not end all. The soul survives. This is commonly what is meant when we speak of "a future life," "a future state," "a hereafter." Not, however, to dwell on the fact that many peoples have no clear conception of an immaterial "soul" in the modern sense (the Egyptians, e.g. distinguished several parts, the Ka, the Ba, etc., which survived death; often the surviving
self is simply a ghostly resemblance of the earthly self, nourished with food, offerings, etc.), there is the more serious consideration that the state into which the surviving part is supposed to enter at death is anything but a state which can be described as "life," or worthy to be dignified with the name "immortality." It is state peculiar to "death" (see DEATH); in most cases, shadowy, inert, feeble, dependent, joyless; a state to be dreaded and shrunken from, not one to be hoped for. If, on the other hand, as in the hope of immortality among the nobler heathen, it is conceived of, as for some, a state of happiness—the elation of the body being shaken off—this yields the idea, which has passed into so much of our modern thinking, of an "immortality of the soul," of an imperishableness of the spiritual part, sometimes supposed to extend backward as well as forward; an inherent indestructibility.

The pagan philosophers believed that the body held back the soul and had to be shed (or shaken off) in order for the soul to obtain its ultimate, blissful state. It seemed absurd to return to something useless and corrupt. This is why they did not believe in a bodily resurrection. They believed they would exist in a disembodied state, as a spirit, and enter into eternal bliss. This is in direct opposition with the Christian teaching, which upholds the resurrection—a return of the soul to the body. (Schaff points out how the term "immortal soul" has passed into our modern thinking, even though this is not the correct Christian belief).

HWA wanted readers to believe Christians teach that believers go to their final reward in heaven and permanently remain as disembodied immortal souls, just as the pagan philosophers taught. This is a clear misrepresentation. The pagan belief goes against the Christian belief of a bodily resurrection, where the soul and body would be reunited, although changed. The pagan philosophers simply could not conceive the soul returning to the body, as this seemed a hindrance. To them, the body was corruptible and contemptible, so why return to it? They simply could not comprehend the redemption of the body, where the soul of the redeemed would return to it and be resurrected in glorified, spiritual perfection. This promise of a bodily resurrection was unheard of in any pagan religion and is unique to Judaism and later, Christianity.

Contrast the pagan belief of "inherent immortality" with the Christian belief about the resurrection: [bolding mine]

It will be seen as we advance, that the Biblical view is different from all of these. The soul, indeed, survives the body; but this disembodied state is never viewed as one of complete "life." For the Bible "immortality" is not merely the survival of the soul, the passing into "Sheol" or "Hades." This is not, in itself considered, "life" or happiness. The "immortality" the Bible contemplates is an immortality of the whole person—body and soul together. It implies, therefore, deliverance from the state of death. It is not a condition simply of future existence, however prolonged, but a state of blessedness, due to redemption and the possession of the "eternal life" in the soul; it includes resurrection and perfected life in both soul and body. The subject must now be considered more particularly in its different aspects. (Immortality: 2. Biblical Conception, "Soul not Inherently Indestructible," International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, 1915.)

Upon death, the soul survives the body, but in a disembodied state. This is not considered "immortality," nor does Christianity espouse this. One does not gain immortality until he is resurrected. This is when the whole person—body and soul—are joined back together and completely delivered from the state of death. In the book, The Great Doctrines of the Bible let's observe what this "deceived theologian" has to say about immortality [bolding mine]:

The word [immortality] as used in the Bible means deathlessness, or exemption from the physical death of the body. It is not to be confused with the eternal life of the saved or the unending existence of the lost, though popular usage confuses these terms. The word is used only with reference to the body (Rom. 6:12, 8:11), and never in connection with the soul. Men are unable to kill the soul. Only God can destroy it (Matt. 10:28) where a word is used which does not mean to deprive the soul of life.
With the coming of Christ, light was cast upon the subject of immortality, which had been clothed in obscurity since OT days (2 Tim. 1:10, Gr.). Only Christ now possesses that immortality (1 Tim. 1:17, 6:16). All men, including saved persons, are now mortal (Job 4:17, 1 Cor. 15:22, Heb. 9:27). Men will continue to die until death is destroyed (1 Cor. 15:26).

At the translation of the church all believers will put on immortality. They will be clothed with deathlessness as with a garment (1 Cor. 15:51-54). Mortality will then be "swallowed up of life" (2 Cor. 5:4) and believers will never again be able to die. In the same manner that their bodies become immortal, they also become incorruptible, or immune to change and decay. (William Evans, 1974, Immortality, Page 299)

HWA brought a scathing accusation against Christianity for teaching a "pagan immortal soul doctrine." Then he fraudulently positioned himself as "the One" who will now reveal "the truth" about the Resurrection. We can plainly see, from the above sources, "deceived scholars and theologians" teaching a future Resurrection. They acknowledge that Jesus Christ only has immortality, for He only, has been bodily resurrected. This is why "no man has ascended to heaven except the Son of man who came down from heaven." Before the resurrection of Christ, the souls of the saved went to Paradise, a.k.a. the "Bosom of Abraham" (Luke 23:43); however, no man, but Jesus, has experienced a bodily resurrection and bodily ascension to heaven. (We will go more in-depth about the bodily resurrection a little later). This book I quoted from was originally published in 1912, long before HWA was "given understanding" about this revealed truth.

Another interesting topic that HWA avoids is the Jewish view of the soul. Do the Jews believe that "the SOUL is composed of physical MATTER, not Spirit" and subject to DEATH along with the body, and ceases to exist, as HWA taught? Or do they believe that the soul departs from the body to an underworld? Schaff's commentary concerning the Jewish belief is continued below: [bolding mine]


The Jewish doctrine is far in advance of heathen notions and conjectures, but presents different phases of development.

(a) The Mosaic writings are remarkably silent about the future life, and emphasize the present rather than future consequences of the observance or non-observance of the law (because it had a civil or political as well as spiritual import); and hence the Sadducees accepted them, although they denied the resurrection (perhaps also the immortality of the soul). The Pentateuch contains, however, some remote and significant hints of immortality, as in the tree of life with its symbolic import; in the mysterious translation of Enoch as a reward for his piety; in the prohibition of necromancy; in the patriarchal phrase for dying: "to be gathered to his fathers," or "to his people;" and last, though not least, in the self-designation of Jehovah as "the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," which implies their immortality, since "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. What has an eternal meaning for God must itself be eternal.

In the later writings of the Old Testament, especially during and after the exile, the doctrine of immortality and resurrection comes out plainly. Daniel's vision reaches out even to the final resurrection of "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth to everlasting life," and of "some to shame and everlasting contempt," and prophesies that "they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

But before Christ, who first revealed true life, the Hebrew Sheol, the general receptacle of departing souls, remained, like the Greek Hades, a dark and dreary abode, and is so described in the Old Testament. Cases like Enoch's translation and Elijah's ascent are altogether unique and exceptional, and imply the meaning that death is contrary to
man's original destination, and may be overcome by the power of holiness. (Schaff, Philip, History of the Christian Church, Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997.)

Of great interest is what HWA doesn't say that is usually worthy of note. Even though he taught his members about Sheol and Hades being nothing more than a "pit or grave" where dead bodies were buried, he failed to mention that there was more to it than that. He gives his members the impression that the Jews also held the point of view (since he quoted OT Scriptures) that the soul was mortal and ceased to exist upon death of the body. But this is not so. The Jews believed that Sheol (Hades) is the general receptacle of departing souls. In Genesis 35:18, we read an example of Rachel's soul departing from her body when she died after giving birth to Benjamin. HWA did not believe that the soul could be separated from the body since he believed it was composed of living matter, the same substance as the flesh and blood human body. He taught that, "Man IS a soul as soon as physical LIFE enters him." When the body died, the soul ceased. There was no personality or entity to the soul that would depart from the body.

In Chapter 5 of the MOA, HWA revealed the Mystery of Israel. In it, he unveiled the hidden identity of the British, American, and Western European peoples as the "Lost Tribes of Israel." (See my research paper: Where Are the Tribes of Israel Located?) If HWA taught that the American and British people are actually ancient Israelites, then why does he not teach the same doctrines of the Jews concerning the soul? If the Jews believe that the soul is a separate entity that departs from the body at death, descending to the dark and dreary abode of Sheol or Hades, then why does HWA teach differently? HWA made his followers believe they were descendents of the ancient Israelites; therefore, he made them follow the OT customs of the Sabbath (like the Jews), clean and unclean (like the Jews), Holy Days (like the Jews), etc. But here, we see HWA give deference to the Watchtower Society's "soul sleep" doctrine over the Jewish belief concerning the soul. If HWA has his followers behaving like Jews, shouldn't he have them believing like Jews? [ESN Note: For a biblical explanation of Hades and Sheol (including how Jehovah's Witnesses have misinterpreted verses on it), see chap. 3 ("Speaking of Heavens and Hells") in the book Sense & Nonsense About Heaven & Hell by Kenneth D. Boa and Robert M. Bowman, Jr.]

HWA also avoids a thorough discussion of Revelation 6:9-11 which show that the souls under the altar of God that were told to "rest yet for a little season." (Members are told that this is proof that the souls are sleeping). Notice that these souls were conscious when they asked their question—they certainly didn't snore through it. Verse 10 says that, "they cried with a loud voice." The New Strong's Concordance states that this particular Greek word for rest (number 373) means "to refresh—take ease, refresh, (give, take) rest." Contrast this with the Greek word for sleep (number 2837) which means "to decease—sleep, be dead. There's a big difference between resting and being dead. HWA knew this, and as usual, doesn't bring it to the forefront.

BODILY RESURRECTION OR A DISEMBODIED SPIRIT (SPIRITUAL BODY VERSUS SPIRIT BEING)?

So back to the original question, "If the saved are in heaven, then why is there a need for a resurrection?" Christianity teaches that the saved have not reaped the fullness of their reward. They believe that the soul continues in a conscious state after death (1 Kings 17:21-22, Matt. 10:28, Rev. 6:9-11) and that those who put their faith and trust in Jesus as their personal Savior will go to heaven when they die (1 Cor. 5:1-2; 2 Tim. 4:18; 1 Pet. 1:4-5; 1 John 5:13). There, they await a bodily resurrection from the dead at Christ's second coming (1. Cor. 15:22-23, I Thes. 4:14-17). HWA accuses Christianity for not teaching a future resurrection, but this is far from true. In HWA's scenario, believers die and their souls do not continue to exist. They are unaware of anything going on, like being in a sound sleep and "utterly unconscious" (this doctrine is also known as "soul sleep" and is taught by the Watchtower Society). The next instant they awaken will be at the first Resurrection when Christ returns to earth. Then they will be raised up from the grave as a spirit being—changed from matter into spirit composition.
—and finally be born into the "God Family" to immortality. HWA claims that Jesus was resurrected as a spirit. This teaching also came from the Watchtower Society. They believe that Jesus was resurrected from the grave as a spirit being, and his physical body disappeared by dissolving into gases while in the tomb. HWA simply announces that Christ's dead body disappeared, but never explains how. This will become an important point, as we will see later in this review. Now let's continue with the Christian view.

Christianity teaches that believers' souls go to heaven upon their deaths to be in the presence of the Lord (2 Cor. 5:8). There, they wait for a bodily resurrection, where their body will be reunited with their soul and raised up again to immortality. This completes their reward—immortality in their resurrected body, but changed. This body is now perfect, free from disease, and is no longer subject to sin and death. It has changed from a mortal body, to an immortal body, from corruptible to incorruptible. This body is a spiritual body, no longer a flesh-and-blood body, and certainly not a disembodied spirit. Look at Paul's own words concerning the spiritual body:

It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening [or life-giving] spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. (I Cor. 15:44-46)

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body... (Phil. 3:20-21)

But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. (Rom. 8:11)

Now let's examine a clear explanation of 1 Corinthians 15:44 by J. Vernon McGee: [bolding mine]

"It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." Many years ago in the city of New York (in fact, it was way back in the day when liberalism was called modernism, back in the 1920s) they had an argument about whether resurrection was spiritual. ... A very famous Greek scholar from the University of Chicago read a paper on the passage from this verse. His paper put the emphasis on the word spiritual. He concluded by saying, "Now, brethren, you can see that resurrection is spiritual because it says it's spiritual." ... Well, a very fine Greek scholar was there, and he stood up. ... He said, "Yes, the author of the paper presented the paper that you did today. You put the emphasis upon an adjective, and the strong word is the noun. Now let's look at that again. 'It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.'" He said, "The only thing that is carried over in resurrection is the body. It's one kind of body when it dies, a natural body. It's raised a body, but a spiritual body, dominated now by the spirit--but it's still a body." ... May I say to you, just a simple little exercise in grammar answered this great professor's whole manuscript and his entire argument which he presented at that time." (Thru the Bible With J. Vernon McGee, Vol. 5., Notes on I Corinthians 15:44, pp. 78-79.)

Why is this distinction important? HWA teaches a spirit resurrection, and Christianity teaches a bodily resurrection:

When man's creation is finally complete, he will be a spiritual creation, formed wholly of Spirit. (p. 109)
Those who died with God's Holy Spirit will be in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-5). They will come forth IMMORTAL, in a glorious body of SPIRIT composition, their faces aglow as the SUN. (<i>The Incredible Human Potential</i>, p. 88.)

HWA was very clever in not pointing out these distinctions. He knew that most people did not understand the difference and he certainly wasn't going to reveal other viewpoints that would easily prove him wrong. Below, notice again what "deceived theologian" J. Vernon McGee had to say concerning the bodily resurrection:

The first heresy in the church was the denial of the bodily resurrection. We see how Paul has shown the truth of the Resurrection. He has spoken against the three major philosophies of his day. Stoicism said the soul merged into Deity at death and there was a destruction of personality. Paul says our bodies shall rise. Epicureanism said there was no existence beyond death. Paul says Jesus Christ was raised from the dead and our bodies, too, shall rise. Platonism believed in the immortality of the soul but denied the bodily resurrection. Paul says that our physical bodies shall be made alive as spiritual bodies. (<i>Thru the Bible With J. Vernon McGee</i>, Vol. 5., Notes on I Corinthians 15: 48-50, pp. 79-80.)

HWA knew that readers cannot refute what they have no knowledge of. Because of trust, they simply believed that he knew what he was talking about. How many members can say that they fully understood the orthodox Christian teaching concerning the Resurrection so they could compare it against HWA's version? Church members understand the well-worn loaded phrase in the MOA—"God is reproducing Himself"—covertly means that one day they will become "God as God is God." Members believe that they will be resurrected as spirit beings (since God is a Spirit and is reproducing Himself) and will rule the universe as co-rulers with Christ. Then, they will "participate in the completion of the CREATION over the entire endless expanse of the UNIVERSE!" (<i>Mystery of the Ages</i>, p. 103). The promise of future Godhood is the reward that keeps members sacrificing all that they have now in order to obtain this tremendous prize in the future.

Since HWA taught that "God is a Spirit," he believed that man had to be resurrected as a spirit being in order to be "God, as God is God." He repetitiously taught that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." On page 71 of <i>The Incredible Human Potential</i>, HWA clearly states: "Matter is NOT Spirit—cannot be converted into Spirit." HWA claimed that Jesus was resurrected a spirit; therefore, he was not composed of matter or flesh. His body simply "disappeared" from the grave when he was resurrected. Now this poses more than a few problems. For instance, to where did Jesus' body disappear? And when Jesus appeared to his disciples after his resurrection, whose body did He use? If Jesus was composed only of spirit at that time, since "matter is not spirit," then how was he able to appear in a material body? Finally, we need to ask whether a spirit can eat, or be touched—actually be felt by human hands? In Luke 24, we have an account of the risen Christ appearing to his disciples:

And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, "Peace be with you." But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And He said unto them, "Why are ye troubled? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, "Have ye here any meat?" And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them. (Luke 24:36-42)

Inviting the disciples to handle him, Jesus clearly stated that a spirit does not have flesh and bones as He did. He also ate physical food to further prove that he was not a disembodied spirit. So if Jesus was changed to Spirit, "no longer composed of matter or flesh," as HWA claimed, then how does he explain that Jesus Himself plainly said he was composed of flesh and bones and that he was not a spirit? Scripture says that Jesus showed Thomas the nail prints in his hands and the spear mark in his side. (John 20:27) Unless somebody else was
resurrected that day with the same nail holes and spear mark, then we will have to believe that Jesus showed Thomas his *original* body! If Jesus' physical body "disappeared" after the Resurrection, then how did He make it reappear to Thomas (John 20:24-27), including the other nine distinct appearances recorded in Scripture? HWA stated that matter cannot be converted into spirit, but he wants his readers to believe that spirit can be converted to matter. Members are taught that Jesus "manifested himself as human" so he could appear to his followers after His resurrection. Again, this is simply another way of HWA contradicting his own teaching without making it obvious.

The truth is, believers are not going to become spirit beings so that they can "become God as God is God." We will return to our bodies, and be resurrected once again, only this time, in bodies that are glorified and not subject to death and decay and fully restored to a sinless spiritual state. Most importantly, believers will not become God, but will be subject to a loving Savior who redeemed them from death through His shed blood. (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14) By not acknowledging a bodily resurrection—a return to the body—HWA was able to put his followers on the same plane as God. This is the highest form of conceit that anyone can ever engage in. Hypocritically, on page 111 of the MOA, HWA declares:

> They [philosophers] make mortal man to think of himself as immortal God.

**SOUL AND SPIRIT**

Earlier in this review, I touched on HWA's description of the soul and the doctrine of *soul sleep*. HWA believed that the soul was mortal and can die:

> Man, formed from material dust of the ground, upon breathing air, BECAME a living soul. It does not say man is, or has, an *immortal* soul. What was formed from material ground BECAME a soul. (p. 104)

> Therefore the SOUL is physical, composed of matter, and can die. (p. 104)

HWA did not believe that the soul was a separate entity from the body or in its continued existence after death. The physical, living "man" was the living *soul*. From here, HWA separates the soul from the spirit. HWA taught that man has a *human spirit*:

> Many passages of Scripture show that there is a spirit in man. Spirit is not matter, and man is matter...I designate it as the "human spirit". Nevertheless, it is spirit and not matter. (p. 105)

HWA taught that this human spirit was a "spirit essence" *IN* the man, and not made of matter, nor was it a spirit *person*, being, or soul. Carefully observe what HWA says that this human spirit *can and cannot* do:

> This human spirit cannot see, hear, taste, smell or feel. The brain sees through the eye, hears through the ear, etc. The "human" spirit cannot of itself think. The physical brain thinks. (p. 105)

Now let's ponder this. If the human spirit cannot see, cannot hear, cannot think (but imparts the intellect to the brain), and it is not a soul, nor a spirit person nor being—just an essence that imparts intellect, and if the soul is nothing more than the living man who can think, but has no intellect without the human spirit—*then what part of man is held responsible for sin*? If this human spirit "essence" only imparts intellect, then this spirit essence is causing the brain to think some pretty *sinful thoughts*! If the man (soul) didn't have the intellect to keep himself from sinning (without the human spirit, he would be nothing more than a brute animal following instinct), it hardly seems fair for God to hold this soul responsible for the spirit's actions! In fact, God does. HWA's oft quoted verse "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. 18:4, 20) plainly states that the soul is held responsible for sinning. HWA does not speak about the *regeneration of the soul* because he would have to acknowledge its personality and that it is a separate entity from the body. (The regeneration of the soul will be covered in more detail under the subtitle "Spiritual Death/Eternal Life).

As if this wasn't confusing enough, HWA informs readers that this human spirit, at death,
When mortal man dies, the body reverts to dust, and the spirit returns to God. (p. 110)

According to HWA, this spirit is an unconscious "mold" of itself that will bring back all the memory, knowledge, character, form, and shape of the person (even the fingerprints!)\textsuperscript{11} in the Resurrection. Of course none of us knew enough to question why a resurrected SPIRIT being would need fingerprints??

But then HWA makes this interesting remark:

The human spirit of itself cannot see, hear, think or know. (p. 110)

If the spirit can't "know," then how can it know to keep an accurate mold of all this intricate information? Even though HWA speaks confidently about his theories, they simply don't make sense.

Why HWA has such a problem with the soul being in heaven with the Lord Jesus until the Resurrection should tell us something. He will go to any lengths to keep one away from the Savior, even after death! In my review of chapter three, I covered the Watchtower teaching that states that the spirit is like a recording of the person and goes up to God, although unconscious and filed away until the Resurrection. HWA also holds to this teaching and selects his wording carefully. Notice that in a round-about-way, HWA is saying that something tangible goes to heaven without using similar terminology as Biblical Christianity. He nonchalantly says the human spirit "returns to God" hoping that readers won't figure out that God is in heaven! So he is admitting that something of man goes to heaven (returns to God, who is in heaven), but by cleverly omitting the word "heaven" and by rephrasing it to "returns to God" he ensures that the reader is never aware of a heavenly hope but will have to depend on the destination of the World Tomorrow as their earthly hope. Since HWA does not give the Christian view of the soul and spirit, below is a simple description:

**BODY, SOUL, SPIRIT**

Man consists of body, soul, and spirit, distinguished in 1 Thess. 5:23. The body is the material part of man, created by God (Gen. 2:7) as the instrument by which soul and spirit relate to the material universe and fulfill His will. Spiritual and physical death came to the body in the day man sinned, as God reckons time (2 Pet. 3:8). Believers present their bodies to God for His use (Rom. 12:1-2). Redeemed and transformed (Rom. 8:23, Phil 3:21) the body will be resurrected for life in a new environment (1 Cor. 15:35-54).

The soul is immaterial, intermediate between body and spirit. It is the seat of the will, affections, personality. Man is called a soul (Gen. 2:7) because he has a soul (Psa. 103:1, 2 Cor. 1:23). The body is now suited to the life of the soul. In resurrection [form] it will be suited rather to the life of the spirit. The soul continues to live after the body is dead (Acts 2:31, Rev. 6:9).

The spirit is the immaterial part of man which is related to worship and communion with God. It gives man God-consciousness. We are to win souls, not spirits (Prov. 11:30). Men worship and serve God with the spirit, not the soul (John 4:24, Rom. 1:9). The spirit is distinguished from the soul in Hebrews 4:12. (The Great Doctrines of the Bible, William Evans, 1974, p. 281)

Again, notice the use of Scripture to back up each statement. (In my review of chapter three I covered how HWA was unable to give a single Scripture to support his phrase "the human spirit empowers intellect to the brain.") HWA makes the simplest things so complicated, then lauds himself for his simplicity! If members were honest, they would admit that they never really studied into the orthodox beliefs of the body, spirit, and soul before they came into contact with HWA's teachings. They would also have to admit HWA's version is the only version that they have believed and memorized (and never challenged).

**SPIRITUAL DEATH/ETERNAL LIFE**
HWA further confuses the immortal soul and having eternal life as one and the same. He does not distinguish that the penalty for sin is spiritual death now, and later, a physical death of the body. Christianity understands that when Adam and Eve sinned, it brought not only physical death, but also spiritual death. The spiritual death came immediately upon disobedience, while their actual physical death did not occur until hundreds of years later (although their bodies were now subject to death at the moment they sinned). Scripture plainly speaks of being spiritually dead, and by believing in Jesus, one will pass from spiritual death to spiritual life:

But she that liveth in pleasure is **dead while she liveth** (1 Timothy 5:6).

And **you** He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1).

Most assuredly, I say unto you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me **has everlasting life**, and shall not come into judgment, but **has passed from death into life**. (John 5:24)

Most assuredly, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and **now is**, when the **dead** will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear **will live**. (John 5:25)

There are two things the believer receives upon his conversion: **Eternal life** at his regeneration, and **immortality** at his resurrection. But in both instances he already has **life** and **existence**. HWA, who received no formal training in the Scriptures, clearly did not understand this and confused the two terms (or did understand them but intentionally confused the two). He made readers believe that "immortality" and "eternal life" were one and the same. (Recall his earlier accusation against Christianity for making people believe that "man has an immortal soul and already has eternal life"). Although related, they are distinct. Eternal life is a newness of life that the believer attains at his regeneration that begins the new life in the soul. As William Evans states, "Man is conscious that he does not have this holiness by nature; he is conscious, too, that he must have it in order to appear before God (Ezra 9:15) ... To live the life of God, we must have the nature of God.12 Man is regenerated by personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior. This is the clear teaching of John 1:12-13, and Gal. 3:26. We become 'children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.' When a man, believing in the claims of Jesus Christ, receives Him to be all that He claimed to be—that man is born again."13

There is absolutely no denial in orthodox Christian teaching that the wages of sin is death as HWA tries to make it seem (p. 124). It is plainly obvious that the physical body dies, and it is plainly obvious that the soul of the person is no longer there. Does he really want us to believe that scholars and theologians are standing around, scratching their heads and wondering why people are dying? Christianity fully understands that eternal life is a gift of God through Jesus Christ. This is exactly why they preach the gospel ABOUT Jesus! He is the only solution to the sin problem. It is HWA who refused to acknowledge this free gift of eternal life, teaching that one could lose his salvation if he didn't do enough good works to "qualify" to rule! And HWA does not want the reader to understand that eternal life is something he can have **now**. This is known as regeneration, or the new birth (born again).

**BORN AGAIN**

HWA wanted his readers to believe that being "born again" wasn't about spiritual regeneration. Instead, he taught that "born again" meant an actual birth into a spirit being. Naturally, he didn't want readers to know that they could have eternal life now (why let them be happy and rejoice in Christ?). He invites readers to write for his free booklet "**What Do You Mean—Born Again?**" so they could be further poisoned. Since HWA never gives the Christian view of this doctrine, it's up to the reader to look up his own resources. Following are excerpts from *The Great Doctrines of the Bible*:

**C. REGENERATION, OF THE NEW BIRTH**

[It is of] the utmost importance that we have a clear understanding of this vital doctrine. By regeneration we are admitted into the kingdom of God. There is no other way of becoming
I. THE NATURE OF REGENERATION

Too often do we find other things substituted by man for God's appointed means of entrance into the kingdom of heaven. It will be well for us then to look, first of all, at some of these substitutes.

1. Regeneration is Not Baptism

It is claimed that John 3:5—"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit," and Titus 3:5—"The washing of regeneration," teach that regeneration may occur in connection with baptism...That the Word of God is an agent in regeneration is clear from James 1:18, and 1 Peter 1:23.

If baptism and regeneration were identical, why should the Apostle Paul seem to make so little of that rite (1 Cor. 4:15, and compare with it 1 Cor. 1:14)? In the first passages Paul asserts that he had begotten them through the Gospel; and in 1:14 he declares that he baptized none of them save Crispus and Gaius. Could he thus speak of baptism if it had been the means through which they had been begotten again? Simon Magus was baptized (Acts 8), but was he saved? Cornelius (Acts 11) was saved even before he was baptized. [See: Do We Only Receive the Holy Spirit as a Result of Baptism?]

2. Reformation is Not Regeneration

Regeneration is not a natural forward step in man's development; it is a supernatural act of God; it is a spiritual crisis. It is not evolution, but involution—the communication of a new life. It is a revolution—a change of direction resulting from that life...

3. Regeneration is a Spiritual Quickening, A New Birth

Regeneration is the impartation of a new and divine life; a new creation; the production of a new thing. It is Gen. 1:26 all over again. It is not the old nature altered, reformed, or re-invigorated, but a new birth from above. This is the teaching of such passages as John 3:3-7, 5:21, Eph. 2:1, 10; 2 Cor. 5:17.

By nature man is dead in sin (Eph. 2:1); the new birth imparts to him new life—the life of God, so that henceforth he is as those that are alive from the dead; he has passed out of death into life (John 5:24).

4. It Is the Impartation of a New Nature—God's Nature

In regeneration we are made partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). We have put on the new man, which after God is created in holiness and righteousness (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10). Christ now lives in the believer (Gal. 2:20). God's seed now abides in him (1 John 3:9). So that henceforth the believer is possessed of two natures (Gal. 5:17).

5. A New and Divine Impulse is Given to the Believer.

Thus regeneration is a crisis with a view to a process. A new governing power comes into the regenerate man's life by which he is enabled to become holy in experience: "Old things are passed away; behold all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). See also Acts 16:14, and Ezek. 36:25-27; 1 John 3:3-6.

II. THE IMPERATIVE NECESSITY OF THE NEW BIRTH

1. The Necessity Is Universal

The need is far-reaching as sin and the human race: "Except a man [lit. anybody] be born again,
he cannot see the kingdom of God." No age, sex, position, condition exempts anyone from this necessity. Not to be born again is to be lost. There is no substitute for the new birth (Gal. 6:15). The absolute necessity is stated by our Lord: whatever is born of the flesh, must be born again of the Spirit (John 3:3-7).

2. The Sinful Condition of Man Demands It

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh"—and it can never, by any human process, become anything else... "They that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:8); in our flesh dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7:18). The mind is darkened so that we cannot apprehend spiritual truth; we need a renewing of the mind (Rom 12:2)...No education or culture can bring about such a needed change. God alone can do it.

III. THE MEANS OF REGENERATION

1. Regeneration Is a Divine Work

We are "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:13)...Our regeneration is a creative act on the part of God, not a reforming process on the part of man...The Holy Spirit is the Divine Agent in our regeneration. For this reason it is called the "renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5). We are "born of the Spirit" (John 3:5).

Is there any wonder why HWA avoided discussing the doctrine of regeneration? To do so would cause him to acknowledge the Personage of the Holy Spirit—something he is not about to do! He wants believers to rely on him, not on the Holy Spirit. He wants them to look to him for salvation (which is a l-o-n-g process—they don't gain it until the first resurrection, and who knows when that will be?), instead of knowing they can posses salvation and eternal life now. Members, convinced they have been duped by "traditional Christianity," never question what is so bad about receiving a new nature, experiencing forgiveness, sanctified, having the fruit of holiness and righteousness, looking to a heavenly hope, no longer fearing death ("to die is gain" - Phil. 1:21), being in the immediate presence of the Lord upon ones' death, dwelling in heaven where there is no evil, and awaiting the promise of immortality in a glorified spiritual body—and having all of this because of belief in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (faith alone), which one can do now. (How did we ever let HWA convince us that these things were so wrong??) Instead, HWA has members continually focusing on the Adversary instead of the Savior: "People have no realization of the tremendous power of Satan." (p. 144) HWA, clearly, has no realization of the tremendous power of Jesus Christ who has won the victory over Satan and all the powers of darkness!

Shifting focus away from the facts comes as second nature to HWA. He harped over and over that Christianity did not believe that the penalty of man's sin is death, and that they believed the lie of the serpent when he said to Eve, "You shall not surely die." (Gen. 3:4) Two things HWA failed to point out: Adam and Eve did not die physically that very day (although the ability to die had entered their body at that moment), but they had also experienced a spiritual death. This is why there is sin and suffering in the world. The second deception was the promise the devil made to Eve— the very same promise that HWA made to his followers: "Ye shall be as gods..."

THE CHURCH IN PAST HISTORY—TRUE, TRUE, FALSE

Let's play a game called "True, True, False." This is where the first statement made is "true," but the second and third statements made might be "true," or they might be "false"—but it is up to you to discern whether they are or not—and that's how the game goes. Advertisers play this game all the time. Take a minute to think about the commercials and infomercials seen daily on TV. Remember the last time you purchased something that sounded so good and later you discovered that the claims were either overstated or downright untrue? ("Try Sweet and Simple Hair Remover! It goes on easy (true), it doesn't contain any harmful chemicals (true, it's made from honey and beeswax), and hair removal is pain free and lasts up to two weeks! (FALSE! It hurts and only lasts three days!). HWA employs this technique throughout his
Indeed Webster defines the word church as a building. (p. 205) (FALSE!—Webster says, "1: a building for public and esp. Christian worship." [Bolding is mine.] In typical fashion HWA only quotes part of the definition and leaves out the rest.)

People suppose a church is a building to which people...flock on a Sunday morning for "worship." (p. 205) (TRUE)

They think people go to the church. (TRUE)

...And the Church assembled on a Saturday, not Sunday. (p. 205) (FALSE!—See my research article on church history for proof: True Original Church/Faith Once Delivered (Proof Herbert Armstrong Lied About the "Lost" Church Century) (Pt. 3)

The first place in the New Testament where the word church appears is Matthew 16:18, where, speaking to Simon Peter, Jesus said, "I will build my church." (pp. 207-208) (TRUE)

As noted above, the inspired Greek word for church was ekklesia, meaning called-out-ones. (p. 208) (FALSE!)

Stated in more clear English language, Jesus said "I will call out of Satan's world disciples, to grow into the altogether new and different world, which will be God's kingdom." (pp. 208) (FALSE!—Fully quoted, Matthew 16:18 only says: "And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." HWA clearly altered the meaning of this verse to fit his agenda.)

Institutionally the CHURCH is thought of today as a religious organization, association, or society (true). One—if "good"—is supposed to join the "church of his choice" (p. 206) (FALSE—Sinners and believers alike are invited to attend the church of their choice. It's only in HWA's church that one cannot freely attend).

Of course there are the "good guys" and the "bad guys" and the "good" go to church. (p. 206) (FALSE—The church is not an exclusive "Good Boys Club" but a place where sinners can find salvation, and where believers gather together for worship, prayer and fellowship).

From here, HWA cleverly steers readers to jump on the bandwagon by the use of a carefully calculated story designed to place mistrust toward the mainstream church. He gives a narrative of "a minister without a pastorate" on pages 206-207. He creates a sense of indignation when he quotes the minister as saying, "I'll preach whatever doctrines they want me to preach." He capitalizes on the discontent by offering the usual solution—his church. What the unsuspecting reader doesn't perceive is that he is being groomed to further adopt the belief that there is only ONE WAY TO BELIEVE. Later, HWA will introduce the loaded phrase, "God is not the author of confusion" in order to get the convert to never hold any personal views that differ with his doctrines.

JESUS—KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Another incredulous statement HWA makes against Christianity is their supposed ignorance that Jesus was born to become king:

Next, what nearly all "Christians", including theologians, do not realize: Jesus was born to become a KING! (p. 209)

The churches of this world—"traditional Christianity—DO NOT speak of the government of God. They do not picture Jesus as coming world RULER. They do not preach Jesus as coming KING—but only as Savior. They overlook— reject—scriptures speaking of Christ as King and coming Ruler, and government rule in the kingdom of God. And that is to say, they deliberately REJECT and OMIT the gospel MESSAGE of Christ in their teaching and preaching! They teach that one is already saved on "receiving" (GETTING) Christ! (p. 257)
Once again, we observe HWA indicting "traditional Christianity" of wrongdoing while he intentionally misrepresents what they do believe. Even though he accuses them as picturing Jesus as only a Savior but not a King, in glaring hypocrisy, the reverse can be said of HWA teaching Jesus as King and Ruler, but not as personal Savior. Notice how HWA equates those who receive Christ as "GETTING" Christ. Of course, the loaded term, "Satan's way of GET" is repeated throughout the MOA and HWA, skilled in advertising, knew the reader's mind would pick up these visual cues. Now he tells readers that "receiving Christ" is equal to "getting Christ," which is the same as living Satan's way of GET.

What about this accusation against Christianity and theologians not realizing that Jesus was born to become King? What HWA doesn't tell his readers is that Christians already believe that Jesus is King and Living Ruler over all. They look forward to His Second Coming when the kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdoms of our Lord (Rev. 11:15), and they acknowledge that He rules his creation with all power and glory NOW and adds believers to His Kingdom daily ("Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:" (Col. 1:13-14)). HWA accuses Christianity of gross neglect for not SPEAKING about the government of God. So here we must pause and ask: Which is more important—the government of the Ruler, or the Ruler of the government? It's not too hard to figure out which is more important to HWA, and which is more important to Biblical Christianity.

DEATH OF JESUS ON THE CROSS—THREE ERRONEOUS TEACHINGS

1. Laws of Health

HWA begins to exert more control over the loyal convert. Inserted between the graphic details about the suffering and death of Jesus are three false teachings. The first teaching that the unwary reader is being introduced to is the "Healing Doctrine."

Because he [Jesus] had never even broken a law of health, he suffered the process of dying as no other human ever did. (p. 211)

The indescribable scourging was endured that believers might be healed from physical transgression, sicknesses or disease (Isa. 53:5; I Peter 2:24). What a terrible price our own very Maker paid that we might, by believing, be healed. Yet nearly all professing believers totally ignore what their Savior provided for them, and instead of relying on him, put their faith in human doctors, drugs, medicines and knives. (p. 212)

The focus has clearly shifted away from a loving Savior, who came to voluntarily die for our sins because He loved us, while HWA cleverly inserts his "law of health" teaching. Notice how HWA induces tremendous feelings of guilt over the death of Christ. By describing in gory detail how Christ was scourged, he evokes a powerful emotional response. It is through this insidious moment—a moment of vulnerability experienced by the reader—that HWA manipulates the reader into the belief that he is not "thankful" for Christ's provision because he had relied on medicine and doctors during his physical illnesses. The reader becomes mortified when he realizes that he's in the same category as one of the "professing believers that ignore what their Savior provided for them" since he's readily used doctors and drugs in the past. Again, another clever set up. Either believe in HWA's healing doctrine, or join the ranks of deceived traditional Christians (which follow Satan). HWA takes advantage of the reader's conscience and will use it against him. Who wants to be guilty of spitting in the face of God? The reader, who experienced great joy at finally being given "the key" in the previous chapter, will now experience deep guilt and shame over his sins in this chapter. This manipulation of emotional highs and lows is typical of religious cults' mind control methods.

Once the convert joins the group, he will be informed that taking medications [medicine] is a form of sorcery and witchcraft, and going to doctors is idolatry. He will be informed that having faith in Christ's provision, and being anointed with oil, and having prayed the prayer of faith to claim that provision, will bring healing. What is not explained to the convert is what happens when anointing doesn't work. Either the person: a) lives with the pain and blames himself for
"not having enough faith," or b) dies, leaving members wondering whether he had enough faith, or whether he had some "hidden sin" in his life, or c) dies, but is looked upon as a "wonderful example of faith" for not buckling in to the devil and getting proper medical treatment. (Category "c" is reserved for mostly ministers.)

Members are conditioned to judge those who do not receive healing as "lacking faith." Those who do seek medical attention are whispered about behind their backs and treated with disdain. Others are "put out" (depending on the capacity for compassion held by the local minister). Members see illnesses as a personal trial sent by God to test their "faith" in His provision. If they give up and seek medical care, they believe they have failed the test. Members are also taught that sin falls into two categories: spiritual sin and physical sin (e.g., the account in Luke 5:18-25 is used to prove that there is "physical sin" when Jesus said to the man sick with palsy, "Man, thy sins are forgiven"). Illnesses are supposedly the penalty for transgressing physical laws that God had made to "govern our bodies." Members are taught that when Jesus healed the sick, their physical sins were forgiven. This teaching places a heavy burden of guilt on the member. Instead of offering a joyful and peaceful heavenly hope for the terminally ill, the dying convert is left wondering if God is still testing him and will heal him at the "last moment" or if God has even forgiven the physical sins he had committed.

By quoting Isaiah 53:5 and I Peter 2:24 HWA wanted readers to believe that Christ paid for our physical healing: Let us see what Dr. J. Vernon McGee had to say about these two verses:

The phrase "with His stripes we are healed" may cause questions in your mind. Of what are we healed? Are we healed of physical diseases? Is that the primary meaning of it? I am going to let Simon Peter interpret this by the inspiration of the Spirit of God. First Peter 2:24 says, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the cross, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." Healed of what? Peter makes it quite clear that we are healed of our trespasses and sins. (Thru the Bible With J. Vernon McGee, Vol. 3, p. 314)

I notice that when so-called faith healers use the words, "by whose stripes ye were healed," they refer to Isaiah 53:5 rather than to this verse in I Peter, because Peter makes it evident that the healing is of sins. I certainly agree that the Lord Jesus came to be the Great Healer—but the Great Healer heals of sins. No human physician can handle that problem. And Peter's use of these words from Isaiah 53:5 reveals that the prophet Isaiah was not speaking primarily of physical healing but of that which is more important and more profound, healing from sin. (Ibid., Vol. 5, p. 695)

This subject of "physical sin" is commented on in our article: What Were the Lies and What is the Truth?

What are these "Seven Laws of Radiant Health" that can cause one to "sin" a "physical sin" if broken?


Although these "laws" may help maintain good health, they are not a guarantee against illnesses, accidents or death! Some people can break all of these laws and still have good health. Others can obey all of them and still develop terminal illnesses. These obviously are not "laws" but common sense principles that HWA tried to disguise as physical laws to support his phony healing doctrine. We can readily see that by obeying the tithing laws (especially in 3rd tithe year where 30% of one's gross income is required) causes one to break the first "Law of Health"!

Exerting control over personal decisions is another characteristic of a Bible-based cult. Paranoia over standard institutions (government, educators, church) will now spill out onto the medical community. Isolation plays a key part of mind control, and HWA does his best to get his converts to continually cut ties with the outside world. Rejecting the medical establishment prevents the convert from being physically and psychologically evaluated for signs of physical or emotional abuse, depression, and/or spiritual abuse. It also prevents the convert from
getting real help for his conditions, which in turn, will cause him to question why the medical community can alleviate his suffering, which in turn will cause him to question the organization and doubt the healing doctrine.

Questioning leads to challenging the system, and HWA's totalitarian government cannot tolerate this. It is a known fact that HWA used doctors himself, and even had his own private physician.\textsuperscript{14} Like the religious hypocrites in Jesus' day, HWA was more than willing to place burdens on the members that he, himself, would not bear.

2. CROSS OF CHRIST

The second erroneous teaching, cleverly inserted into this emotional story of Christ's suffering and death, is the belief that He was not crucified on a cross, but on a "stake":

Scourging was intended to weaken the victims so they would die quickly on the \textit{stake} of crucifixion. (p. 212)

Although HWA mentions that Jesus was "unable to carry his cross," he is being very deceitful. He engages in "Christian" sounding terms, but will redefine them later. Once in the organization, converts will learn to despise the cross, and will be taught that he was crucified on a pole or "stake." The familiar arguments are given below:

\textbf{Why do [your] publications show Jesus on a stake with hands over his head instead of on a traditional cross?} The Greek word rendered "cross" in many modern Bible versions ("torture stake" NW) is \textit{stau-ros}. In classical Greek, this word meant merely an upright stake, or pole. Later it also came to be used for an execution stake having a crosspiece, \textit{The Imperial Bible-Dictionary} [by P. Fairbairn, London, 1874, Vol 1, p376] acknowledges this saying: "The Greek word for cross \textit{[stau-ros]}, properly signified a stake, an upright pole, or piece of paling, on which anything might be hung, or which might be used in impaling [fencing in] a piece of ground….Even amongst the Romans the crux (from which our cross is derived) appears to have been originally an upright pole." (\textit{Reasoning from the Scriptures}, 1989, p. 89.)

\textbf{What were the historical origins of Christendom's cross?} "Various objects, dating from the periods long anterior to the Christian era, have been found, marked with crosses of different designs, in almost every part of the old world. India, Syria, Persia and Egypt have all yielded numberless examples…The use of the cross as a religious symbol in pre-Christian times and among non-Christian peoples may probably be regarded as almost universal, and in very many cases it was connected with some form of nature worship." (\textit{Encyclopedia Britannica}, 1946, Vol. 6, p. 753).

The shape of the [two-beamed cross] had its origin in ancient Chaldea, and was used as the symbol of the god Tammuz (being in the shape of the mystic Tau, the initial of his name) in that country and in adjacent lands, including Egypt.

\textbf{Is veneration of the cross a scriptural practice?} 1 Cor. 10:14: "My beloved ones, flee from idolatry." (An idol is an image or symbol that is an object of intense devotion, veneration, or worship.) Ex. 20:4-5: (Notice that God commanded that his people not even make an image before which people would bow down.)…Concerning first century Christians, \textit{History of the Christian Church} says: "There was no use of the crucifix and no material representation of the cross." (New York, 1897, J.F. Hurst, Vol. I, p. 366).

\textbf{Does it really make any difference if a person cherishes a cross, as long as he does not worship it?} How would you feel if one of your dearest friends was executed on the basis of false charges? Would you make a replica of the instrument of execution? Would you cherish it, or would you rather shun it?…So by cherishing the cross, a person is honoring a symbol of worship that is opposed to the true God.

As stated at Ezekiel 8:17, apostate Israel also 'thrust out the shoot to the Lord's nose.' He viewed this as "detestable" and 'offensive.' Why? This "shoot", some commentators
explain, was a representation of the male sex organ, used in phallic worship. How, then, must the Lord view the use of the cross, which, as we have seen, was ancienly used as a symbol in phallic worship?

After this discussion, is there any wonder that members of the WCG held the cross with such derision and disgust? Did God really reveal these truths directly to HWA, or did he get them from another source? The above quotes were not taken from any WCG publications, but were extracted from the Watchtower Society's handbook, *Reasoning from the Scriptures*, under the topic "Cross" (1989, pp. 89-93). The similarities are undeniable. Why would HWA derive this teaching from a known religious cult? Ironically, what HWA didn't know was that the Watchtower Society lied about the cross of Christ to their own members. In their *Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures*, the Watchtower Society intentionally misquoted Roman Catholic scholar, Justus Lipsius (Joost Lips), in his book, *De Cruse Liber Primus* while deceptively displaying only one of the three illustrations shown in this book.15 The first illustration shows a man being crucified on a single beam, with his hands nailed above his head. The next two illustrations in Lipsius' book—which were deliberately omitted by the Watchtower Society—show the correct cross upon which Jesus was crucified. Lipsius states that four pieces of wood were used: The upright stake, the crossbar in which his hands were nailed in an outstretched position, the piece of wood above the crossbar which contained the entitled superscription ("JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS"), and the final piece of wood fastened below for his feet. Justus Lipsius affirms that Jesus was nailed to a cross as displayed in the latter two illustrations, and not on a simple stake as shown in the first. HWA never realized that he was being duped by the Watchtower Society while he was gleaning his doctrines! The *Interlinear* is not available to the general public,16 so HWA was never aware of how the Watchtower Society lied about this particular teaching.

HWA made a big deal over the pagan origins of the cross. What about the cross being pagan? Of course it is—Jesus certainly wouldn't have been hung on a "Christian" cross, would he? The cross was an instrument of execution used by Romans. This is what HWA wanted his members to focus on. What he didn't point out was the fact that Jesus transformed this instrument of death into a symbol of hope, and opened the door to forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Remembering the cross of Calvary reminds believers that he conquered death and was resurrected. One must ask why would HWA look to the Watchtower Society for his doctrines instead of quoting Scripture? There are 28 scriptural references using the word "cross" and none of them are derogatory, nor do any support derision against the cross. On the contrary, we see Scriptures that show us the cross was a reminder of the sacrifice of Jesus, and we are not to be the enemies of the cross.

But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. (Gal. 6:14)

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. (I Cor. 1:18)

For it pleased the Father that in him should fullness dwell; And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. (Col. 1:19-20)

(For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ;) (Phil. 3:18a)

When we focus on the Savior and his endless love and sacrifice, "pagan paranoia" fades into deserved irrelevance. Let's "believe the Bible" and not him (HWA).

### 3. JESUS SCREAMING

The third erroneous teaching introduced by HWA is the final death of Jesus. On page 212 he quotes from the Moffatt Bible—a modernist translation, which denies the infallibility of the Bible:
...As he [Jesus] hung on the cross, helpless, a soldier stabbed him with a spear, he screamed in pain (Matt. 27:50, Moffatt) and then he died.

According to the gospels, Jesus had already died before the soldiers came.

Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. (Matt. 27:50, KJV)

And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. (Mark 16:37)

And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit; and having said thus, he gave up the ghost. (Luke 23:46)

When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. (John 19:30)...Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs; But one of the soldiers, with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. (vs. 32-34).

Why would God's apostle misrepresent Scripture? If HWA was personally trained by Jesus, then why does he plainly contradict what the Scriptures say concerning him? HWA's rendition of Jesus' death on the cross does not show a Savior who voluntarily gave up his life on the cross, but instead, depicted one who was involuntarily slain by a soldier. Saddling the reader with guilt, HWA says this happened because of transgression of the Law. Now the reader is placed in the position of having to make up for this awful death by keeping the Law as dictated by HWA. The focus here is on guilt, and not on sacrificial love, nor on forgiveness.

CHURCH—ONE CANNOT JOIN

Secret societies never allow anyone just off the street to join:

Anyone who "joins the church of his choice" has not come into God's true Church. Once cannot just "join" the TRUE Church of God. (p. 229)

Advocating the belief that God selects those He wants in his church, the reader easily plays into HWA's hands. The reader doesn't know what insiders' already know—that he must jump through several hoops before he will be allowed "in." Locating a local church will prove to be a challenge. He won't be able to find a telephone listing in the Yellow Pages of the nearest church, nor will he be allowed to simply walk into a church service without ministerial approval. If the reader is convinced that he must be part of this church to save his skin from the impending cataclysmic holocaust, he will write away to the headquarters and request a visit from a minister. Eventually, the minister (with another person) will visit and question the potential members by their willingness to submit to requirements. Is he smoking? Then he must quit. Is he "shacking up"? Then he must marry. Is he eating unclean foods? Then he must change his diet. Is he keeping the Sabbath, etc.? This initiation process can take weeks, even months, depending on the number of hoops he must jump through. [For a personal experience showing how this process works, read: How Did Herbert W. Armstrong Recruit People?] As time passes, the recruit becomes more urgent as his desire to obtain access to the church becomes insatiable. When he is finally granted permission to attend services, he is elated, at long last, to be "in." Ironically, the new convert will, in turn, defend this initiation process and jealously guard against unconverted "intruders" walking into services "uninvited."
HWA introduces the notion that only a "minute few" are being called to salvation in this present age. Church members always understood this minute few to be the converted members of the Worldwide Church of God (also known as the 144,000). This illustrious plan of salvation teaches that the majority of the human race is "NOT YET JUDGED" while God lets them willingly and willfully follow Satan's "GET" way. From this description, we can easily conclude that God allows men to disagree with Him, even disobey Him, without any condemnation. HWA said that they are not being judged at this present time. He clearly explained on page 235 that "Christ had already atoned for their sins." According to HWA, "uncalled" humans would be allowed to continue living in their sinful state, but they would "reap what they sowed." Sounds easy enough.

Now let's examine some deeper questions: Is it accurate to say that if one is not judged yet, one is not condemned (to the Lake of Fire)? In order for one to be condemned, as stated by HWA, a formal Judgment must first take place. Now let's think about the millions who have come into contact with HWA's teachings—those who read some of the literature, but never entered the church, much less contacted a minister. If they decide, in this life, to reject what they have read, are they held accountable? Are they condemned? "No," according to HWA. These "uncalled" persons will be given a chance later, during a "special resurrection to judgment at the end of the 7,000 years of the master plan." God has not opened their eyes to understand His Truth yet. If they do not believe the literature, then God isn't calling them yet. From this, we can deduce that the uncalled can disagree with God in this present life, and if one can disagree with, and even reject the words of the Creator without being judged or condemned, then let us further ask: Since HWA is God's messenger who is teaching God's truth, can one read and disagree with, or outright reject HWA's literature without condemnation? After all, millions aren't called to understand, right? And that includes "born-again Christians."

They [Christians] do not know they are deceived and wrong in their beliefs. But they are not now being judged! They are neither condemned to the lake of fire nor "saved." They are among the WHOLE WORLD, swayed by the deceptions of Satan, CUT OFF from God! (p. 272)

"This is not the time when salvation is opened to those in Satan's world." (p. 270)

So according to HWA's own words, traditional Christians, along with the WHOLE WORLD, are not being judged nor are they condemned. God is opening the eyes, in this present time, of only a minute few. Now contrast this with the following. In the book, The United States and Britain in Prophecy (1980), we see HWA plainly condemn those who disagree with his British-Israel/Sabbath doctrine to the Lake of Fire:

"Yes," says the rebellious one who would argue his way out of obedience, "but it is between God and the children of ISRAEL. It is throughout Israel's generations; it is between God and the ISRAELITES forever.

Oh—then you admit it is binding FOREVER on Israelites—and throughout their generations? There are TWO answers to that argument that will condemn you, if you so argue, to the LAKE OF FIRE! (Chapter XI, "Sign for Israel Only?" p. 141)

HWA, once again, has contradicted his own teaching. If millions read the United States and Britain in Prophecy, and did not believe this particular teaching concerning the Sabbath, ARE they or are they NOT condemned? Either they are or they aren't. Here, HWA says those who argue with this teaching and try to wiggle out of it, ARE condemned. This means, millions who have read this book (including born-again Christians), and decided it was pure hogwash, are condemned. Apparently, it is okay to willingly and willfully disobey God, but one cannot argue with and willfully disobey HWA without his invoking God's wrath upon him!

HWA performed this doctrinal flip-flop in order to trap people into his organization. In the MOA, the reader is invited to write for a free copy of the The United States and Britain in Prophecy for more detailed explanations. He will be spoon-fed a steady diet of sensational
claims concerning the lost identity of the tribes of Israel. [See my research article: Where Are the Tribes of Israel Located?] The reader, weak in doctrine, does not see how he was tricked into believing that if he doesn't agree with HWA—does not believe that he is an Israelite, and that he is required to keep the Sabbath (including the annual Sabbaths)—then he is condemned to the Lake of Fire for questioning and resisting this. Notice how HWA labels those who won't submit to this teaching as "rebellious ones." We have revisited this set-up umpteen times. HWA, a shrewd salesman, cannot allow the customer to walk away.

HWA offers a palatable salvation solution—one that is irresistibly reasonable and universally fair—a scenario where almost everybody wins. But after the convert takes the bait, he is blindsided by a clever switch. HWA ridicules the teaching of a literal hell, but will hang "annihilation in the Lake of Fire" over his converts' heads for anything that smacks of "rebellion," "bad attitudes" and "bitterness" against him and his organization. "The Lake of Fire" is another loaded term which is nothing more than HWA's redefinition of hell—only, in cruel irony, he is willing to cast his chosen, elite "converted members" into it for being "unsubmissive" and "rebellious," but lets off those outside of his organization with a wink and a promise of a second resurrection in a future paradise.

The reader does not have enough doctrinal learning to think through the cruelty and unfairness of HWA's plan of salvation since he does not understand what all that entails. HWA fools the reader into thinking that Christianity teaches a false plan of salvation, where God has favorites:

If God is opening salvation to the few in his Church only to give them salvation, while he excluded the preponderance of the world as a whole until later, then God certainly would be a respecter of persons, discriminating against the world as a whole. Jesus said plainly no man can come unto him except that the Father draws him (John 6:44). A professed Christianity believes precisely the opposite. This false Christianity teaches that God is calling and trying to save everybody in this present time. If that were so, then Satan is certainly winning a great victory over God. For the overwhelming majority of mankind knows [sic] little or nothing about Christ or salvation through him. (p. 215)

Although this argument sounds logical, it is full of loopholes and misrepresentations used to push the right buttons to get the reader to side with him. Again, HWA will not quote Scripture to show why Christianity believes what it does. He simply declares it unjust, and then introduces his own "fair" salvation plan. Claiming that the "overwhelming majority of mankind know little or nothing about Christ," he fails to mention the millions of professing Christians located throughout the world, even in Communist countries such as China. But since they don't ascribe to his version of "Christianity," he disregards them altogether.

Does God really "call" those He wants into the WCG (or any other splinter), or does HWA underhandedly intimidate people into his group? On page 269, the reader is invited to take an in-depth Bible course. The Bible Correspondence Course is given "gratis" upon request. One does not realize that this poisonous "freebie" is another tool used to make the reader take the bait through use of fear, intimidation, and end-of-the-world threats—techniques used by master scammers. The first several lessons (1969 version) consist of the "paradoxes of mankind"—great achievement versus appalling evil—and world leaders declaring that there are no solutions to these problems. As the lessons continue, they cover the Millennium and the supposed "deceptive lies" of "traditional Christianity." The next lessons focus on natural disasters and impending nuclear war. Finally, in Lesson 8, the pressure is on:

**Dangerous Knowledge**

We frankly doubt whether all of you FULLY GRASP the dangerous knowledge that you have learned from your own Bibles through this Course. We want to impress on you the seriousness of knowing what the future holds. YOU HAVE NO EXCUSE whenever you fail to act upon God's warning—BECAUSE YOU NOW KNOW what God plans to do! *(Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course, 1969, Lesson 8, "This is GOD Speaking..."! p. 4.)*
The above technique, used by scammers, is known as "commitment and consistency." The lessons leading up to this point were designed to get one to agree with HWA's assessment of the world—that it's a rotten, evil, polluted, crime-filled, confused mess. Even though something as simple as agreeing with HWA's opinions seems small, professional scammers know how to later use this against someone. Once the reader arrives at this lesson, he now discovers he is responsible for what he knows. If he still does not take the bait, then he will be made to feel that he is being inconsistent—after all, he did agree with HWA for seven full lessons and now he is trying to renege:

Beware the lethargy and confusion of which NEWSWEEK magazine warns:

...Incapable of determining the truth, people have developed a skepticism, a "you-show-me" attitude, which resists taking advice from God's verbal warnings. *(Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course, 1969, Lesson 8, "This is GOD Speaking..."! p. 4.)*

Using personal insults, HWA slaps on the labels of lethargy, confusion, skepticism and an arrogant attitude toward God Himself for not heeding his warnings. Combine this with the carefully planted doomsday threats:

But soon God is going to show the disobedient world the consequences of its evil. *He will speak in a language the world will understand*—He will unleash terrifying forces of nature. Through these forces He will inflict physical punishment for our own good until we learn how WRONG we have been. (Ibid.)

The rest of the lesson is filled with graphic pictures of a dust storm, locust plague, hurricane-ravished homes, and a steaming volcano. Cap this off with a Basil Wolverton illustration of Sodom and Gomorrah going up in smoke and this can leave one fearfully trembling in his boots! If the pictures aren't convincing enough, then throw in capitalized words like COSMOCIDE, EXCRUCIATING SORES, WAR MACHINES, CAPTIVE INTO VARIOUS COUNTRIES, and PRESENT GENERATION, and in hopes that the scammer will succeed in hitting the epicenter of raw fear that will push the individual into action. *Why focus on all this fear? What does the Bible have to say about fear?*

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. (I John 4:18)

Fear causes torment. Why does HWA focus on fear, doomsday scenarios, and divine punishment instead of telling us about the perfect love of Christ, which will cast out all these fears?

In his usual inconsistent manner, HWA wants the reader to believe that God is only "calling a minute few," and that mankind, on the whole, is not being judged for his actions in this life. But here in this lesson, HWA now portrays an angry and vengeful God that will punish the world for being disobedient and stubborn. If God isn't calling these people in the first place, then why is He punishing them? HWA explained earlier that God is not judging mankind, but here HWA claims that God will actively execute divine punishment against mankind for his rebellion. This doctrinal flip-flop and Jekyll/Hyde image of God is employed at HWA's convenience.

GRACE

Herbert Armstrong despised the doctrine of grace. On one hand, he taught that grace was "unmerited pardon," but he emphasized endlessly the loaded term "grace was license to sin." This kind of double-talk produced a cognitive dissonance in the members, who never questioned this disparity. He openly expresses indignation and continually impugns guilt toward "traditional Christianity" for "nailing the law to the cross." So disdainful was HWA's attitude toward this particular doctrine that the Subject Index at the end of the MOA has the word grace listed twice and it is found on the same page:

He [Simon Magus] accepted the doctrine of “grace” for the forgiveness of sin (which the
Now this brings us to an interesting point. HWA tries to make the reader believe that grace was nothing more than a license to sin. But in his own contrived "Plan of Salvation," he announces that the whole of mankind will not be judged for all the sins committed in this present life—he will merely reap the consequences of what he sows. Listen closely to what HWA is saying. "Sin all you want in this present life. God isn't judging you or condemning you for anything you have done, no matter how evil, although you will have to reap the natural consequences. When Satan is removed, then you will be resurrected in a beautiful paradise on this earth, have your eyes opened and given a chance to qualify for your salvation. Only this time, it will be a cakewalk since Satan won't be around to influence you to sin." Now whose plan of salvation is giving license to sin? Although HWA accuses "traditional Christianity" for teaching others to sin with impunity, we see just the opposite happening here. Careful examination of this salvation plan makes one thing obvious: It is better that one not be part of the Church in this present age. There are too many disadvantages. You have Satan and the world fighting against you (in the next age he will be bound), and you can fall out of favor with the organization and be condemned to eternal death in the Lake of Fire! Yes, what HWA doesn't reveal in the MOA, is that one who leaves the church will lose his salvation. Once one has "tasted this way of life" and turns his back on it, he is considered incorrigible and is condemned. Never mind that the majority that "left" were forcefully put out and not allowed to return, but as observed earlier, HWA is a master at leaving out important details when it plays to his disadvantage. (Although HWA states on page 272 that one "put out of the church could be readmitted upon repentance and renewed belief," members know this happens rarely.)

Why didn't HWA ever challenge his followers to look up the word "grace" in the Strong's Concordance? He repeatedly guided his followers to the oft-quoted passage in Jude 4, but never mentioned the numerous Scriptures found in the NT using the word grace (129 of them to be exact). Shouldn't we find this odd coming from a man of God? Grace must have been very important to have been mentioned this many times in the Bible. Why would HWA overlook this very fact? HWA doesn't want his readers to know about grace because he cannot enslave those who fully understand the true meaning of grace. He minimized grace, perverted its meaning, so his followers turn up their noses in disgust whenever this word is mentioned.

CO-SAVIORS/FIRSTFRUITS

HWA taught his followers that they would be the Firstfruits, resurrected into spirit beings in the first resurrection and becoming "God, as God is God." But this blasphemy only gets worse. On page 240, HWA will offer the ultimate prize—to be on equal footing with Jesus as co-saviors!

In a sense, then, the Church shall become co-saviors with Christ.

After we have attained to the resurrection of the dead, as the wife of the Son of God [the Bride of Christ], and members of the God family, we shall be not only heirs and coheirs with Christ, but in a sense, co-saviors.

The family of God will grow. As kings and priests, the Church in the resurrection will be co-rulers under Christ in restoring the government of God over all nations. But we shall be, as priests, co-saviors with him in saving the world.

Notice the lack of scriptural backing to this particular claim. One would think that something as important and earthshaking as becoming a "co-savior" would be plainly stated in Scripture. Instead, God's handpicked and personally trained apostle failed to quote this scripture plainly revealed in Isaiah 43:11:

I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour.

Time and time again, we see HWA outright lie while he accuses Christianity of engaging in this practice. HWA knew that the offer of ultimate status and power would be difficult to ignore. Once in the group, he/she will learn that God is reproducing Himself through him/her. He/she
will be resurrected into a spirit being at Christ's return and become God, as God is God. His/her future will have a purpose and a master plan. He/she will help Christ rebuild the destroyed earth (after Armageddon), and restore it back to Paradise. Following the Millennium, the second and third resurrections will take place. After this, the whole earth will be purified with fire. Then there will be new heavens and a new earth, and the New Jerusalem will descend from heaven to earth. At this time the fully trained convert will have a chance to re-create the universe and fulfill his/her "incredible human potential" as a God-being. Speculations such as "becoming a God on your own personal planet, and having to die like Jesus did for the sins of the people on your planet" were commonplace. Warped theology leads to warped conclusions. The uniqueness of Jesus' sacrifice was diminished when followers entertained thoughts that they, too, could become a savior.

ONE CHURCH WITH ONE GOVERNMENT

Against mainstream denominations, HWA stated on page 206:

Jesus founded only one Church. Yet in the Western world today there are many different churches—Catholic, Protestant, independents. And within them many denominations, sects and divisions or congregations, each with its differing beliefs, teachings, rituals and programs.

HWA gives the impression that his church is the "only one church" that Jesus founded and doesn't suffer from division. Is this true? On pages 241-242, HWA makes some telling remarks about the origins of his organization:

When I came among the brethren of the Church of God, there were questions among the leaders respecting the nature of Church organization....But division over Church organization and government began about 1930. Two leaders organized a new Church, departing from its headquarters at Stanberry, Missouri, setting up its new headquarters at Salem, West Virginia. They adopted a system of organization that they erroneously called "Bible organization."

Selecting his words carefully, HWA does not point out that his church is a splinter from this Salem, West Virginia church, which split off from the Stanberry, Missouri church, which split from the Seventh-day Adventist Church, etc. (See the chart on: Roots of the Worldwide Church of God) He disguises this fact forty-five pages later, pretending these splits are "batons" being passed between the different church eras (which will be discussed later in detail).

Though he accuses religious organizations of confusion and division, his organization was no better. He doesn't mention the split by his son, Garner Ted, or the "rebellion of the `70s." Following HWA's death in 1986, two major splinter groups formed (the Philadelphia Church of God, and the Global Church of God, which is now Living Church of God.) Later, during, and after 1995, the only "one church" that Jesus founded spiraled into hundreds of splinter groups, claiming either to be the only true church, or the continuation (or restoration) of the original true church. The house built on the sand has collapsed, but the various landlords won't allow the tenants to pack up and leave.

CHURCH OF GOD—WHAT'S IN A NAME?

HWA reassures his readers that God has provided a safe enclave against the heresies of this world—his church—which he claims is the ONLY TRUE CHURCH. He dismisses other denominations (Congregational, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Methodist, Baptist, Catholic, etc.) for not using the specific words "Church of God" in their namesake while spurning them for holding a democratic form of church government.

HWA will build the case that this particular denomination—the only true church—must hold the name "Church of God."

Jesus said his true Church was to be KEPT in the name of the Father—GOD. Twelve times in the New Testament, the NAME of this one true Church is the CHURCH OF
GOD! It is God's Church, and Jesus Christ is its guiding, sustaining, directing HEAD! (p. 247)

HWA quotes the twelve Scriptures proving that "Church of God" is the true NAME of the church, and reminds readers that it "CANNOT BE DIVIDED" and everyone must "SPEAK THE SAME THING." HWA also states that, "There must be no division in what is believed, taught or preached." (p. 249). Here, strict conformity of the organization's rules is cleverly masqueraded as "unity." Before the reader has time to process this, HWA quickly distracts him with the eye-catching, bolded subheading, "Traditional Christianity." For the next few pages, he hammers into the reader's head that the true identity of traditional churches is "Mystery Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." After elevating his own church, HWA must vilify and burn in effigy, the competition.

First, we will look at the assertions by HWA that the true church must have the name "Church of God." Later we will look at some interesting allegations made concerning this false Mystery Babylon church.

Withholding pertinent information is a trademark of HWA. Although he informs readers that the true church must have the name "Church of God," he fails to mention that there are approximately twenty other denominations (and countless WCG splinter groups) that hold the name "Church of God."

Of course, HWA does not bring any of this to our attention. He also takes liberties in embellishing the name of his church (Radio Church of God, and later, Worldwide Church of God) without explaining why this is permissible for his church to do. While describing other denominations calling themselves after their leaders, doctrines or systems (Luther—Lutheran, Wesley—Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, etc.) he opportunistically forgets that his own members call themselves "Worldwiders" and are known as "Armstrongites."

Just in case one discovers that there are other "Church of God" branches not affiliated with his church, HWA requires further qualifications to "God's Church":

Yet none is truly the Church of God, unless it is GOD'S CHURCH, continuing in doctrine, practice, organization, in all ways on the original biblical pattern, headed by Jesus Christ, yet belonging to God the Father, empowered by the Holy Spirit, having GOD'S TRUTH, fulfilling Christ's commission of proclaiming his GOOD NEWS of the KINGDOM OF GOD to the world as a whole. (p. 249)

And it CANNOT BE DIVIDED. It remains ONE. (p. 249)

The reader is unaware of the hidden meanings of the loaded words shown in capital lettering. Once in the organization, the member will quickly learn to refer to this organization as "THE Church" (denoting the one and only church) or "GOD's Church" (meaning no other church outside of this organization belongs to Him), and he will learn to call the doctrines of the church "THE TRUTH." This "TRUTH" will become his central reference point for every decision he makes in life, no matter how wrong this "TRUTH" may be. He will learn to internalize this word more than he will ever internalize the name Jesus, and it will flow incessantly from his lips. When one carefully listens to sermons and conversations between members, he will find this word used with suffocating regularity.

MYSTERY BABYLON

Now what about his Mystery Babylon? If Mystery Babylon is the false church, or false religious system, why doesn't HWA mention the Mormons, the Watchtower Society, the Seventh-day Adventists, and other well-known heretical groups? Of course, he knew that if he condemned them, he would condemn himself, so he must remain silent. Since HWA accuses "traditional Christianity" of being this Mystery Babylon, let's take a look at a particular group that has written a book with the word "Mystery" in the title. This highly esteemed book of "mysteries" is on equal footing with the Bible. The author claims that "seven basic mysteries" were revealed to him, and declares, "I want to fully reveal the MYSTERY." The central message is not about Jesus Christ and finding salvation through Him. It's about the author, and his special
calling, his understanding of these various mysteries about God, angels and evil spirits, man, civilization, Israel, the Church and the Kingdom. He boldly claims that the Bible itself is a confusing jigsaw puzzle that only he can put together. On page 243 of this special book of mysteries we read:

The CHURCH is not divided. There is only one Church. Not a parent church and many little daughter churches that have split off in disagreement. Divisions splintering off are NOT STILL IN THE CHURCH. It is the CHURCH that is to marry Christ in the resurrection at his coming—not disagreeing churches—not groups who have broken off! Not a parent church and apostate daughters. That will become more obvious as we continue.

Yes, it has become painfully obvious that the author of these seven mysteries died almost two decades ago, leaving behind his parent church. This parent church has splintered into countless daughter churches, many claiming to be the ONLY TRUE Church (or the continuation or restoration of the original true church.)—disagreeing with one another—while still claiming to uphold these MYSTERIES. Using the author's specific criteria to identify this "Mystery Babylon," it seems HWA has described his own organization in amazingly accurate detail.

NO PROPHETS IN THE N.T. CHURCH

On page 244-245, HWA makes the clear statement concerning the role of New Testament prophets:

The prophets set in the foundation of the Church are those of the Old Testament, whose writings were used to form a considerable part of the New Testament and gospel teaching and functioning. **No prophets are mentioned as having either administrative, executive or preaching functions in the New Testament Church.**

Gerald Flurry, founder of the Philadelphia Church of God (and who now owns the copyrights to the *Mystery of the Ages*), couldn't allow these words to remain since donning the lofty title of "That Prophet." Understanding fully the ramifications of that sentence, he removed it entirely.

Even though Flurry causes his followers to virtually worship the infallibility of HWA (even believing he was "the Elijah to come"25), apparently it wasn't beneath Flurry to alter HWA's "infallible" words in the MOA to his advantage.

DEVIL

HWA wants his followers to believe that the traditional churches have "some" of the truth, and declares that this is due to the devil's deceptions:

Many Protestant denominations, and some personal "ministries," quote certain scriptures, especially concerning Christian living, faith, love, etc., correctly. But they ignore numerous basic scriptures, cited in this book. **Satan seems willing to let the deceived have parts of the truth.** (p. 251)

Do the Scriptures say that the devil has any truth to "let the deceived have parts of"?

...He [the devil] was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him...for he is a liar and the father of it. (John 8:44)

The Bible states that there is no truth in the devil. He cannot give what he does not have. HWA simply cannot admit that these "Protestants" got their "correct" ideas from the Bible without tainting it in some way. Just like the Pharisees in Matthew 12, he gives the devil undue credit. Accusing Christians of ignoring "basic scriptures," HWA opportunely ignores numerous Scriptures that contradict his teachings. Hypocrisy runs deep in the veins of false teachers. Appearing as "an angel of light" is not the same as having truth, and HWA is an excellent example of this. He sounded so logical, and reasonable. His arguments seemed to make sense. But when we begin to peel back the layers, we see that behind every logical argument, there were hidden lies to make his claims seem true.
CHURCH ORGANIZED—RAH! RAH! RAH! WE'RE A TEAM!

HWA must continually remind his readers that he is special:

God put it in my mind and heart when I was a child only 5 years old to desire—literally to crave—UNDERSTANDING! (p. 231)

Through this and other revealed knowledge of the Holy Bible, God gave me UNDERSTANDING of the working out of his great PURPOSE! (p. 231)

Oozing with "humility," thirty-six pages later, HWA reassures his readers that he, the author, is "Christ's apostle" (pp. 267, 269). He describes those in his church as ORGANIZED into a TEAM, cooperatively performing TEAMWORK. (p. 271) This is a continuation from the last chapter, where HWA described the different "teams" (Abraham/Isaac/Jacob team, etc.) that God would utilize in the World Tomorrow. HWA actively recruits the reader to become part of the TEAM, which he elevates as "an ORGANIZED SPIRITUAL ORGANISM unlike any secular or worldly organization" (p. 268). He lets the lay member know his role:

The individual lay member HAS HIS VITAL PART in proclaiming the GOOD NEWS (gospel) to the world. How? Not by going out and himself proclaiming Christ's message to the neighborhood or to the world. (p. 266)

HWA tells the reader that he is not to go out and proclaim Christ's message. Yet, three paragraphs later, he says the spreading of the gospel was done by "personal proclamation" by the early church:

In the first century it was done by personal proclamation. (p. 266)

So much for restoring the teachings of the "original church."

Proselytizing is not permitted in HWA's organization. Once the recruit is "in," he learns that only the "apostle" is allowed to publicly preach the gospel. The members learn to PAY, PRAY and OBEY. At first this comes as a relief. The individual is off the hook for personal evangelism—the discomfiting burden of approaching others with the gospel has been removed. Later, the financial burden of tithes, offerings, and various "needs" begin to drain him financially, and the strict obedience drains him physically and emotionally. In due time, he realizes something is amiss. Instead of questioning the organization, he begins to question his own loyalty and dedication "to God and His Work," certain that he, himself, is the cause. The recruit is unaware the isolation process working in his life. He does not share what he believes, which in turn, keeps the society secretive. Sharing his beliefs leaves the member open to questions by outsiders, something that HWA wanted to avoid at all costs. Isolation is a key element in mind control, and HWA employs this technique effectively. By appointing himself as sole-declarer of the gospel, he absolves his members of any personal responsibility in sharing the gospel. The avoidance of proselytizing keeps the organization out of public scrutiny. Members are known as "quiet, keep-to-themselves kind of people that devoutly go to church on Saturday." Aside from this, neighbors, co-workers, and friends know little else of their personal convictions and beliefs. Members are taught that people on the outside "don't understand the truth," so they are told not to "cast their pearls before swine."

Just in case the reader gets the idea that he is going elsewhere to gain his reward, HWA warns him that "only those so trained in the Church will be kings and priests in the kingdom of God." (p. 270)

LOST HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

HWA wants his readers to believe that early church history is "scanty and suspicious," a product of a great cover up orchestrated by the devil himself. Nevertheless, the surviving early church documents have been covered extensively in my article True Original Church/Faith Once Delivered (Proof Herbert Armstrong Lied About the "Lost" Church Century!) Confident of his findings, HWA paints a picture of scholars and historians agreeing with his assessment:
Scholars and church historians recognize that events in the early Christian Church between A.D. 50 and 150 can only be seen in a vague outline—as if obscured by a thick mist. (p. 280)

In the interest of "proving all things" we will look at the sources that HWA gives in the MOA and see if he is guilty of misquoting, omissions, and misrepresentations, which would certainly not be the fruits of a man of God. First HWA quotes Edward Gibbon:

Now we quote from a book of history, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Volume I and chapter 15: "The scanty and suspicious materials of ecclesiastical history seldom enable us to dispel the dark cloud that hangs over the first age of the Church." I have often called it "the lost century" because the history of that Church was lost at that time. (p. 280)

Now I will supply the full quote. The red text is the sentence quoted in the MOA. The bold lettering is my emphasis, while the historians' footnote commentaries to Gibbon's writings are in brackets:

**Part I. The Progress Of The Christian Religion, And The Sentiments, Manners, Numbers, And Condition Of The Primitive Christians.* **

[Footnote *: In spite of my resolution, Lardner led me to look through the famous fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of Gibbon. I could not lay them down without finishing them. The causes assigned, in the fifteenth chapter, for the diffusion of Christianity, must, no doubt, have contributed to it materially; but I doubt whether he saw them all. Perhaps those which he enumerates are among the most obvious. They might all be safely adopted by a Christian writer, with some change in the language and manner. Mackintosh see Life, i. p. 244. - M.]

But this inquiry, however useful or entertaining, is attended with two peculiar difficulties. The scanty and suspicious materials of ecclesiastical history seldom enable us to dispel the dark cloud that hangs over the first age of the church. The great law of impartiality too often obliges us to reveal the imperfections of the uninspired teachers and believers of the gospel; and, to a careless observer, **their faults may seem to cast a shade on the faith which they professed. But the scandal** of the pious Christian, and the fallacious triumph of the Infidel, **should cease as soon as they recollect not only by whom, but likewise to whom, the Divine Revelation was given.** The theologian may indulge the pleasing task of describing Religion as she descended from Heaven, arrayed in her native purity. A more melancholy duty is imposed on the historian. He must discover the inevitable mixture of error and corruption, which she contracted in a long residence upon earth, among a weak and degenerate race of beings.*

A candid but rational inquiry into the progress and establishment of Christianity may be considered as a very essential part of the history of the Roman Empire. While that great body was invaded by open violence, or undermined by slow decay, a pure and humble religion gently insinuated itself into the minds of men, grew up in silence and obscurity, derived new vigor from opposition, and finally erected the triumphant banner of the Cross on the ruins of the Capitol. Nor was the influence of Christianity confined to the period or to the limits of the Roman Empire. After a revolution of thirteen or fourteen centuries, **that religion is still professed by the nations of Europe,** the most distinguished portion of human kind in arts and learning as well as in arms. By the industry and zeal of the Europeans, **it has been widely diffused to the most distant shores of Asia and Africa; and by the means of their colonies has been firmly established from Canada to Chili, in a world unknown to the ancients.**

[Footnote *: The art of Gibbon, or at least the unfair impression produced by these two memorable chapters, consists in confounding together, in one undistinguishable
mass, the origin and apostolic propagation of the Christian religion with its later progress. The main question, the divine origin of the religion, is dexterously eluded (otherwise avoided) or speciously conceded (erroneously accepted); his plan enables him to commence his account, in most parts, below the apostolic times; and it is only by the strength of the dark coloring with which he has brought out the failings and the follies of succeeding ages, that a shadow of doubt and suspicion is thrown back on the primitive period of Christianity. Divest this whole passage of the latent (underlying or hidden) sarcasm betrayed by the subsequent one of the whole disquisition, and it might commence a Christian history, written in the most Christian spirit of candor. - M.]

Edward Gibbon, The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Random House, N.Y., ch. 15, p. 382).

Read in complete context, we begin to understand the full meaning of what was really said. This book concerns the Roman Empire—its rise to world power, and its fall—and how Christianity triumphed in the face of the Empire's decay and final collapse. When one understands how fervently the powerful Roman officials tried to stamp out this "new religion," it truly is a miracle that it not only survived, but prospered, outlasting the Empire itself. So in spite of what seemed to be "silent and obscure" beginnings for this humble religion, it has managed to triumph beyond the confines of the Empire, and become established throughout the world. The great Empire that once was responsible for persecuting this new religion, by quirk of fate, was now responsible for the spread of this same religion. The historian accurately discerns the error of Gibbon's comments concerning the unfair impression he gives concerning the "shadow of doubt and suspicion" of primitive Christianity. He correctly points out Gibbon's error in blending the early origins of Christianity (which exist as accurate records) with its later progression (possibly referring to the thirty years after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.) in order to reach his conclusion.

HWA undoubtedly read these very same records, but extracted one sentence to prove that his claims of lost church history were true. HWA misrepresented the writings of Gibbon's by not divulging the full context of Gibbon's discussion. His failure to point out the authentic historical church documents in existence is nothing short of deception.

Now let's examine the second quote given by HWA:

The noted English scholar Samuel G. Green in A Handbook of Church History wrote:
"The thirty years which followed the close of the New Testament Canon and the destruction of Jerusalem are in truth the most obscure in the history of the Church. When we emerge in the second century we are, to a great extent, in a changed world." (p. 280)

HWA continually challenged his followers to "prove all things." How can one prove these things if HWA refuses to give out precise information so one can follow this specific dictate? Notice that the source that HWA has quoted above contains no publisher, no dates, no pages numbers, no footnotes, nor an Appendix. For one who claims to have the "truth," he isn't very forthcoming with particulars. One reason, of course, is to make it difficult to verify his information. But another reason for this is to screen out those who were willing to put their total trust in his claims—these are the ones HWA is looking for. How many of us thought, "I'll have to look that up and see if what he says is true," only to never get around to doing it? Others of us started to look up these claims, only to be frustrated by the inability to locate the information. So we gave up and said, "He seems to know what he's talking about, so I'll trust he's telling the truth." Still others, who questioned the minister about these sources, were told, "These books are no longer in publication. They were written in the early 1900s, back before evolution and other false teachings permeated society. These older books contained valuable information before Satan caused worldly scholars to edit most of these truths out." (Members can easily recall HWA's penchant toward the 1911 edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica as a prime example of this reasoning).

Today, fortunately, the Internet can be very helpful with procuring information and after much searching I was able to locate a copy of this book. The full quote is provided below. The red lettering is the portion quoted in the MOA:
The thirty years which followed the close of the New Testament Canon and the destruction of Jerusalem are in truth the most obscure in the history of the Church. When we emerge in the second century we are, to a great extent, in a changed world. Apostolic authority lives no longer in the Christian community; apostolic miracles have passed; the Church has fairly begun her pilgrimage through "the waste of Time." (A Handbook of Church History, From the Apostolic Era to the Dawn of the Reformation, Samuel G. Green, D.D., The Lutterwoth Press, London: 1937, p. 22).

Notice that the sentence quoted by HWA states, "When we emerge in the second century we are, to a great extent, in a changed world." The sentence says "changed world"—not "changed religion." In fact, if there had been specific quotes about this, we can guarantee that HWA would have quoted it in his usual dramatic, over-emphasized style. Remember—what HWA doesn't say is just as important—if not more so—than what he does say. This author also does not validate HWA's "lost century" dogma. Green states that church history was obscure (but not completely lost) for only 30 years—from 70 A.D to 100 A.D. Remember, HWA stated (bolding mine):

Scholars and church historians recognize that events in the early Christian Church between A.D. 50 and 150 can only be seen in a vague outline—as if obscured by a thick mist. (p. 280)

I have often called it "the lost century" because the history of that Church was lost at that time. (p. 280)

This is why HWA omitted the first part of the paragraph "Obscurity of the History, A.D. 70-100." He didn't want to publish any dates that would be contrary to his theory and make readers suspicious. Clearly, Dr. Green does not support the notion of a "Lost Century" and HWA knew this and tried to hide this fact.

Now let's look further into the context of Green's book and see if it supports this "lost century/false church emerges in Rome" theory. Predictably, HWA does not quote the previous paragraph of this book.

Extent of the Church at the close of the Century. On the whole, the later part of the first century instructively shows that the kingdom of God cometh not with observation. At its close, however, Christian Churches were already planted in the chief cities of Syria and of Asia Minor; possibly also in Mesopotamia; in Greece, in Macedonia, and Dalmatia; in Rome, and possibly in Northern Africa and Western Europe. The remnant of the Church of Jerusalem, returning from Pella, lingered amid the ruins of the Holy City (now called Aelia Capitolina), under, it is said, the Presidency of Symeon; the Gentile mother-church in Antioch flourished under the care of Ignatius; Polycarp had commenced his lengthened and illustrious ministry in Smyrna; and in Rome the chief pastor Clement, often thought, but on insufficient grounds, to have been the "fellow-labourer" of the Apostle Paul (Phil. 4:3). (A Handbook of Church History, From the Apostolic Era to the Dawn of the Reformation, Samuel G. Green, D.D., The Lutterwoth Press, London: 1937, p. 22).

If church history had been lost, then these historians seem to have had no trouble finding it. In fact, by the end of the first century, the church was well established and thriving, and many of their writings were preserved. HWA did not quote Samuel G. Green's previous paragraph, because he knew it would flush his bogus "lost century" theory down the toilet.

If HWA taught that "theologians and scholars are deceived" and "don't understand" even the simplest "truths," why is he quoting these very same "deceived" scholars and theologians? If they are truly instruments of the devil, why would he quote them at all? HWA bashes them throughout this chapter of MOA, but whenever he can find something they say that remotely agrees with him, he quotes them as sources of proof!

HWA quotes another historian without giving any precise information:
In *Lectures on Ecclesiastical History* William Fitzgerald wrote: "Over this period of transition, which immediately succeeds upon the era properly called apostolic, great obscurity hangs...." (p. 280)

Again, we must question why HWA did not supply the reader with information to look up this particular quote. Wouldn't he want his readers to be able to verify what he says, if it is indeed, true? Now let's look at the full context of what William Fitzgerald was discussing. First, Bishop Fitzgerald describes the primacy of the Jerusalem church:

While that city stood, the Church there formed a sort of local centre to the early churches, with far higher claims than Rome could reasonably pretend to. It was, in reality – what the Church of Rome so falsely and so absurdly calls herself – the mother of all churches, to which all the lines of spiritual descent in other places converged, and in which they met. It was the place in which our Lord's own ministry had closed, and in which the presence of the Comforter had been first manifested, and it was the golden link of connection between the old and the new dispensations.

Bishop Fitzgerald observes the importance of the dissolution of the Jerusalem Church:

With such advantages as these, it is not wonderful that the Church of Jerusalem should have exercised great influences over the whole circle of the Christian community, and there certainly was no small danger that, especially after the guiding hand of the inspired Apostles was withdrawn from this central wheel as it were of the ecclesiastical machine, its movements might have been highly prejudicial to all that depended on it. There was manifest danger that the national peculiarities of the Church of Jerusalem might be impressed upon Christianity itself, and a character thus given to the religion which would render it unsuitable to discharge its important function of blending freely with the institutions of all nations and all climes and all ages, in which the true secret of its real strength and permanence lie.

The almost synchronous events of the removal of the Apostles, and the disruption of the Jewish polity, seem thus to have been so arranged by Providence that the latter to some extent compensated for the former. And just at the time when the Judaising tendency of the Church of Jerusalem was likely to do most mischief, the Roman arms drove it from its metropolis and violently broke up the associations of local dignity to which it owed its influence.

Without the influence of the original apostles, it would have been far too easy for the central church to fall prey to Judaizing or Galatianism. God used the Roman army to scatter the Jerusalem Church to prevent this from happening. Bishop Fitzgerald continues:

By these events, however, as I said, the churches were for a certain space deprived of the means of combined action. That central tie of common government, or at least a common point of contact, which had been supplied by the Apostles and elders at Jerusalem, was taken from them, and nothing of the same sort substituted in its room. Thus each separate Christian community was thrown upon its own resources for the conservation of the apostolic faith and the working out of such institutions of church order as might suits its own case.

After this scattering, there was no central church government, or point of contact. Each believing community had to work out its own church order. This, in turn, had quite remarkable results, as we will later see. Next comes the quote that HWA provided in the MOA: [HWA’s quote in red]

Over this period of transition, which immediately succeeds upon the era we call apostolic, great obscurity hangs. I shall endeavor presently to assign some reasons for that obscurity.

Now why would HWA ignore the sentence after his quote? Did he not think that readers would
desire to hear Bishop Fitzgerald's explanations? Or is it because he wanted them to believe that church history was lost, even if it means misrepresenting the words of a Bishop? HWA claimed that church history was lost during this period, "as if obscured by a thick mist." He claimed that the curtain began to lift around A.D. 150, but now this "original church" had become a totally different church, but still called itself Christian. Continuing from the quote above, let's see if Bishop Fitzgerald agrees with this assessment:

But what I wish to remark at present is that the fact of such obscurity, combined with with all the antecedent probabilities of the case, and the little that we do know of the history of that interval, seems to make it certain that no great piece of combined action on the part of the whole Church in its federative capacity can have taken place during it. Such an event could not have occurred without impressing some permanent record of its occurrence upon the annals of the time. And therefore, when in the middle of the next century the mist begins to clear off, and shows us the spectacle of the churches diffused over the whole surface of the Roman Empire, and beyond it, acknowledging everywhere the same essential articles of faith – tracing their religion to the same persons, founding their faith upon the same miraculous facts, appealing unanimously to the same documents as the well-attested records of their founders' teaching – and practicing the same external rites as delivered down to them by those founders, this is very strong and convincing evidence that such an uniform system of belief and practice could not have originated in that short, dark interval. There was in that interval no common authority which could have fixed these things for all the churches diffused over so wide a surface...It is surely incredible that any such universal empire as this should, like Jonah's gourd, spring up in a night and vanish with the day. But if there was none, then it is plain that the unanimity which meets our view in the second century was the result of the independent testimony of the several churches, each preserving for itself, by diligent inquiry and examination, the records of the apostolic teaching. It is the uncoerced testimony of a multitude of independent separate witnesses to the same truth. (Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, William Fitzgerald, D.D., Vol. 1, pp. 132-134; London, 1885.27)

According to Bishop Fitzgerald, when the mist began to clear around A.D. 150, churches were established all over the Roman Empire. Even more miraculous was the fact that even without a central authority, they were all in agreement—not only with each other—but with the founders of the original church! This is nothing short of remarkable. The original teachings had been preserved in spite of the fact that there was no central authority overseeing this operation. Clearly, we see HWA omitting information that did not agree with his claims concerning the transformation of the early church into the false church. This would explain why he did not provide adequate references. He did not want his readers to find what he was trying to hide.

The next proof that HWA gives states: (bolding mine)

In The Course of Christian History William J. McGlothlin wrote: "But Christianity itself had been in [the] process of transformation as it progressed and at the close of the period was in many respects quite different from the apostolic Christianity." (p. 280)

Let us once again, carefully observe what is said. Since HWA lifted this sentence out of context, we cannot know what exact "period" that the author was referring to. We can clearly see that the author was speaking of a definite historical time period that had come to close. Knowing what specific time period the author was referring to would make a major difference in the context of this sentence. Past experience with HWA's dishonesty in quoting and/or omitting historical records would appropriately cast suspicion toward his direction.

HWA repeatedly refuses to supply precise information so one can look up this quote. How difficult could this have been? He doesn't even provide a footnote! I was able to locate a copy of Dr. McGlothlin's book. Below is the full quote in context, plus the exact source from where it was derived. The red type is quoted in the MOA, while the bold type is my emphasis:
We have now followed the rapid spread of Christianity over the empire during the second and third centuries, and have seen it finally conquer the emperor and achieve its freedom. But Christianity itself had been in process of transformation as it progressed and at the close of the period was in many respects quite different from the apostolic Christianity of A.D. 100. At every step it had been changing and these changes were making the Catholic church. (The Course of Christian History, page 27; W. J. McGlothlin, Ph.D., D.D., The MacMillan Company, 1919).

HWA plainly tampered with this sentence, omitting the date of A.D. 100. Why? Because on page 293 of the MOA, he claimed: (bolding mine)

There ensued a hundred years in which all history of the New Testament Church was destroyed.

HWA claims that these scholars recognize that events in the early Christian church between A.D. 50 and A.D. 150 can only be seen in a vague outline, as if obscured by a thick mist. In this book, William J. McGlothlin makes no such claim. Instead, Dr. McGlothlin confidently states that apostolic Christianity existed up until A.D. 100, reducing the time of the "lost century" by 50 years! HWA obviously couldn't have that piece of evidence floating around, so he altered the sentence to make it agree with his theory. How can anyone trust a man that would knowingly alter a pertinent piece of information in order to make his theories sound correct?

Also contained in this book are thorough outlines of eight historical periods of the Church to the present day, and lengthy details of each period. At this point in our review, we are only interested in the first two periods. The First Period covers the time from 1 A.D. to 100 A.D. The Second Period extends from 100 A.D. to 323 A.D. This should adequately cover the "lost century." Dr. McGlothlin makes some interesting observations during these time periods. Under the First Period, Dr. McGlothlin writes:

"What is certain is that by the end of the first century Christianity was firmly established in most if not all the great cities of the empire, that it had spread into many of the smaller towns and even into country districts. In some sections Christians constituted a large and influential element in society." (The Course of Christian History, page 17, Section 10, Saul's Conversion and Work).

This author certainly doesn't seem to agree with HWA's assessment of a lost century. Primitive (apostolic) Christianity, by the end of the century, was firmly established throughout the empire and flourishing, which easily corroborates with Samuel Green's earlier assessment.

On page 247, HWA faulted traditional churches for having a "democratic" form of government. Dr. McGlothlin also informs us what type of church government the early church established: [bolding mine]

"Organization is necessary to success in any great task and so we very early find the Christians organized into bodies which they called ecclesiae, a word which is translated into English by the word churches. The basis of organization was fraternal equality. "Call no man your father, for one is your Master and all ye are brethren." This is fundamental democracy, and these early churches were undoubtedly democracies in principle as far as possible in practice. Paul appointed elders for the churches, but it must have been in consultation with the brethren in whose hands the ultimate authority rested. (The Course of Christian History, page 17, Section 11, The Churches).

HWA's top-down government (which he claims to be theocratic, but in reality is a dictatorship)
that he had supposedly "restored" from the early church is a false claim. We also see that the word *ecclesiae* (ekklesia) simply means *churches*, and contains no "hidden meaning" such as "called out ones."

The final quote HWA gives as proof that a century of church history was lost:

> In *History of the Christian Church*, Philip Schaff wrote: "The remaining thirty years of the first century are involved in mysterious darkness, illuminated only by the writings of John. This is a period of church history about which we know the least and would like to know the most." (pp. 280-281)

How difficult would it have been for HWA to give the exact source of this information? One would think that he would be enthusiastic for his readers to "prove all things" and would have made it easier for the reader to locate these quotes. Instead, he has intentionally made this an arduous task so the reader would become discouraged and simply take his word at his claims. Notice carefully that Schaff states that the *remaining 30 years* of the first century were considered obscure (70-100 A.D.), which corroborates with Samuel Green's statements. Schaff's statement clearly does not support a lost century, but only three decades, and those decades weren't *completely lost*. John was still living and writing during this time.

Below we have supplied Philip Schaff's full quote in context. The red type is the quote found in the MOA: [Bold type mine, comments in brackets mine]

**Sources of Information.**

The author of Acts records the heroic march of Christianity from the capital of Judaism to the capital of heathenism with the same artless simplicity and serene faith as the Evangelists tell the story of Jesus; well knowing that it needs no embellishment, no apology, no subjective reflections, and that it will surely triumph by its inherent spiritual power.

**The Acts and the Pauline Epistles accompany us with reliable information down to the year 63.** [HWA's "50 A.D.- 150 A.D." date is clearly debunked here]. Peter and Paul are lost out of sight in the lurid fires of the Neronian persecution which seemed to consume Christianity itself. We know nothing certain of that satanic spectacle from authentic sources beyond the information of heathen historians. A few years afterwards followed the destruction of Jerusalem, which must have made an overpowering impression and broken the last ties which bound Jewish Christianity to the old theocracy. The event is indeed brought before us in the prophecy of Christ as recorded in the Gospels, but for the terrible fulfillment we are dependent on the account of an unbelieving Jew, which, as the testimony of an enemy, is all the more impressive.

The remaining thirty years of the first century are involved in mysterious darkness, illuminated only by the writings of John. This is a period of church history about which we know least and would like to know most. **This period is the favorite field for ecclesiastical fables and critical conjectures.** How thankfully would the historian hail the discovery of any new authentic documents between the martyrdom of Peter and Paul and the death of John, and again between the death of John and the age of Justin Martyr and Irenaeus. (Philip Schaff, History of the Christian Church, First Period Apostolic Christianity A.D. 1-100, Volume I, Chapter III. THE APOSTOLIC AGE.)

Observe how HWA carefully avoided quoting the sentence immediately following the one displayed in the MOA. Could it be because, as Schaff astutely described, he is guilty of propagating critical conjectures and ecclesiastical fables concerning this time period? Notice that Schaff did not say historical writings were non-existent. He simply states his desire for any new authentic documentation that would shed more light during this 30-year period. This would undoubtedly put to rest the many fables generated by false teachers concerning this time period. HWA has discovered a fertile field in which to sow his seeds of suspicion, much to the chagrin of church historians.

In conclusion to this Lost Century discussion, we have seen HWA clearly omits information in
order to prove his false theory true. He built up the false belief that church history was lost, and then excerpted comments to make it seem that church historians agreed with him. If HWA were truly a man of God, he would have had nothing to fear IF he did indeed have the Truth. Apparently, he knew better and had to stoop to lying through omission of key information that didn't substantiate his claims.

SEVEN ERAS OF THE CHURCH

Another fable generated by HWA is the belief of the "Seven Church Eras" listed in the second and third chapters of Revelation. Every Bible-based cult has their "sacred myths" and "sacred roots" and this teaching is another example. HWA will trace his present day organization back to the original church through these "eras."

The unwary reader does not understand the significance of these "church eras" until he becomes a convert. Once in the organization, he will learn that this present era is considered "Philadelphian." This Philadelphian era was commissioned by HWA to "finish the Work" in order for Christ to return. The convert will be trapped, in stages, to a grueling "financial plan" that will supposedly support this "End Time Work." What began as a work "supported through voluntary contributions of the members and co-workers" has now become a burdensome obligation, lest one be accused of "stealing from God." HWA will also extrapolate his sole authority from this era as the one that Christ had set before an open door that "no man can shut." Following the Philadelphian era is the Laodicean era. During the Laodicean era, those members who are lukewarm, will not "qualify" to go to the place of safety, and will be left behind to suffer through the Great Tribulation. Needless to say, converts will be suckered into adopting this erroneous view out of fear. Again the options are narrowed: Either be a Philadelphian (and be part of the most blessed era by funding it) or be a Laodicean (and suffer agonizing pain).

**Ephesian Era**

Let us return and closely examine each of these eras to see whether HWA's theory stands up to scrutiny. Once again, the reader will think he is being given detailed and thorough knowledge of biblical history, but upon closer examination, the opposite will be proven true. HWA claims that:

> The history of the Church would fall into seven distinct eras—each with its own strengths and weaknesses and its own special trials and problems. (p. 283)

With an introduction like that, one would think that HWA would provide all the information one would need in order to prove him true. Let's see how "distinct" this information is when it comes to revealing these particular eras:

Some time during the early decades of the second century, the baton was passed from the Ephesian era to the people that God had called to the Smyrna era of his Church.

Powerless, often persecuted, and rejected as heretics, the world lost sight of them. (p. 283)

Curiously, HWA mentions that the baton passed from the Ephesian era to the Smyrna era during the early decades of the 2nd century, but gives no specific identities of the groups from which this "baton exchange" had occurred. If the eras are so distinct, why is HWA so vague? Why does he not reveal the names of specific groups and give specific dates? He avoids mentioning names until he arrives at Peter Waldo, three church eras and ten centuries later. So enraptured is the reader concerning the significance of the "seven eras" that he scarcely noticed that HWA glossed over a millennia of historical data! But this matters little to HWA—he is looking for those who believe in him and will take him at his word.

If the Ephesian era of the church is the first era, then it is important to ask when was the church founded? HWA informs readers that the church was founded in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost in A.D. 31 (pp. 233, 283), when the Holy Spirit came (Acts 2:1-4). One would think this first church era would plainly be named the "Jerusalem era" of the church, but historical
inconsistencies never stopped HWA from declaring them as fact, especially if it plays to his advantage. Why does he avoid giving information about the churches that these verses in Revelation are actually referring to? Simply because the reader would discover that the history of the church was never really lost, which would, in turn, debunk his myths.

**Smyrna Era**

No specific details are given concerning the Smyrna church either. HWA simply marches forward two hundred years to A.D. 365, quoting the decree from the Catholic Council of Laodicea.

This decree of A.D. 365 definitely shows that there were true Christians observing the Sabbath.

The small remnant of Christians of the Smyrna era fled once more—to seek the religious freedom they needed to practice their beliefs.

They left few records. Occasionally they appear as a footnote of history, rejected as heretics, ridiculed, and hounded by their enemies. (pp. 284-285)

HWA informs readers that the Smyrna age began around A.D. 110-130 (sometime during the early decades of the second century) and after the Council of Laodicea in A.D. 365, the Smyrna Christians fled. Carefully note the complete lack of details and footnotes to corroborate these claims. Why doesn't he reveal this little "footnote of history"? If these "facts" are indeed historical, then HWA should be excited to share them with his readers. Below, we have supplied the full quote of the "famous canon" of the Catholic Council of Laodicea. The red type is the quote found in the MOA, and the bold type is what HWA conveniently omitted:

THE CANONS OF THE SYNOD OF LAODICEA IN PHRYGIA PACATIANA

**CANON XXIX.**

CHRISTIANS must not judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day, rather honouring the Lord's Day; and, if they can, resting then as Christians. But if any shall be found to be judaizers, let them be anathema from Christ. (Canon XXIX)

Why can't HWA give a simple historical quote without tampering with it? He didn't bother inserting the usual ellipses ("...") to show that this information was omitted. Evidently he altered this decree to make it sound more sensational than it actually was, giving the impression of a state-enforced, strict Sunday observance.

Since HWA frequently quotes Philip Schaff, a renowned church historian, let's see what else was written concerning this decree that HWA conveniently omitted:

**Notes:**

ANCIENT EPITOME OF CANON XXIX.

A Christian shall not stop work on the Sabbath, but on the Lord's Day.

BALSAMON.

Here the Fathers order that no one of the faithful shall stop work on the Sabbath as do the Jews, but that they should honour the Lord's Day, on account of the Lord's resurrection, and that on that day they should abstain from manual labour and go to church. But thus abstaining from work on Sunday they do not lay down as a necessity, but they add, "if they can." For if through need or any other necessity anyone worked on the Lord's day this was not reckoned against him. (Canon XXIX)

Notice the clear distinction between Christians (the faithful) and the Jews (not to be confused with Jewish believers). Historians have documented the vehemence of the Jews against the
Messiah (the early church fathers also bear record to this). This is one of the reasons for the purposeful distinctions placed between the believer and the Jew in this particular canon. The Jews do not acknowledge that Jesus is the Savior, they do not acknowledge His Resurrection; therefore, they do not recognize the authority of the Sunday remembrance of His Resurrection. They still keep the Sabbath and wait for the Messiah to come.

Does being anathematized from the church mean an automatic death sentence? During this Laodicean Council, several decrees were made that could get one anathematized (see Canons 34, 35 and 36), but HWA does not mention this.

**Canon XXXIV**

No Christian shall forsake the martyrs of Christ, and turn to false martyrs, that is, to those of the heretics, or those who formerly were heretics; for they are aliens from God. Let those, therefore, who go after them, be anathema.

**Canon XXXV**

Christians must not forsake the Church of God, and go away and invoke angels and gather assemblies, which things are forbidden. If, therefore, anyone shall be found engaged in this covert idolatry, let him be anathema; for he has forsaken our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and has gone over to idolatry.

**Canon XXXVI**

They who are of the priesthood, or of the clergy, shall not be magicians, enchanters, mathematicians, or astrologers; nor shall they make what are called amulets, which are chains for their own souls. And those who wear such, we command to be cast out of the Church.

In Canon 34 and 35, we see other conditions for being declared "anathema." The tone of these two Canons in comparison to the tone of Canon 36, appear to be less reprimanding. In Canon 36, the punishment of the clergy for engaging in the magical arts is severe—they are "cast out of the Church." So being anathematized may have gotten one excommunicated, but the door of repentance, reconciliation and restoration remained open. The clergy did not seem to have this option since they were "learned" shepherds and should know better than to engage in sorcery. Their punishment was harsh and appears to be permanent.

Although HWA claims that Canon 29 caused these "Judaizers" to be tortured, or put to death, he gives no historical data to back this claim! Had there been such an event, it would not have escaped the attention of historians, and HWA would have readily seized the opportunity to bring this to everyone's attention. But as usual, the silence speaks volumes. After charging hateful murders to the established church (without giving proof), HWA simply skips along to his summary of this canon: "This decree shows that there were true Christians observing the Sabbath." (p. 284-285) HWA qualifies "true Christians" as those who "observe the Sabbath" and not as those who "believe in Christ as Savior."

There are other interesting points that HWA failed to bring to his members' attention. There were over 50 canons declared during this Council of Laodicea. If the established church wanted to stamp out any vestiges of religious activities on the Sabbath day (the word "Saturday" in brackets is not mine but in the original), then let's look at Canons 16, 49 and 51:

**Canon XVI**

The Gospels are to be read on the Sabbath [i.e. Saturday], with the other Scriptures.

**Canon XLIX**

During Lent the Bread must not be offered except on the Sabbath Day and on the Lord's Day only.

**Canon LI**
The nativities of Martyrs are not to be celebrated in Lent, but commemorations of the holy Martyrs are to be made on the Sabbaths and Lord's days.

From these Canons, we can easily ascertain that religious observances were not completely banned on the Sabbath. Why didn't HWA bring this to the reader's attention? In Canon 29 (the one partially quoted in the MOA), Christians were not limited to, nor commanded to a "strict Sunday observance." What was banned was the practice of Judaizing—declaring that one must practice the Jewish law in order to be saved! Judaizers not only held to a strict Sabbath observance (and demanded others do the same), but they also held to circumcision, and other Jewish practices. HWA wanted his readers to believe that Sabbath-keepers were the "true Christians," but did not distinguish between "Christians" and "Judaizers," because to him, they were one and the same. He did not qualify Christians as "believers in Christ," but clearly alleged true Christians were "believers in Judaism"!

The Gentile churches were faithful to the teachings of Paul, making it clear that Sunday would be kept as the Lord's Day in honor of His Resurrection. This practice is in harmony with the early church fathers (of whom HWA avoids quoting). HWA purposefully wanted to depict a "blood-thirsty, Sunday-keeping, false Church" that would execute "true Christians" for "being faithful to the Sabbath" (which is not the same as being faithful to Christ—one is faithful to a "day," the other is faithful to the "Savior"). All this is done in order to continually provoke an emotional response in the reader so he would side with the "faithful underdogs" and jump on the bandwagon with HWA.

Pergamos Era

Continuing with the Smyrna church passing the baton, HWA paints a picture of valiant heroism by the faithful few in the Pergamos era (p. 285):

And so the baton was passed from the Smyrna Christians to those of the Pergamos era.

These had been called to carry the truth through one of history's most difficult periods—the Dark Ages.

But they were never far from the threat of persecution and martyrdom.

And so very few of the Pergamos Christians remained faithful. One thousand years after Jesus had founded his Church, the exhausted remnant of the Pergamos era handed over the baton.

Once again, there are no specific details given. HWA glibly jumps forward from the Council of Laodicea (365 A.D.) to the Dark Ages and pronounces this period as the Pergamos era. (HWA does not supply any dates, but history records this as the time from 410-800 A.D.) From here, he jumps forward again to "a thousand years after Jesus had founded his Church" and states that the "exhausted Pergamos era handed over the baton." Once again, observe the complete lack of dates or details. If HWA knew that there were martyrs during this period, then who were they? Who are these "very few" that remained faithful? Why doesn't he name them? He had to have had some group in mind, or he would not have made this statement. But details (let alone accurate information) matter little to HWA. He is too busy perpetuating his sacred myths to be bothered with details.

Thyatiran Era

Somewhere around 1000 A.D., the Pergamos era hands over the baton to the Thyatiran era. Of this era, HWA says:

The Thyatiran era got off to a vigorous start, preaching repentance throughout the Alpine Valleys of Southern France and Northern Italy. Many heard and were converted.

The religious authorities quickly reacted to this challenge. Leaders of the true Church were arrested. Some were martyred.
After the death of its first leaders, the Church went into a temporary decline—but emerged once more under the dynamic leadership of Peter Waldo. For several years in the 12th century, these Waldensians flourished in the Alpine Valleys, preaching what truth they had. Booklets and articles were written and copied by hand. This was still before the days of printing. (pp. 285-286)

But once again, persecution followed, as the full force of the Inquisition was felt in the peaceful valleys that had once provided a safe haven for the work of God.

Once again, witness the lack of corroboration to these claims. Why can't HWA give the names of the leaders that were martyred? Where are the dates? If they "got off to a vigorous start" then who were these hardy members? The reader must wait another two hundred years before HWA reveals the name of Peter Waldo in the 12th century. Finally, HWA gives a name and a date—but not without an interesting qualifier. HWA quickly inserts that these Waldensians preached "what truth they had." Why would HWA make this peculiar statement? Finally revealing a name and date, HWA knew that history buffs would look this up and question why there weren't any similar teachings between the Waldensians and his church.

The Inquisition began in 1232, but HWA doesn't offer up any historical details, let alone the date. He simply jumps forward to the 15th-16th centuries (another date he doesn't reveal) to the Protestant Reformation stating that it "broke the monopoly of the Church of Rome." Whizzing past this significant piece of history, he jumps into the 17th century England, which he states "Jesus was raising up the fifth era of his church—Sardis. (In the book Daughter of Babylon: The True History of the Worldwide Church of God, Bruce Renehan details in chapter 9 and chapter 10, the discoveries he had made concerning Stephen Mumford and Roger Williams.) (Note that ESN does not endorse the atheistic views on this website.)

**Sardis Era**

Now church history gets very interesting as HWA begins to give a few details. Remember, it's what HWA doesn't say that's more important than what he does say. HWA states that William Miller was part of this Sardis era in the mid-1800s. William Miller was a false prophet—not a single one of his prophecies came to pass. Why would HWA consider him part of the true Church? Then he mentions Ellen G. White and some of her bizarre doctrines, but fails to mention that she also was a false prophetess. (See the chart: Worldwide Church of God Roots.) Why would God trace His church through false prophets? A true church can't hold false beliefs, let alone a false prophet at the helm. But that doesn't faze HWA. Without skipping a beat, he runs along, evading important details, into the 19th century to his church, where the baton will now be exchanged from the Sardis era to the Philadelphian era.

**Philadelphian Era**

Once at the Philadelphia era, the focus will now be turned back to HWA as he invokes the "principle of duality" to interpret the Greek word *aggelos*:

> This word angel is translated from the Greek *aggelos* means messenger or agent. This is not necessarily always referring to a spirit angel but can refer as well to a human agent. It is possible that God's principle of duality may apply here. (p. 289)

> Or it may also apply to the human messenger or agent God has raised up to lead this era of his Church. (p. 290)

> It may apply to the Church of this era as a whole, and also it could apply to the human leader God had raised up to this ear of his Church. (p. 290)

> To this era—or to its human leader—God had set before it an open door. (p. 290)

> The human leader to be raised up somewhat shortly prior to Christ's Second Coming was to prepare the way—prepare the Church—for Christ's coming...(p. 290)

The set-ups get easier to discern. HWA has appointed himself as this special "human leader"
that was to prepare the way for Christ's coming. Is anybody really surprised? He appropriated all the authority and privileges of the Philadelphian church described in Revelation 3:7-12. Of course, many of the splinter groups today want to believe that they, too, are this dynamic Philadelphian church—and certainly none of them are calling themselves the Laodicean church!

**Laodicean Era—Any Volunteers?**

Even though HWA lists the Seven Church Eras by name at the beginning of this section, he never expounds upon the seventh and final era—the Laodicean Era. HWA has the reader so absorbed in the Philadelphian era, and on himself as the special "human messenger" of this era, that he never notices absolutely **nothing** is written in this chapter about the final era of the church! As we have shown throughout this review, when it comes to HWA, what the reader doesn't know can hurt him. There are two reasons why HWA never gives details about this particular era. The first reason is that he made members believe that he was going to lead them to the place of safety before the Great Tribulation began. He was seen as a type of Moses who would lead his people to the promised land (the World Tomorrow). Just as Moses journeyed through the wilderness with the children of Israel, members would journey with HWA (and HQ's personnel) to the wilderness of Petra, where they would undergo their "final training" while awaiting for the returning of Christ. Those in the Philadelphian era were considered "worthy to escape" the coming worldwide destruction—if they "qualified." Of course, HWA died in 1986 and none of these prophecies ever transpired.

The second reason is that HWA used this Laodicean era as a type of punishment. Those who didn't support HWA financially, who were "lukewarm" and not "on fire" for the Work, would be left behind when it came time to "flee." These "worldly" members would comprise the Laodicean church and would have to suffer through the Great Tribulation. The Laodicean Era is looked upon with contempt. This is why nobody wants to be a part of this era, and precisely why the various splinters refuse to acknowledge themselves as the "next era"! They try to justify their "defection" from the mother church by using HWA's personal example when he defected from the Sardis church in Oregon. But what they failed to see is that HWA claimed that the Sardis era ended and the Philadelphian era began when he defected. If they are truly following HWA's example, these splinters need to see that their defection signals the **beginning** of the Laodicean era!

Calling the original parent church that HWA founded as the present Laodicean church, the splinter groups fail to explain how the church eras have fallen out of sequence. The baton is supposed to be handed **from** the Philadelphian church **to** the Laodicean church. But the splinters are claiming that the Philadelphian church era of HWA has now become Laodicean, becoming the only church era that has handed the baton back to **themselves**! [Read: *Is the Philadelphia Church of God Now the Laodicean Church?*] The splinters are reluctant to admit that this baton has **to be passed forward** (according to HWA's historical accounts) to the next generation. Here, we see the splinters taking the Philadelphian baton **forward** and passing the Laodicean baton **backward**! Why? Because none of them want to bear the description of "lukewarm, wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked"!! How do you recruit people into **that kind** of a group?

HWA also proclaimed that there is only one church, but the splinters ignore that there are **many** groups today who are claiming to be this Philadelphian era. There are virtually **hundreds** of Philadelphian batons being carried. If one believes the claim, they are going to have to figure out which one is the **real one**, since they all claim to be it. Once again, HWA's theory has crumbled.

When speaking of the original apostles, HWA makes his readers believe that although they would be astonished at the size and scope of the Work, other things would be surprisingly familiar:

> But some things would not be strange —the Sabbath and Holy Days, the name, the Church of God, and the gospel of the kingdom—these they would recognize—handed down through the ages from the time of Christ to the end of time. (p. 292)

On the last page of this chapter, HWA claims that, "the name, the Church of God [has been]
handed down through the ages from the time of Christ to the end of time." This is clearly not the case and neither did HWA give concrete proof of this. HWA never once has shown an unbroken continuation of the name "Church of God" through these seven church eras. He quoted twelve Scriptures on pages 248-249 showing the name "Church of God" as proof of the "one true church," and then thirty-four pages later, he used the name "Church of God" when speaking of his fledgling church in Oregon. He simply let our imaginations fill in what wasn't there! Go back and read the section about the Seven Church Eras (pages 282-288) and you will not see him once give any proof that these groups handed down the name "Church of God" through history. He so enraptured readers with the heroic story of the "passing of the baton" that they failed to notice the missing details!

It is interesting to note that HWA does not invite readers to write away for a booklet that gives concrete proof that his church has descended from these eras. Why didn't the WCG print a booklet called "The Seven Eras of the True Church"? If this information is truly factual, then HWA would have undoubtedly printed such a booklet (and distributed it for FREE to every household at the Feast). Is there a real reason why a booklet of this importance never existed? Certainly, every other subject under the sun was written about—from nutrition, marriage, child-rearing, doctrines, and every "mystery" covered in the MOA—but not a specific booklet concerning the seven eras. Why? Because HWA did not get this privy information from the mouth of Jesus, but from his past associates in the Church of God 7th Day. None who entered the WCG during the early 1980s were aware of a big skeleton hiding in the WCG's dark closet of deceit. In 1959, church "historian" Herman Hoeh, wrote a booklet entitled, A True History of the True Church. The historical information in this booklet by Hoeh was stolen from HWA's ex-affiliates, A. N. Dugger and C.O. Dodd (See chart: Roots of Worldwide Church of God). In 1936 Dugger and Dodd published "A History of the True Church" over two decades before Hoeh published his booklet with a similar title. Since this booklet was proven fictitious—even publicly denounced by HWA's son, Garner Ted, it was quietly dropped from publication, unbeknownst to the general membership. Instead, HWA heavily promoted and perpetuated this myth to the members through "church history" sermons, even producing a video shown at the Feast of Tabernacles depicting scenes with the "passing of the baton." Not wanting to come under public scrutiny, nor wanting to abandon this sacred myth (which was very useful in keeping the members focused on him as the undisputed carrier of the Philadelphian baton), HWA cleverly provided a "sanitized" version in the MOA.

When Ronald Kelly ran a 12-part series in The Plain Truth magazine in 1990-1991 about the history of the "true church" and the seven eras, the WCG received outcries for their inaccurate information and outright falsifications. Kelly had to provide historical details for these articles, which, in turn, were easily proven false. (See Bruce Renehan's book: Daughter of Babylon, The True History of the Worldwide Church of God).

It is also of great interest to note that HWA plainly states on the very first page of this chapter that "the true gospel hadn't been preached from 50A.D. until 1953." If this statement is true, then why is HWA bothering to trace his church's roots back through these eras? If the true gospel wasn't preached until 1953, then what gospel was Peter Waldo preaching? What gospel was William Miller and Ellen G. White preaching? If HWA charged "traditional Christianity" for preaching a false gospel, how are they any different than Waldo, Miller, and White? According to HWA, it was all a false gospel until 1953! The "seven Church eras" is just another example of where HWA adds in more complicated details to keep the reader preoccupied and confused.

When one gives their trust and allegiance to an organization, they are subject to the fickle and arbitrary man-made rules. When one gives their trust and allegiance to Jesus Christ, they are subject to a loving Savior that never changes. One only needs to look at all the endless requirements placed on the convert by HWA's "enlightened" government. Thus far in the MOA, we have seen how one must change their diet, their dress, the way they spend their free time and money, spurning the medical establishment, the cross, adopting a whole new belief system, isolating themselves from society, believe in a false history and a false gospel, etc. so one day they can become God as God is God (and there is no guarantee of this). HWA has been proven a con man and a liar; misrepresenting traditional doctrines, misquoting resources, and outright lying about history and his own roots for his own financial gain. Instead of the simplicity of the gospel, Herbert Armstrong has lead the reader into the twisted labyrinth of
lies, confusing him at each and every turn, until he consigns himself to completely trust his evil guide.

**Footnotes for Chapter Six:**

1 Some prefer the word "target" instead of "victim" which denotes powerlessness. Tim Field, author of *Bully in Sight* has this to say: "The word 'victim' allows disingenuous people to tap into and stimulate other people's misconceptions and prejudices of victimhood. 'Target' correctly identifies that it is the choice of the bully to bully, it is not the choice of the target to be targeted." Read: *From Victim to Survivor (Take Back the Power).*

2 *Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course*, 1966, Lesson 15, p. 3.


4 "Man is FLESH and BLOOD—composed wholly of MATTER—and that living matter IS a living soul." (Ibid. p. 72.)

5 Ibid. p. 71.

6 Ibid. p. 164.

7 Ibid. p. 67.

8 "...the Son of God, (was) no longer human, but composed of SPIRIT—a Spirit Being. ... Christ's body did disappear. Christ was raised as a divine spirit being!" (Reprint of WCG article "If You Die... Will You Live Again?" Herbert W. Armstrong, p. 5.)

9 "The purpose of your being alive is that finally you will be born into the Kingdom of God, when you will actually be God, even as Jesus was and is God, and His Father, a different Person, also is God! You are setting out on a training to become creator--to become God!" (*Why Were You Born?* Herbert W. Armstrong, pp. 21,22)

"In man is God reproducing himself. We shall be as much God as God Himself is God, a God Family. God the Father will always be at the head of that whole Family. Jesus Christ will always be next in that Family. The rest of us at the resurrection, at the time of the Second Coming of Christ, will be the Bride marryng Him." (*Transformed by Truth*, Joseph Tkach, Jr. quoting Herbert Armstrong, p. 153) The footnote given in the back of TBT for this quote of HWA's was: Armstrong, "CONGRESS OF LEADING MINISTERS," 2.

"The PURPOSE of life is that in us God is really re-creating His own kind—reproducing Himself after His own kind— ...we shall be instantaneously CHANGED from mortal to immortal—we shall then be BORN of God—WE SHALL THEN BE GOD! ...The PURPOSE of your being alive is that finally you will be BORN into the Kingdom of God, when you will actually BE GOD!..."What it means to be glorified...brought to the very rank of God." ("Plan of God," Herbert W. Armstrong, Feast of Tabernacles, Big Sandy, October 1957)

"And the second thing to be restored is the PURPOSE of God. And the gospel has to do with that. That God IS reproducing us and that MAN CAN BECOME God!" ("Mission of the Philadelphia Church Era," sermon given by Herbert W. Armstrong on December 17, 1983.)

"This great false church is going to be made to come and worship at the feet of the saints who at that time will be gods." (Richard Frankel, Worldwide Church of God sermon, "Petra," November 8, 1980. [Copy of sermon with ESN])

"You are destined to become God! Shocking? Unbelievable? If you understand the purpose of God's government, you will not be surprised... God is in the process of reproducing Himself in you! ... You will be what he is--God." (Good News, Nov./Dec. 1988, p. 5)

"God is a family: God is reproducing Himself and man was created to literally become God." (What It Means to Be Equal with God, p. 43.) "We were born for the express purpose of literally becoming equal with the Creator of the universe... (*Tomorrow's World*, April 1971, "What It Means To Be Equal With God," Robert L. Kuhn, p. 43, 44.)

**Note:** Referring to the previous quote in *Tomorrow's World* by Robert L. Kuhn, Dr. Robert L. Sumner says, "Yet Kuhn backs off and says he really doesn't mean what he is saying. He [Kuhn] wrote: 'When mankind is promised to be made 'equal with God,' that of course means that individual human beings will eventually become qualitatively equal with God—and obviously does not mean that individual human beings will eventually become quantitatively equal with either God the Father or Jesus Christ. Being 'equal with God' only means that we will be in the same God
Family...and has nothing to do with an equality of power, authority, intelligence, etc. with the family." (Ibid., p. 44). Dr. Sumner goes on to say, "So this is a horse of a different color and the equality offered is divided between what he calls qualitative and quantitative.' " (Armstrongism: The "Worldwide Church of God" Examinined in the Searching Light of Scripture, Robert L. Sumner, 1974, pp. 126-127.)

NOTE FROM ESN: To believe that we will "be God as God is God," is an occult/New Age teaching. See our article: Did Herbert Armstrong Have God's Truth?


11 "...God will provide a SPIRIT BODY, formed and shaped by the Spirit mold. The resurrected being will be COMPOSED of SPIRIT, not matter as the human model was. In the resurrected SPIRIT form he will suddenly come ALIVE. It will seem like the next flash of a second from his loss of consciousness at time of death. He will have all his memory intact. He will look as he did in human life in form and shape. Even his fingerprints will be the same." (Ibid., p. 87.)


13 Ibid. p. 155

14 Charles Hunting, former Worldwide Church of God evangelist, discussed this and other double standards of Herbert Armstrong on The Clyde Thomas Show, WKIS, Orlando, Fl. 1988. Read this part in "History of the Worldwide Church of God" which tells how HWA and other evangelists were seeing doctors and taking medicine while forbidding members to do so and see: Herbert Armstrong Received a Bag of Medicine and Had a Parade of Doctors (Letter to ESN from an area sales manager who worked for a pharmaceutical company at the time)


16 The Watchtower Society's Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures is distributed to members training for field work and is not available to the general public.

17 This is known as the bait and switch tactic. It is characteristic of destructive religious groups.

18 Basil Wolverton (a comic artist and WCG elder) was behind the grotesque and horrifying pictures in 1975 in Prophecy and other WCG literature. Read more about Wolverton.

19 "And after period of growth and overcoming, then shall come their spiritual salvation with no Satan around to deceive them!" (The Incredible Human Potential, 1978, p. 164.)

20 "Then finally there will be a last resurrection of those who HAD been called by God in their mortal human life, but had rejected or turned from the truth. They...will be in the lake of fire, which is the second death." (Ibid., p. 88) "...there will then be a last, final resurrection of the incorrigible who have rejected the eternal salvation offered them. They, with any such living at the end of the Millennium, will then die the second death—utter extinction—in the lake of fire, described by Peter as the face of the earth becoming a molten mass." (Ibid., p. 164.)

21 The definition of biblical grace is "unearned, unmerited favor from God."

22 Herbert Armstrong taught that there would be a 2nd resurrection called the "Great White Throne" resurrection. This would be for "all those who never had a chance to hear the true gospel." The 3rd resurrection would be of all those who had rejected "the truth," and who would be thrown into the Lake of Fire to be annihilated.

23 Herbert Armstrong changed the name of his Radio Church of God to Worldwide Church of God on January 5, 1968.


25 "Just as one John the Baptist prepared Christ's way the first time, so one messenger [HWA] has prepared the way for Christ's Second Coming." (Malachi's Message, Gerald Flurry, p. 8.)

26 Herbert W. Armstrong claimed many times that he was God's Apostle (a.k.a. "Christ's apostle"): Notice just a few quotes from him (bolding ours): "The author, Christ's apostle, can say emphatically that the apostles, evangelists, pastors and elders could not carry on the work of God without the loyal backing and continued encouragement of the lay members." (Mystery of the Ages, Herbert W. Armstrong, p. 267) "And finally, Christ's apostle sends out monthly a mimeographed Co-Worker letter to all members and co-workers reporting on progress in the work,
current activities and needs." (Ibid., p. 269) "And please state in your letter, in your own words, that this money is your endorsement of my apostleship, and the money is to be used for defending God's Work as I, Christ's Apostle, deem best." (January 14, 1979 Dear Brethren letter) "Naturally, it is incumbent on me as God's Apostle, to protect His 'sheepfold' He has placed under my care." (July 31, 1978 Dear Brethren letter) "I call upon all of you in the name of Jesus Christ, as God's Apostle, and your Minister, be careful!" (March 29, 1957, Dear Brethren letter)

27 William Fitzgerald was the Bishop of Killaloe and Clonfert, Ireland. He held a Doctorate of Divinity, and was a Professor at the University of Dublin. His Lectures are contained in 2 volumes. The library was able to locate this book for me through an interlibrary loan. Because of its publishing date of 1885, there are only 33 copies of this book in the United States. Many libraries will not release their copies to the public, and those that do will charge a fee. This book can also be found on microfilm, which may be easier to obtain. (I took a photograph of the volumes and photocopied the needed pages.)

28 The word "Catholic" as used here means "Universal," and the early church fathers used that term.

29 Herman Hoeh, evangelist in Worldwide Church of God, was the one who began teaching the 7 church eras to members in 1958 (with WCG supposedly being the Philadelphia era).


31 Ibid.
"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting [giving excessive attention] about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings. Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself." (I Timothy 6:3-5).

HWA introduces his final "unsolved mystery"—the Kingdom of God—and predictably, the "world's churches, theologians and Bible scholars" can't solve it. (p. 293) To understand HWA's contrived "Kingdom of God" is to understand what a man envisions Utopia to be: No more illness, death, poverty, violence, suffering—only peace and prosperity. These have been the eternal cravings of mankind, and HWA capitalizes on it. HWA will substitute the glory of Heaven for the glory of this "new world order." This World of Tomorrow, according to HWA, will be racially pure and separate, completely rebuilt from being wasted by war. There will be "total literacy," perfect weather, a sound economic structure and it will be ruled by top down Government. This "government of God" will enforce all the ordinances kept by the followers of HWA. Men will be "forced to live in peace." Following the Millennium, HWA will complete his grandiose vision with three resurrections, culminating into the finale—the Headquarters Church of the Universe coming down from heaven and permanently establishing itself on the new earth. The great majority of mankind who has been converted into spirit beings (gods, actually) will be free to create life on all the dead planets throughout the universe for all eternity, while Earth will be the central Universe Headquarters.

REDEFINING THE TRUE GOSPEL

HWA begins this chapter with the falsehood that there was a violent controversy in the early church as to what is "the gospel of Jesus Christ." He informs us that all church history was destroyed during the first 100 years of the church and then a counterfeit church arose shortly afterward, which has espoused a false gospel since. Not to worry—HWA assures his readers that the "true gospel" has now been fully restored, 1900 years later (by him, of course), and is now being preached all over the world today. Let's examine what that "gospel" is that HWA is calling the "True Gospel" or "the gospel OF Christ."

This Kingdom of God, HWA insists, is the "good news" or "gospel" about the Kingdom and not about Christ. HWA claims that Christ came as a Messenger of that gospel:

Jesus was a Messenger sent from God with a message, and that message was THE KINGDOM OF GOD. (p. 294)

Christ supposedly brought down from God the good news about the future, soon-coming, literal Kingdom of God on earth. This Kingdom will rule the world. Is this true? Was Jesus the Messenger, and was that message the Kingdom of God? Let's see who Matthew 11:7,10 says the messenger is:

And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?...For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare they way before thee.

Jesus says the messenger is John the Baptist fulfilling Malachi 3:1. Jesus isn't the messenger of the Kingdom, but the "messenger of the covenant" which we will see him fulfill under the section entitled "The New Covenant" later in this article. We can easily see that Malachi 3:1 is speaking about John and Jesus:
Behold, I will send my messenger, [John] and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, [Christ] whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

So right off the bat, HWA is already lying. He even usurps John the Baptist's position by declaring himself to be this very Messenger, 1900 years later! How conceited and delusional.

What exactly was Jesus' main purpose for coming to this earth? Was it merely to bring mankind the "Kingdom of God" message? Let's let the Bible interpret itself:

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21)

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; (I Timothy 1:15)

You mean Biblical Christianity has been right all along? Jesus came to save us from our sins. Through Him we have forgiveness of sins and can be given eternal life. Not only is HWA guilty of stealing the limelight away from John the Baptist, but he's also guilty of hiding the true gospel message. We need to ask ourselves why would God's very own "apostle" ignore the importance of the true mission of His Only Begotten Son? Why would he intentionally divert attention away from Jesus as Savior and relegate Him to a position of a mere messenger? Shouldn't this tell us something?

Before he explains his contrived gospel HWA must again plant suspicion against other sources. Let's look at the negative messages bombarding the reader at the beginning pages of this chapter:

Why do churches disagree on what actually is "the gospel of Christ"? (p. 293)

It seems today that all churches have lost the gospel of Jesus Christ. (p. 294)

Yet few preach about the kingdom of God today, for they have lost all knowledge of what it is! (p. 294)

Not one is right! Could anything seem more incredible? (p. 295) What is the one and only gospel of Jesus Christ? THE WORLD DOES NOT KNOW! (p. 295)

If all churches have lost this gospel, then that leaves only one that hasn't. Again, the set up is complete. The subtitles on pages 294 and 295 read, "Not One is Right!" and "CHRIST'S Gospel." HWA will now introduce his rendition of the gospel. (Carefully observe how the simplicity of the gospel will evolve into a very complicated gospel). Jesus, he claims, did not come as a personal savior, but as a messenger, bringing the good news of the Kingdom of God, which he claims is "the only true gospel" (pg. 298). Here is an obvious shift away from the Savior. Just in case one doesn't believe his version, he will spell out the seriousness of the situation:

It is necessary to believe that GOSPEL to be saved! And how can you believe it, unless you know what it is? (p. 295)

And God Almighty, through Paul, pronounced a double curse on man or angel that would DARE preach any other gospel! (p. 296)

The set up here is plain. The assumption HWA wants the reader to make is that he isn't guilty of preaching the wrong gospel. If the reader doesn't have a solid understanding of the gospel, he cannot refute what he doesn't know. HWA speaks boldly, confident that he, only, has the true gospel. At this point, the reader knows he knows so little, and HWA seems to know so much. The reader will convince himself that HWA must certainly be from God and he doesn't want to miss the boat to salvation. Along with this, HWA will resort to intimidation tactics.

Why, then do so many DARE to preach so many other gospels? The good news of THE KINGDOM OF GOD is something you must understand, and BELIEVE, in order to be saved! (p. 296)
A severe pronouncement of a "double curse" is given by HWA toward to those that preach the gospel about Jesus. In other words, HWA openly insists that the "world's churches" preach a false gospel about Christ, and to believe in that gospel spells disaster for the reader. With options like that, what choice is the reader likely to make? An expert salesman will always make the customer think he is making a deliberate choice, but in reality, he isn't.

Again, HWA cleverly guides the reader toward his organization:

...But does any, except God's true church, proclaim the true gospel of the kingdom of God today? (p. 294)

On page 296, HWA states, "The apostle Paul preached THE KINGDOM OF GOD (Acts 19:8; 20:25; 28:23, 31)." HWA gives a string of Scriptures that contain the phrase "Kingdom of God" to validate his point. What the unsuspecting reader doesn't know is that HWA omitted two Scriptures containing the key phrase "kingdom of God" because they clearly contradict his teaching that the gospel isn't about Jesus. Let's look these missing Scriptures below:

But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. (Acts 8:12)

And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed. (Acts 14:21-23)

Earlier, HWA challenged the reader, stating that he "better be finding out what gospel is!" and insisted "The good news of THE KINGDOM OF GOD is something you must understand, and believe, in order to be saved! Jesus Christ said so!" If HWA was truly sent from God and personally trained by Jesus Christ, then he would have wanted to show—from Scripture—what Jesus said concerning what one should "believe," right? Would a good Bible teacher challenge the reader to find out what he needs to believe yet fail to supply him with the Scriptures using the word "believe" so he can know exactly what it is that the Bible says he needs to believe? The reader will not see HWA quote Scriptures like these in the MOA:

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life...(John 3:36)

Jesus answered and said unto them, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." (John 6:29)

Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. (John 14:1)

But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name. (John 20:31)

And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. (I John 3:23)

Verily, verily I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. (John 5:24)

Be it known unto you all and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom God raised up from the dead... Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts 4:10, 12)

Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus...And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he [the eunuch] answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. (Acts 8:35, 37)

And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy
That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved...For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. (Romans 10:9, 13)

The Bible clearly states that belief in the name of Jesus Christ is how one gains eternal life, not belief in HWA's "Kingdom of God" (and all that it entails) gospel. Predictably, the Scripture Index at the end of the MOA does not contain any of these crucial Scriptures. This is outright deceit when one omits the very words of Jesus and the direct instructions of the apostles as to how one can gain eternal life. This is the simplicity of the gospel. We can believe what these Scriptures say, or we can slog through 70 pages of confusing text written by HWA about this coming "Kingdom."

HWA harangued his followers to "keep the Commandments," but here we see him contradict Scripture. In 1 John 3:23 quoted above, we see that the commandment given is that "we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ..."—the very thing that Biblical Christianity has said all along—the very thing that HWA said wasn't the gospel. In addition, members are taught that "The Work" is financially supporting HWA so he can get the gospel preached so the "end" will come. But the above Scripture says "the work of God" is for one to believe on Jesus Christ, the One He has sent.

Does Scripture teach a coming Kingdom of God? Absolutely. But just because Scripture is inerrant doesn't mean HWA is inerrant. Contrary to what HWA has told his readers, there are Christian churches that do believe in the future return of Jesus Christ and His coming kingdom. But they do not outline minute details that aren't in Scripture (see The 14 Executives later in this article), nor do they omit Scriptures in order to blind people to the simple process of salvation. To intentionally divert attention away from what Jesus accomplished on the Cross and deny people salvation is reprehensible. Belief in a coming kingdom of God¹ and belief in Jesus Christ as Savior isn't contradictory, as HWA wants his readers to believe.

A FALSE PROPHET AT WORK—WHEN WILL THIS KINGDOM BE ESTABLISHED?

This seventh chapter of the MOA will clearly identify HWA as a false prophet. When is this great Kingdom of God supposed to be ushered in? [bolding mine]

...News before it happens—of the most colossal event of all earth's history certain to occur in your lifetime—during the very next few years! (p. 298)

So mark carefully the time element! In the days of these kings"—in the days of these ten nations or groups of nations that shall, IN OUR TIME, resurrect briefly the Roman Empire...(p. 301)

Yes, in OUR TIME! (subtitle, p. 301)

Therefore, we are CLOSE to the coming of Christ! We are now very near the END of this world! (p. 303)

The MOA was written in 1985, over 20 years ago. When HWA emphasized the words "our time" he meant it for the time that he was living. He gave his followers the impression that he fully intended to be alive at the Second Coming. He was supposed to be a dual type of Moses (applying the duality principle), and would lead his followers into the Promised Land (The Wonderful World Tomorrow). But this did not come to pass.

Now let's look at another false claim by HWA:

Well, there is the Strong Hand from somewhere. If that unseen Hand does not exist, humanity will not survive on earth another 25 years, or less! I know whereof I speak, for no organization on earth has a more knowledgeable grasp and understanding of world conditions, trends, and causes, than ours. We know where the world is heading... (The Ambassador College Correspondence Course, 1969, Lesson 5, p. 15).
Speaking with arrogant confidence, HWA, back in 1969, stated that he knew the earth wouldn't survive another 25 years. Yet the world has, but HWA hasn't. Notice carefully how he gives his "organization" credit for having this knowledge—more than any on earth. Clearly we see HWA make a prophecy that did not materialize within the time period he pronounced with great certainty. The last issue of the 1969 *Ambassador College Correspondence Course* had these final words:

There is very little time remaining. You now know only a minority of humanity will remain alive just a few years from now. You have been warned of the terrible physical suffering and mental agony the immediate future will bring...A place of safety is promised...YOU can be one of those who step into eternity. The way is plain. Draw near to God and His Church!

Only by drawing near to Christ who is the Head of the "Philadelphia" Church—and having continuing contact with God's Headquarters Work—will you make the spiritual growth required. And having a share in the Work of God's Church you can share in her place of safety.

Very soon, world events will prevent many from being able to have contact with this Church. Don't wait to go through the terrible Tribulation with the sleepy, lukewarm "Laodicean" Church. Act now!!" (*The Ambassador College Correspondence Course*, 1969, Lesson 44, p. 16)

After completing the AC Correspondence Course, these sentences leave little doubt that HWA uttered false prophecies. Notice that HWA says to draw near to God and His Church, equating involvement with his organization to developing a direct relationship with Christ. He offers the promise of divine protection—the place of safety—but only if one becomes a part of his church and shares in its "Work." The recruit hardly notices that he must no longer trust in Christ for eternal life, but he must now be dependent upon the organization for protection. HWA ridiculed the traditional church for "coercing people into accepting Christ," but using coercion to scare people into his church didn't seem to bother his conscience in the least.

Bible-based cult leaders are also known for their duplicity and deceit, which they intentionally use to cause cognitive dissonance in their recruits. A prime example of this is shown on the previous page of this very same lesson in which HWA states:

COMMENT: Some have foolishly set dates, sold their houses, closed their businesses and quit work. Others locked themselves in their homes or waited in caves for the end of the world! Of course, Christ did not come! (*The Ambassador College Correspondence Course*, 1969, Lesson 44, p. 15) [emp. mine]

HWA foolishly set dates while bashing others who have done the same. HWA also promised divine protection in the caves of Petra, while discounting the whole notion altogether. He was very clever at covering all his bases. When 1975 rolled around, and members did these very things, he could scold them and say, "I never said to do that" and declare his innocence. Never mind the members were fed a steady diet of fear and date-setting up to that point. When my family began attending in 1983, we had heard rumors about the "1975 in Prophecy" fiasco. We asked our minister about this event. His response? "Well, Mr. Armstrong saw that world events were transpiring in a direction that could have been the beginning of Christ's imminent return. He never said that Christ would definitely return, but members went out and sold their homes and businesses because they thought Christ was returning at that time." In other words, it was the dumb members' fault for believing HWA in the first place!

Does this mean that Bible prophecy isn't true? Will Jesus return and will there be a Millennium? Positively, yes. The Bible clearly states these things will happen. But how do we put this in proper perspective? Here is an interesting insight:

THE TIME OF CHRIST SECOND COMING

No One Knows the Day Nor the Hour (Matt. 24:36-42; Mark 13:32; cf. Acts 1:7)
The Scriptures tell us enough regarding the time of Christ's coming to satisfy our faith, but not our curiosity. These statements of the Master should be sufficient to silence that fanaticism which is so anxious to tell us the exact year, month, and even the day when Christ will come. This day is hidden in the counsels of God. Jesus Himself, by a voluntary unwillingness to know, while in His state of humiliation, showed no curiosity to peer into the chronology of this event. **We should not nor ought we to want to know more than Christ did on this point...** *(The Great Doctrines of the Bible, 1949, pp. 241)*

Isn't it interesting that a "deceived scholar" would listen to the words of Jesus and teach others to not make end time prophecies concerning Christ's return? Why does HWA have such a hard time believing and obeying Jesus in this matter?

Now let's look at HWA update his end time predictions in the MOA:

> The whole purpose of the DREAM [speaking of Daniel the prophet's dream] was to reveal GOD'S GOVERNMENT—the fact that God RULES—the truth of THE KINGDOM OF GOD—the very thing that is the one and only true GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST! And, secondly, to reveal—preserved in writing for us TODAY—what is to happen "in the latter days"—actually within the next two decades—**THIS LAST HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY!** (p. 298) [bolding mine]

So here we have another date set—twenty more years from 1985 or "the last half of the 20th century," whichever comes first. Both of these dates have past. Was HWA predicting the end, or was he forecasting the length of his lifespan, setting himself up financially until the end of his days?

What does the Bible say about all this? "But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak...even that prophet shall die" and "When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him." *(Deuteronomy 18:20, 22)*

HWA's prophecy did not come to pass "during the next few years," nor "this last half of the twentieth century." Decades have passed. The Great Tribulation did not occur in the time frame given by HWA, nor did the United States of Europe invade the United States and Britain and take them captive. World War III never happened. We must no longer believe the words of this false prophet, nor the words of those who try to carry forward his burned out torch of falsehoods.

**LIES AGAINST BIBLICAL CHRISTIANITY CONCERNING LUKE 1:31-33**

Again, we see the same methods used by HWA before he introduces a new topic. He must discredit, misrepresent, and malign traditional churches. Once feelings of mistrust are in place, the reader will open his mind to "other alternatives." Ceaseless in his tirades against Biblical Christianity, HWA makes the following sensational claims:

> How amazing—what a tragedy—that in church services and gospel preaching today, one seldom, if ever, hears of Christ as coming king and world ruler. (p. 303)

> Why do the professing Christian churches omit all these scriptures about Christ coming and of his ruling the earth? (p. 305)

In reference to Luke 1:31-33, HWA states:

> Why do the churches of this world never mention any of these scriptures? Millions have attended churches all their lives and never heard any of these scriptures about Christ becoming a king or about the coming kingdom of God. (p. 304)

HWA claims that:

> The churches of this world never mention these Scriptures in Luke 1. (p. 304)
Millions have attended churches all their lives and never heard any of these Scriptures. (Ibid. 304)

Although HWA claims that these Scriptures aren't read in church services today, he completely disregards the fact that these very Scriptures are read in Christian churches everywhere around the world—during Christmas! HWA knows this, but he wants to stir up feelings of righteous indignation against traditional Christian churches even if he has to lie to do it! Luke 1:31-33 are core Scriptures of the gospel:

And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Christian churches celebrate the birth of Christ and His coming as the Son of God, the Savior. The traditional Christmas story begins with the angel announcing to Mary that she has found favor with God, and has been chosen to give birth to the Savior. From there, the story progresses to Jesus being born and placed in a manger, and the shepherds visiting the stable to witness "a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:11) Look again at the two claims against Biblical Christianity that HWA makes concerning these Scriptures. Can one really believe that these Scriptures are "never mentioned?" Can one really have "attended church all their life" and "never heard any of these Scriptures"? Contrary to HWA's claims, these very Scriptures are even memorized by children and recited during Christmas plays. Can you imagine a Christmas pageant that would skip over them? It would certainly leave out crucial details such as the virgin birth, and who Jesus is. The Bible wouldn't make sense without them. The Christian church clearly understands that Jesus Christ is King NOW and forever.

Again, HWA resorts to repugnance against "traditional Christianity" by lumping them with the vilest of the vile:

But will humanity shout with joy, and welcome him in frenzied ecstasy and enthusiasm? Will even the churches of traditional Christianity? [emp. mine]

**They will not! They will believe, because the false ministers of Satan** (II Cor. 11:13-15) have deceived them, that he is the Antichrist. The churches and the nations will be angry. The churches and the nations will be angry at his coming (Rev. 11:15 with 11:18), and the military forces will actually attempt to fight him to destroy him (Rev. 17:14)! (p. 306-307) [emp. mine]

HWA gives a graphic description of the consequences of joining forces with them:

This rotting of their flesh off their bones will happen almost instantaneously—*while they are still on their feet.* (p. 308)

The setup again, is clear. Who in their right mind would want to fight against Jesus Christ and go through something this gross? Once again, HWA wins. The above is an example of how HWA implanted subconscious fear in the minds of his followers. Is there any wonder why church members are so rejecting and caustic toward the mainstream church? This is one of the main reasons why those who exit the various churches of God are unable to keep traditional holidays. HWA's literature continually reminds them that partaking of any holidays, outside of what the organization allows, is falling into the trap of "false Christian ministers." If members go along with anything that is approved by the traditional church or society, they are automatically in league with the Antichrist, and will suffer agonizing punishment. Members do not even realize the fear and phobia induction used by HWA to keep them in check. So successful is this method, that members who exit from the organization still cannot bring themselves to celebrate traditional holidays—even years after they have left.

**TO THE MILLENNIUM... AND BEYOND!**

Church members believe that the Feast of Tabernacles depicts the coming Millennium. When will the Millennium, the "Wonderful World Tomorrow" begin? According to HWA, after church members, who are "counted worthy to escape," flee to the place of safety, they will undergo
their "final training" for 3-1/2 years in the fortified citadel of Petra. Petra is located in the Middle East in the country of Jordan. Members believe they will wait there, supernaturally protected, until the Second Coming of Christ. The rest of the world will go through the Great Tribulation. Just before the worldwide nuclear holocaust destroys the entire planet, Christ will return and stop mankind from complete annihilation. Then the First Resurrection will occur and church members will be transformed ("born again") from flesh and blood beings into spirit beings. This is the "salvation" they have long awaited. At that time Christ will usher in a thousand years of peace, also known as the Millennium, and members will rule with Him.

Members believe they will teach the survivors to conform to the rules of God's government during the Millennium. Of course, the problem is that many teachings of HWA have changed throughout the decades. Since HWA taught "the dead know nothing" then faithful members who have died will come up in this First Resurrection with obsolete beliefs. These born-again spirit beings will not be unified, resulting in confusion for this new millennial government.

**HUMAN NATURE DOESN'T DISAPPEAR DURING THE MILLENNIUM**

In addition to resurrected church members, Bible saints, and the Great Multitude, the Millennium will consist of people who survived the Great Tribulation and the battle of Armageddon. Although Satan will be restrained during the Millennium, on page 311 HWA reveals that "complete utopia cannot be ushered in all at once" due to the "acquired satanic attitude" that man will retain. "Multiple millions will still hold to the attitude of rebellion—of vanity, lust, and greed." Then HWA promises that with the recruit's help, this can be overcome through re-education.

**WORLD PROBLEMS SOLVED**

From here, HWA assures us that the world's problems will be solved during this time. The world's population explosion will be rectified by reclamation of land from fertile deserts and oceans, and provision of pure water sources. Weather patterns will be changed – even the nature of wild animals will be changed. Everyone will be completely literate, speaking the same language, and the economy sound. On page 324, HWA states, "Once each 50 years, all debts, public and private, will be canceled, completely." It is interesting to note that HWA never practiced this "Year of Jubilee" with his own church members, even though his church was in existence for over 50 years. He insisted that the tithing laws be upheld (obviously, he didn't want to wait for the Millennium to institute tithing), but swept the Year of Jubilee under the rug.

**LAWS OF HEALTH REVISITED**

As stated earlier in the MOA, HWA was a master at progression. In the previous chapter, he carefully mentions the Laws of Health and implies that Jesus Himself observed them and never broke them. He will progress further with this thought, this time, offering the reader a highly coveted prize—perfect health—and one need not wait until the Millennium to achieve this.

HWA never rests in his assaults against Biblical Christianity, even concerning issues of health:

Why should we be so willing to believe such a perfect state of health and joy is impossible? Why are all these Scriptures ignored by professing Christian preaching? Instead they picture going to heaven with idleness and ease and no accomplishment. (p. 318) [emp. mine]

There are blessings for observing the laws of health—absolute guarantees good health will result—and that sickness and disease will become in the third and fourth generations a thing of the past. (p. 319) [emp. mine]

The bait is carefully set. First we observe HWA dangling a tantalizing promise of "perfect health and joy." Next, he must ensure that the competition ("professing Christianity") offers an inferior product and will quickly malign its product—heaven. Who wants to wait until heaven to be healed when HWA can offer his product NOW? For those readers who suffer from poor health, this offer will we hard to resist.
Once in the organization, members are expected to abide by these "laws of health." Abstaining from unclean foods (pork, shellfish) is only the beginning. The ability to abstain from particular foods will be used as a "spiritual yardstick" for members to measure their spiritual progress. Any illnesses (even a common cold) are seen as a "broken health law" and members must pray for forgiveness. They are to be anointed with oil by an elder and not see a physician for medication [medicine].

When the unsuspecting reader writes away for the "free" literature, he will learn that using doctors is the equivalent to paganism and worshiping other gods:

Patients often face costly doctor and hospital bills, painful suffering and sometimes premature death because they lack faith in the God Who reveals Himself as our Healer.

Comment: For centuries, Israel's only means of healing was through the power of the Almighty God. He was their healer! There were no doctors or physicians in Israel. That is, not until they began to turn to the pagan ways of the heathen nations around them.

The same conditions of obedience to God's commandments and not looking to other gods for our healing apply today. Because of not abiding by these conditions, a lot of people who have a little understanding about divine healing, and actually believe in it, are not being healed! (The Ambassador College Correspondence Course, 1969, Lesson 43, p. 13) [all bolding mine]

The Laws of Health are simply another system to keep members under control. If they get sick, they believe they have committed a "physical sin," and ask God for forgiveness instead of seeking medical attention. If they remain sick, they feel tremendous guilt. Fellow members question whether there is "some secret sin" that the ill person is hiding when there is no evidence of divine healing. Although HWA claims that the laws of health are "absolute guarantees," he fails to mention that members in his church do not experience "a perfect state of health and joy" and die just like everybody else in the world. Members succumb to cancer, heart attacks, stroke, diabetes, etc., even after abiding by these health laws. (HWA himself suffered a major heart attack, and his wife died from a bowel obstruction. Joseph W. Tkach, Sr. died from cancer). The truth of the matter is that there are no guarantees that observing these supposed "laws of health" will prevent all sickness and disease, let alone cure them.

Although HWA berates Christian churches for being completely ignorant, he does not point out what they do understand: What goes into the man doesn't make him unclean—it's what comes from his heart that makes him unclean. (See Matthew 15: 11, 18) Traditional Christian churches are concerned about one's spiritual health for they understand that Jesus is the cure to spiritual sickness.

**NO TEMPTATION**

HWA informs his readers that Satan will not be in the millennial kingdom to tempt them:

Happily they [people converted during the Millennium] then will not have to overcome Satan. But they shall have to overcome all evil impulses, habits or temptations, innate within themselves. (p. 350)

Members understand that they will already be converted to spirit beings at the moment of Christ's return and will no longer be human. They will rule over the survivors of the Great Tribulation and teach them the O.T. laws. Everyone will be forced to keep the Sabbath, the Holy Days, tithing, health laws and other ordinances practiced in his organization, which were a part of the Mosaic Covenant.

According to HWA, even though Satan is "put away," men will still have to overcome "evil impulses, habits or temptations." Members, now spirit beings, believe they will correct these errant men before they succumb to their evil deeds. Members will suddenly appear, and instruct wayward people just as they are in the throes of sin. As "God" members will be able to read the minds of potential sinners and prevent them from indulging in their wrongdoing:
COMMENT: In the world tomorrow, those now qualifying to rule under Christ will be ever-present and ever-ready to speak or act, both to teach and to nip in the bud any attempted act of disobedience. Because they will be composed of spirit, they will be able to come and go as necessary, to pass through walls, or simply disappear, just as Christ was able to after His resurrection (John 20:17, 19, 25-27; Luke 24:31). (The Ambassador Correspondence Course, 1972, Lesson 4, p. 14)

Again, the members fail to perceive what a daunting job this will be. Today, there are over six billion people in the world. If only 1% of them survive the Great Tribulation, that leaves at least 60 million survivors. If these sixty million survivors sin daily, there will have to be endless instruction, as spirit beings (members) appear and disappear from person to person, in an effort to stop sin (Isa. 30:20-21). HWA ridiculed Heaven as a place of idleness and ease, but the member never realizes how much work HWA has in store for his converts in this coming paradise. Somehow, they must manage not only to correct potential sinners, but also rebuild the destroyed earth back into a paradise known as The Wonderful World Tomorrow. The worldwide urban renewal and vast engineering projects of Job will be taking place during this time. And what about the Sabbath? Will these members have time off on the Sabbath? What if sin doesn't take time off for the Sabbath?

Many female members have small children and some may be pregnant when they flee to the place of safety. By the time Christ returns and the First Resurrection occurs, these women will have toddlers or preschoolers who will remain human. How will they ever get to spend any time with their children? Members are told that their obedient human children will become princes and princesses of high honor in the World Tomorrow, and that they will be taken well care of. Again, HWA contradicts his own dogma to "turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers" (Malachi 4:6). How can this be done if the fathers (and mothers) aren't present, and somebody else is raising their child? And how many of these children would gladly give up "status and prestige" just to spend time with their own parents? Nobody will ask them because in this new world order, everyone will do what they're told without resistance or question. This is the main reason member's children are not allowed to participate in traditional holidays, or celebrate birthdays. They must forgo these worldly pleasures of today in order to inherit their lofty positions in the World Tomorrow. So even the children are placed in a situation where they are pressured to conform to the rules in order to gain their reward (or at least make their parents look good so they can gain theirs). Members believe that their children are "sanctified" and are "set apart for a holy purpose." If the parents can "qualify" for their salvation, then their children will be awarded these earthly ruling positions. So much is speculated, yet HWA has his followers believing that these imaginings are derived from Scripture.

ALL WILL KEEP THE FEAST (ZECHARIAH 14)

Further, on pages 328-329, HWA again mentions the seven annual Festivals of God. He lambastes Christian churches again:

Today the professing Christian world rejects God's Holy Days; holy to him, but which a deceived "Christianity" hates. They observe instead the pagan days—Christmas, New Year's, Easter, and others—"which God hateth!" Many know and confess that these are pagan—but they argue, "We don't observe these in worshiping the pagan gods, we use their customs in worshiping Christ and the true God."

But false "Christian" ministers taught that God's Festivals were "part of the old Mosaic system—not for us today." The clergy deceived and prejudiced the people. The people were deceived into believing that Christmas, New Year's, Easter, etc., were days Christ ordained.

Christians do not believe all of these holidays are "ordained" and to say so is a gross misrepresentation. Many holidays are civil holidays and the Christian church does not command its followers to keep them. Such holidays are New Year's, President's Day, Memorial Day, Mother's and Father's Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and others. The church understands what Paul taught in Romans 14 that observance of certain days are
optional according to one's conscience. [Read: Should the Sabbath Be Observed Today? (mentions Romans 14)] Christmas and Easter are set apart as holy days because they center around the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Although many Christians believe these two are the most important to observe, they do not force others to observe them, nor declare as anathema those who don't. The Lord's Supper or Holy Communion is considered an ordained ceremony in Christian churches. As far as "God's Festivals" being part of the old Mosaic system, this is entirely true. But since the reader knows little to nothing about this "Mosaic system" he cannot refute what HWA is saying. Notice, again, the set up: to agree to keep traditional holidays one is labeled as deceived and prejudiced. The reader may not understand what the Mosaic system is, but he doesn't want to allow himself to be deceived! And this is the reaction that HWA is looking for. Jehovah's Witnesses also do not observe any religious or civil holidays, nor birthdays. Why doesn't HWA mention these millions of "faithful followers" who hold the same beliefs?

HWA points to Zechariah 14:17-19 as proof that all will keep God's Holy Days when Christ returns. Is this true? Will the world keep the Feast of Tabernacles sometime in the future? According to Scripture, yes. Does this mean that we are to keep them today? According to Scripture, no. Paul, in Romans 14, had the perfect opportunity to spell out Holy Day observances as commands for converts. But does he? In verses 5-6, Paul states, "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it." Paul isn't speaking about liking one Holy Day or Sabbath day better than another. HWA taught that High Holy Days were not optional. But here, Paul clearly gives the believer the option to not observe a particular day unto the Lord if he so wishes.

Predictably, HWA does not give Biblical Christianity any credit for understanding the future observance of the Feast of Tabernacles and hides this fact from his readers. Since HWA taught that any Christian literature printed outside of his organization was filled with deception and prejudiced, let's see what The Bible Knowledge Commentary -Old Testament, 1985, has to say about Zechariah 14:17-19:

That Gentiles will go to Jerusalem to worship does not mean they will become Jewish proselytes, as in Old Testament times. Millennial religious worship will not be a restored Judaism but a newly instituted worldwide religious order embracing both Jews and Gentiles. It will center in Jerusalem and will incorporate some features identical with or similar to certain aspects of Old Testament worship. One of these aspects is the annual celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles. The need to go to Jerusalem is partially explained by the presence there of the object of worship—the King, the Lord Almighty, that is Jesus Christ who will be ruling on the throne of David in Jerusalem. (14:16). Worshipping annually in Jerusalem will be necessary for the people to enjoy fertility of crops. Those nations that neglect or refuse such opportunities for worship will forfeit water supply. For most nations this simply means they will have no rain. But Egypt, whose irrigation depends not on rain (at least not directly) but rather on the flooding of the Nile, will still experience the plague of drought, as punishment from the Lord, as will all the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. (The Bible Knowledge Commentary -Old Testament, 1983, p. 1571)

I even asked a "deceived and prejudiced" Baptist pastor about these verses. He readily agreed with the above. He also noted, "What will be instituted in the future does not mean that we are required to do it during the present church age. ... God does not require Christians today to keep the Feast of Tabernacles, but in the Millennium, this ordinance will be re-established for that particular time only. God can add or annul religious observances to suit His purposes, and has done so throughout history."

If this "deceived Christian" pastor "hated" God's Holy Days, his answer didn't reflect this.

[Note by ESN: Also see this offsite article by John C. Whitcom about the Millennial Temple and which includes an answer midway down about Zechariah 14:16-21. Also refer to this on our site: Doesn't Zechariah 14:16 prove we are to keep the Feast of Tabernacles today?]
HWA briefly discusses the New Covenant as something that is future and to begin at Christ's return:

In short, under the New Covenant, which **Christ is coming to usher in**, what we shall see on earth is happiness, peace, abundance and justice for all... (p. 327) [emp. mine]

HWA will continue his discussion of the New Covenant by distorting Hebrews 8:10 as "proof" that converts are to keep the Law. Why doesn't HWA mention any other Scriptures that discuss the New Covenant? Is it because out of five Scriptures he chose the only one that mentioned the "law"? What could HWA be hiding? HWA failed to quote Matthew 26:27-28, Mark 14:23-24, Luke 22:20 and I Corinthians 11:25. Since these verses are worded similarly, I only quote one:

Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the **new testament** in my blood, which is shed for you. (Luke 22:20) [emp. mine]

The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible shows that **diathēkē** is the Greek word for "testament" in the above verses and means:

prop. a disposition, i.e. (spec.) a contract (espec. a devisory will: —covenant, testament).

Likewise, **J. Vernon McGee** states the following:

We have what is known as a New Covenant today; we call it a new testament. **The New Testament is actually a New Covenant** which God has made, and it is in contrast to the old covenant of the Old Testament. (Thru the Bible With J. Vernon McGee, Vol. 5, Hebrews 8:6, p. 559) [emp. mine]

HWA didn't quote these for three reasons: One, because they dispel the notion that the New Covenant is "still future"; two, because they show that Jesus fulfilled his role as **Messenger of the New Covenant**, not "messenger of the Kingdom" (discussed at the beginning of this chapter concerning Malachi 3:1); and three, because they speak of the blood of Christ which is shed for the remission of sins. This is such a monumental event in history, yet HWA dedicates only three small paragraphs to discuss the New Covenant! There are 363 pages of text in the MOA—shouldn't this tell us something?

Covenants were ratified with the blood of a sacrifice. This blood of the New Covenant was Christ's own blood, shed for the remission of sins. This covenant was ratified at His death and Christians have a part in it now.² HWA skipped over the fact that the New Covenant is established on better promises—spiritual promises—the provision of a Savior and being able to be redeemed now through the blood of Jesus. (Readers must write for booklets that will twist this teaching around). Others who have critiqued HWA's literature have also noted a purposeful dependency that HWA tries to create in his other publications:

With such overwhelming proofs of HWA being wrong on the new birth, one has to suspect him of evil motives. **Does he want to destroy assurance of salvation in order to make people dependent upon himself?** This seems to be true in several of his misleading articles. (Armstrongism's 300 Errors Exposed by 3000 Bible Verses, S. E. Anderson, 1973, p. 113.) [emp. mine]

Yes, indeed, he does.

**THE PERFECT GOVERNMENT**

HWA informs his readers that this "government of God" will be a perfect government, and was "planned" from the beginning. This perfect government will replace the bungled 6,000-year rule of Satan on earth. HWA will now give details of how this government will be organized. It will consist of both church and state, and be broken down to a national and international level with a "topflight team" in charge under Jesus Christ. A Headquarters Church will be established to re-educate the world. Let's examine HWA's vision of this new government.
THE 14 EXECUTIVES OF THE TOP FLIGHT TEAM

Let's look at another contradiction of HWA. On page 299, he states,

Men ought never to interpret the Bible. The Bible gives us GOD'S OWN INTERPRETATION!

Well spoken. But has HWA followed his own advice? Let's look and see. On pages 334-335, under the subtitle "The Pattern of Government Organization" HWA states:

God has not told us, in so many words, precisely how his coming world super government will be organized. Yet he has given us the general pattern. He has told us specifically where 14 high executives (including Christ) will fit in. And from them we may deduce a great deal of the remaining government structure. Much of the coming structure of government is at least strongly indicated by what is plainly revealed.

In the paragraph above, we see HWA use a technique called "double-speak." This technique, which uses "contradicting terms," keeps people confused so they are unable to process information clearly.

Now let's closely examine the above paragraph. HWA plainly states [bolding mine], "God has not told us...precisely how His coming world super government will be organized" but quickly flip-flops and states, "He has told us specifically where 14 high executives (including Christ) will fit in." He flip-flops again and admits that every thing else concerning this government structure is "deduced." Then he flip-flops again and tries to convince readers that these things are "plainly revealed." Are they? Or are they plainly made up? Once the technique of double-speak is employed, HWA will use the phrase "We know," repeated five times following this contradicting paragraph. He must quickly regain a foothold in the minds of his readers before they can process these contradictions.

Let's see if HWA lets the Bible interpret itself, or whether he does the interpreting. We will examine whether God has told HWA specifically, in Scripture, where these 14 high executives will fit in.

Executives #1, #2, and #3—Abraham, Isaac and Jacob:

What is plainly revealed indicates, then, that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will function as a topflight team, with Abraham as chairman of the team, next under Christ in the coming world government of God. (p. 336). [emp. mine]

Where in Scripture is this specific statement "plainly revealed"? The verse given by HWA in Luke 13:28 is a warning to those who will be shut out of the kingdom when the time comes for the Master to shut the door. It says nothing about a "topflight team" and Abraham being the chairman. Men ought never to interpret the Bible.

Executives #4 and #5—Moses and Elijah:

Certainly the indication is given us that, under Christ as King of kings, and under Christ's top team—the "fathers"—will be Moses over all organized national and international government; and Elijah, over all organized church, religious and educational activity. (p. 337)

Although HWA makes the above definite statements, he gives no definite Scriptures to back up what he has declared. He gives Matthew 16:27-17:9 as his scriptural proof, but they say nothing about Moses heading up an "organized national and international government," nor Elijah being "over all organized church, religious and educational activity." Appearing at the Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah, speak with Christ about His impending death in Jerusalem. Luke 9:30-31 state this plainly:

And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elijah: Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.
But HWA does not give this particular Scripture in order that the Bible can interpret itself. Since he believes, "There is absolutely NO Scripture in all the Bible that promises HEAVEN as the "reward of the saved," and "NO Scripture speaks of the saints—true Christians—going to heaven when they die!" Therefore, he must concoct another explanation as to why Moses and Elijah appear in glory with Christ at the Transfiguration. He teaches that the Transfiguration is a future "vision" of "church and state" united again under Christ in the World Tomorrow. Here again, is another example of how HWA points to one Scripture to prove his teaching (giving Matt 16:27-17:9 as an example) while ignoring another that disproves his point (ignoring Luke 9:31 and which further describes Moses and Elijah speaking to Christ). Why would a "vision" be conscious of Christ's impending death and be speaking to him about it? Moses and Elijah represent the Law and the prophets which both foretold Christ's death. Luke 9:31 clearly states that this is what the three of them were discussing.

HWA can't resist mentioning the three schools ("or colleges" as HWA gladly inserted) that Elijah established at Bethel, Jericho and Gilgal (p. 337-338). Why? Members understand this to be a form of the "duality principle" covered in the introduction of MOA. HWA built three colleges—one in Pasadena, California, one in Big Sandy, Texas and one in Bricket Wood, England. Since members believe that HWA is the modern-day Elijah (see chapter seven, page 348 of the MOA under "Elijah to Come in Our Day"), this serves only as a reminder to his elevated status as a prophet of God.

**Executive #6—King David:**

King David, resurrected, immortal, in power and glory, will be king, under Moses, over all twelve nations of Israel (Jer. 30:9; Ezek. 34:23-24; 37:24-25). Each of the original twelve apostles will be king, under David, over one of these then super-prosperous nations (Matthew 19:28) (p. 338)

Notice carefully how HWA was able to give scriptures that seem to agree with his claims. Now let's look at these scriptures and see if they say this:

- But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will **raise up** unto them. (Jeremiah 30:9)
- And I will set up **one shepherd** over them, and he **shall feed them**, even my servant David; he shall **feed them, and he shall be their shepherd**. And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David a **prince** among them; I the LORD have spoken it. (Ezekiel 34:23-24). [emp. mine]
- And David my servant shall be **king** over them; and they all shall have **one shepherd**: … (Ezekiel 37:24) [emp. mine]

God promises to raise up king David, but nowhere in these scriptures does it say, "David will be king under Moses." There is nothing here that even remotely implies this. HWA claimed that the twelve apostles would be under David, ruling super-prosperous nations. Let's take a look at the Scriptures he gave as proof:

- So Jesus said unto them, "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed Me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (Matt. 19:28)

In Matthew 19:28, we do not see Jesus saying that the twelve would be under David. Jesus said that the twelve will be sitting on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, but that's all it says. Again, HWA resorts to conjuring up an imaginary corporate structure that simply isn't there.

**Executive #7—Daniel:**

HWA writes:
But what of the gentile nations? Who will be given top positions of rule over them? ...The prophet Daniel will be made king over them all, directly under Moses. (p. 339)

It is an interesting possibility, in passing, to consider that Daniel's three colleagues—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—might serve as a team directly with and under Daniel, even as the three "fathers" very possibly may serve as a team directly with and under Christ himself. (p. 340)

The only scriptural proof that HWA was able to give was Ezekiel 14:14, 20 and Daniel 12:13.

"...Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness," say the Lord GOD. (Ezekiel 14:14) (repeats in verse 20)

But you, go your way till the end, for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days. (Daniel 12:13)

Again, HWA takes these Scriptures and interprets through them what is simply not there. These do not say that Daniel will be made "king over the gentile nations directly under Moses." These Scriptures, in context, simply say that Daniel's (and Noah's and Job's) righteousness could deliver no one but himself, and that God has promised Daniel that he would come up in the Resurrection. HWA also makes a statement concerning Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, which he, himself, can give no supporting Scriptures. If "the Bible gives us God's OWN INTERPRETATION," then we do not see God's interpretation agreeing with HWA's interpretation here. Again, HWA speculates about Scripture, the very thing he warns against.

Executive #8—Paul:

HWA launches into a discussion as to whether Daniel or Paul will head the gentile nations. His conclusion?

The indication, then, seems to be that Paul will be given position over all gentile nations, but under Daniel. (p. 341).

Although HWA states that Paul's position under Daniel is "clearly indicated from what God has already revealed," he can give no Scriptures to prove this statement. Those in the various churches of God are taught to "Prove All Things" and "Don't Believe Me—Believe Your Bible!" and certainly they believe that they do. But what they do not perceive is the method that their revered leader uses. He makes a string of false statements, inserts a correct statement with what seems to be supporting Scriptures, and then summarizes the meaning of the Scriptures while ignoring any Scriptures that could annul his theories. Because the Scriptures he gives seem to support what he is saying, the novice will not catch this tricky method.

Executive #9—Noah:

This is quite comical.

But Noah, in the resurrection, immortal, in power and glory, will be given the power to enforce God's ways in regard to race...It seems evident that the resurrected Noah will head a vast project of the relocation of the races and nations.... and no defiance will be tolerated. (p. 342)

Earlier in chapter 4 and chapter 5 of the MOA, I showed how HWA contradicted himself by stating that interracial marriages were against God's will, but later stated that the sons of Noah had married an Oriental and a Black woman. [Note: HWA does the same thing in his 1963 Plain Truth article: "The Real Cause Of The RACE CRISIS!" (found online)] If Noah couldn't control the actions of his own sons, what makes HWA think that he is qualified to separate the various races? As usual, HWA can give no Scriptures that specifically state, "Noah will head a vast project of race relocation."

The Scriptures given by HWA (Deut. 32:8-9; Acts 17:26), read in context, have nothing to do with men refusing to remain in the lands given to them. Starting in verse 24 in Acts 17, Paul is
speaking to the Gentiles about God, who made the world and everything in it. Paul says God needs nothing, but gives life to all. He has made all nations descend from one man, and He controls the rise and fall of nations. He establishes their specific geographical locations (Deut. 32:8) and determines the time of their existence. Why? "...So that they should seek the Lord, in hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each of us." What we really see in the Scriptures provided by HWA is that God determines the boundaries of nations and how long they will exist—not for the sole purpose of keeping them racially separated, but as Paul said—so men will seek Him and call on Him.

HWA cleverly trimmed away the true context of these Scriptures. What HWA doesn't delve into are the details. If men were returned to their original lands, what time period are we looking at? If the Romans are returned to their own lands in this vast relocation project headed by Noah, do they return to the territories held by the Roman Empire during their zenith, or do they only occupy Italy? There were no Romans during the time of Noah, so how would he know where to return them since God keeps changing the borders throughout history? What about the Assyrians? Does God remove them from Germany and return them to Iraq? Where do the Iraqis go? They certainly don't resemble the Germans of today. Should Noah go by political boundaries or by skin color? Are all blacks automatically shipped off to Africa, all whites to Europe and America, and all Asians to China and the Pacific Rim? Remember, it was HWA who taught that there are three distinct races. What about the blended races? The truth is HWA doesn't know even though he wants his readers to think he knows.

Executive #10—Joseph:

It seems evident, therefore, that Joseph will be made director of the world's economy—its agriculture, its industry, its technology, and its commerce—as well as its money and monetary system. (p. 343)

HWA quotes Gen. 39:2-3 as his proof text. God did cause Joseph to prosper in Egypt, but this scripture nowhere states that in the future, he will be "made director of the world's economy, agriculture, industry, technology, commerce, its money and monetary system." Can you begin to see how far-fetched these statements have become? These are all suppositions made by a man who clearly stated, "Men ought never to interpret the Bible."

Executive #11—Job:

...well, surely no man who ever lived could equal him [Job] as an engineer over vast stupendous world projects. Indication is strong, therefore, that Job will be director of worldwide urban renewal, rebuilding the waste places and destroyed cities...vast engineering projects such as dams and power plants—or whatever the ruling Christ shall decree. (p. 344)

Job, indeed, was a wealthy man who had lots of children, sheep, camels, oxen, donkeys and laborers. And if this wasn't enough, God even calls him "blameless and upright." As the story unwinds, Job befalls misfortune through the hands of Satan, but in the end is redeemed and restored by God. In the entire book of Job, there is not one single Scripture that specifically states that Job will be "director of worldwide urban renewal, rebuilding the waste places and destroyed cities, etc." And neither can HWA give such a Scripture. Church of God members value the Bible and are certain they derive all their beliefs from it, but here, again, we see a plain fabrication which members believe simply because HWA has it in print.

Executive #12—Zerubbabel:

Not much is said concerning him:

At least one other man seems indicated as a top assistant in this vast administration. That is Zerubbabel. (p. 344)

But it doesn't matter. HWA only wants to seek out 14 executives because the number 14 is significant. It is the number 7 (which members consider sacred) times two. If anything can be said of HWA, it is certainly his penchant for numerology. Go back over the MOA and see how
often numbers are used by him: Numbers 7 and any multiples of 7; 12 and multiples of 12; the number 19 (it's 7 plus 12); 10 and any multiples of 10.) By paralleling Biblical numbers, HWA uses them to bolster his claims that God has ordained him.

**Executive #13—John the Baptist:**

Next, in this all-important Headquarters Church organization, working with and directly under Elijah, it appears, will be the resurrected John the Baptist. (p. 347)

Because John the Baptist's name is mentioned in the same verse as Elijah's, HWA concludes, "It seems logical that he should be placed with, or immediately under, Elijah." It is interesting to note that HWA stated, "Jesus said that no man who ever lived was greater than John the Baptist" (p. 347). Quickly following this statement, HWA writes about the "Elijah to Come in Our Day" (p. 348), which members readily understand is HWA. If Jesus stated that there is no greater man than John the Baptist, and John the Baptist will be serving under Elijah, where does that put HWA? The implication here is that he is equal to if not greater than John the Baptist!

Members are so blinded by their loyalty to HWA that they don't realize how high a pedestal they have placed him on (and how high he has placed himself).

**Executive #14—Jesus:**

Nothing much is really said of Him, other than He is the supervisor of these executives. Will he wear a pinstriped suit and carry a briefcase and hold international meetings with these other 13 on a regular basis? HWA says little of Executive #14 since there wouldn't be any Scriptures to back it up (this, we can all be certain of)!

Why is it so important for HWA to pigeonhole Jesus and the biblical patriarchs into an imaginary corporate structure? Because HWA has molded Jesus into his own image. Jesus is no longer a Savior, but a big-shot corporate boss who calls all the shots without question. HWA wants his followers to believe that Jesus will rule over His executives and His kingdom like HWA rules over his executives and his organization. From this "Jesus" one can be sure that "no defiance will be tolerated" (p. 342) as none is tolerated in HWA's organization. Men will be forced to live in peace. Obviously, HWA has no concept of spiritual conversion.

**HEADQUARTERS, THE TRUE UNIVERSE**

On page 305 of the MOA, HWA cleverly redefines the "Throne of God" as the "Headquarters of the Government of the Universe." This method is known as "transferal."

He ascended to the Throne of God, Headquarters of the Government of the Universe. Here is a subtle transfer of authority from God to an entity called Headquarters. Members unwittingly adopt the belief that "God" and "Headquarters" are one and the same. This is where the "mind meld" occurs. Once the convert adopts this erroneous belief, it is a very powerful tool used against him. To question or challenge Headquarters is equal to questioning or challenging God. God no longer speaks to the hearts of men through Scripture. Instead, Headquarters will now speak to the members and let the will of God be known through a hierarchical system.

In chapter one of the MOA, HWA informed the reader that the word "Trinity" is not found in the Bible. From there, he concludes that the Trinity doesn't exist because the word isn't found in the Bible. If this methodology is true, then HWA has failed to inform his members that the word "Headquarters" is nowhere found in the Bible either, much less the term "Headquarters of the Government of the Universe" which he lavishly parades through this chapter.

Now we will observe how cleverly HWA transfers authority from the "Headquarters of the Government" to the "Headquarters Church" forty pages later. HWA plainly states that this HQ mega church will be located in Jerusalem:

This Headquarters Church, at Christ's own world capital of Jerusalem, then, undoubtedly will be given the administration of the world's new system of education. (p. 349)
Also the indication is that the teaching of spiritual truth—of the true gospel, the spiritual conversion of the world—will be directed, worldwide, from this Headquarters Church, under Elijah and the overall direct supervision of Jesus Christ. (p. 349)

HWA will be unable to provide a single Scripture to prove these and other statements concerning this future Headquarters mega church, nor any proof that it will be under Elijah. He simply states things as if they are fact. Here, he uses the word "undoubtedly" to bolster the reader's confidence in this claim. HWA often quoted, "Where there is no vision the people will perish." He was a master at giving his followers visions of the future of his church:

But the real world evangelism will be administered by this Headquarters Church composed of resurrected immortals, under direct supervision of Jesus Christ.

One thing there will not be in the millennial Headquarters Church is a doctrinal committee of intellectual "scholars" to decide whether Christ's teachings are true doctrines.

There was no such doctrinal committee in the first century Headquarters Church at Jerusalem...God's Church today, as in the first century, receives its teachings from the living Christ, through an apostle, just as as in A.D. 31. [emp. mine]

One other tremendous organizational function will be directed from this Headquarters Church—that of direction of all the local churches over the world. (p. 350)

Initially, this vision seems exciting: Being directly under Jesus Christ in helping to convert the world? Wow! Who can resist? But upon closer scrutiny, there are a few things the reader has failed to perceive concerning this Headquarters Church, first and foremost, the lack of scriptural references. The second thing is HWA's demeaning attitude toward sound Christian scholarship. HWA knows that educated men can easily see through his false arguments and challenge these falsehoods. HWA will poison his followers to believe that examining Scriptures and coming to conclusions that negate his teachings will not be allowed in this millennial church. There will be no "doctrinal committees"—only what proceeds from the mouth of HWA—which he assures us comes directly from the living Christ and is patterned after the first century church. Of course, he does not mention Acts 15:6-21 where it clearly describes the historic Jerusalem Council. Contrary to what HWA stated above, the first "doctrinal committee" recorded in Scripture occurred in the first century and in Jerusalem. In Acts 15, we see a committee consisting of Paul, Barnabas, Peter, James, Simeon, Barsabas, Silas, and the elders at Jerusalem to decide whether or not the Gentile converts should be circumcised and keep the law of Moses (the very law HWA taught his followers to keep). What was the result?

And God which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they....Foresomuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying "Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment. (Acts 15:8-11, 25) [emp. mine]

Here, we don't see one man making all the decisions, as HWA wants his readers to believe. Plainly stated, one shall be saved by belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, and there is no commandment given to be circumcised and to keep the Law.

Thirdly, readers will not understand the full implication of this shift in authority—that all doctrinal truth will be given through an apostle, which is none other than HWA. Once in the church, HWA has his followers believing that his doctrines are Christ's doctrines, and he will ensure that they will conclude that challenging his doctrines is equal to challenging Christ Himself. Again, this is done purposefully to cause a dependency on HWA to reveal "truth" to his members.

THE THREE RESURRECTIONS
HWA taught that there would be three resurrections:

There will be three resurrections. The first resurrection takes place at Christ's second coming when all the firstfruits—the elect saints—are born again.

The second resurrection takes place after the Millennium is over. In it all the unsaved dead will be given physical life and their first opportunity to know and understand the gospel. They will have one hundred years to grow in godly character.

The third resurrection takes place when God's plan is complete. All of those wicked who have rejected God's ways and died in their sins will be raised to physical life. They will appear before the judgment seat of Christ to receive their reward—to suffer final extinction in the Lake of Fire. For them, this is the second death! They will never again be resurrected! (The Ambassador College Correspondence Course, 1965, Lesson 39, p. 13)

Now let's examine each teaching carefully.

**The First Resurrection**

**The 144,000**

As stated earlier, members believe that they are the 144,000 that are chosen to rule with Christ at His return. Below, we will see that they must make room for the Jehovah's Witnesses, who also believe that the elite 144,000 comes from their group:

The foundation of God's Messianic Kingdom was laid with the selection of Jesus' apostles (Ephesians 2:19, 20; Rev. 21:14) These were the first of 144,000 who would rule in heaven as associate kings with Jesus Christ. While on earth, these prospective corulers would spearhead a witnessing campaign, in keeping with Jesus' command: "Go...and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit." - (Matt. 28:19) (Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life, Watchtower and Bible Tract Society of Pennsylvania, 1995, p. 93).

How grand it will be when the knowledge of God fills the earth! There will be an extensive educational program under the direction of the King Jesus Christ and his 144,000 corulers. New "scrolls" will then come into use. Evidently these are God's written instructions that will serve as a basis for educating earth's inhabitants (Rev. 20:12) (Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life, Watchtower and Bible Tract Society of Pennsylvania, 1995, p. 185).

One can easily conclude that HWA did not get his ideas from God, but again from the Watchtower Society. HWA taught that his followers were the "little flock" mentioned in Luke 12:32. (Jehovah's Witnesses also use this same terminology). Members are told that God began numbering this "little flock" beginning in 1934, when HWA began "the Work." Little do they know that Luke 12:32 is taken completely out of context. Jesus was addressing his small flock of disciples directly (vs. 22), telling them not to worry because the Father would take care of all their needs (v. 29). He was not prophesying that his faithful followers would remain a small flock of believers. In fact, the parable of the mustard seed contradicts this very notion (as do other parables). This mustard seed pictures the kingdom of God beginning with one seed and then spreading out to the whole world. This has been fulfilled, as we shall see in the Scriptures quoted a little further in this section.

HWA knew members would not know enough church history to understand the math. First of all, along with the 144,000, will this also include all of the apostles, and those who were converted during the inception of the early church? According to HWA (comments in brackets mine):

The dead IN Christ at the time of Jesus' Second Coming [the First Resurrection occurs as this time] shall be resurrected to immortal God-life if they shall have died, and those still living who are IN Christ at his coming and led by his Holy Spirit shall be changed instantly to immortal God-life. They shall rule and teach with and under Christ during the
Now let's do the math and see if Scripture is correct—that the kingdom of God would start out small and then grow large—or if HWA is right, and that there would only be a "little flock" of true believers throughout history. Beginning with the twelve disciples, Acts 1:15 reveals another 120 believers in their midst. After the Holy Spirit came on Pentecost, another 3,000 souls were added (Acts 2:41). In verse 47, Scripture states, "And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved." How many hundreds or thousands could this have added up to? Another 5,000 who heard the word and believed is recorded in Acts 4:4. Again in Acts 5:14, Scripture states, "And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women..." In Acts 6:1, "Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying..." and in verse 7, "Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith."

Before long, we begin to see Scripture identifying churches by name and recording continued growth:

Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, were multiplied. (Acts 9:31)

But the word of God grew and multiplied. (Acts 12:24)

And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. (Acts 13:48)

And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily. (Acts 16:5)

Books of the Bible were named after large churches in Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Philippi, Colosse and Thessalonica. The parable of the mustard seed started with one small seed (Jesus) and has grown steadily since.

In addition to the thousands of believers we see here, we must remember that HWA taught in an earlier chapter that there were seven church eras. How many more thousands of believers could this add up to? HWA taught that there would be 14 executives and "other such teams" of believers that would come up in the First Resurrection. Many of the names he gave were people who were believers before the inception of the church. Along with Daniel and Noah, will this include the 7,000 men that God reserved for Himself who did not bow down to the image of Baal during the time of Elijah? (1 Kings 19:18, Romans 11:4) HWA never says. But HWA does indeed, plainly state that the "dead in Christ" shall rise up along with those who are still alive at His Coming." These faithful "dead" will rise up along with the "living" WCG members (WCG claimed to have 150,000 during their peak in the 1990s. Read how this figure was a myth.) So how many of these "faithful dead" will there be in the First Resurrection?

History records at least as many as 250,000 Jewish Christians alone in the early church and that number may have been close to a million. Conservative estimates of those who were martyred for their faith range from 250,000 to as high as 800,000. This number is far from the "little flock" of true believers purported by HWA. So even though HWA made his followers believe there would be 144,000 "Firstfruits" and the 14 Executives of the Topflight Team ruling in the World Tomorrow, he conveniently hid the fact that there are hundreds of thousands (if not a million or more) of true believers recorded in the New Testament that would come up in this First Resurrection. He did not want to acknowledge what the Scriptures taught: that thousands believed on Him and were saved. This is why HWA cleverly covers his bases by only mentioning the 120 believers in Acts 1:15 as the "few who believed," while the other people "believed on Him" but "didn't believe His Message" (p. 356). This way, he could randomly qualify or disqualify any group throughout history as "true believers" to suit his agenda.

HWA also taught that his followers were descended from ancient Israel, thus the erroneous belief that they represented the 144,000:
COMMENT: The "four winds" of course, are symbols, but they are restrained from blowing until the "servants of God" are sealed in their foreheads. First of these to be sealed are the 144,000. They are 12,000 from each of the 12 literal tribes of Israel...(The Ambassador College Correspondence Course, 1973, Lesson 12, p. 9)

In Revelation 7, the 144,000 are sealed from each tribe of Israel—all, that is, except the tribe of Dan. Not to worry—HWA informs us that Joseph gets a double portion.

Among these, now yielding their lives to GOD and to HIS WAYS, will be the much-quoted but little-understood "144,000." There will be 12,000 from America—another 12,000 from British Commonwealth nations—12,000 Jews—12,000 from each of the 12 tribes of Israel except Dan—but Joseph is given a DOUBLE-portion. (1975 in Prophecy, 1956)

This should bring little comfort to church members in Denmark. HWA taught that Denmark is the modern Israeliite tribe of Dan. Unfortunately, those faithful members will not be part of the 144,000 according to this scripture, even though they have faithfully tithed and kept the Sabbath and Holy Days. Why didn't HWA point this out? It would have saved many Danish members the trouble (and the money). Notice how he sidesteps the whole issue by diverting attention back to tribe of Joseph. He never addresses what will happen to Dan and how this affects the salvation of members in Denmark. And if a member is of Spanish, Italian, German, Black or Asian descent, they won't be included either since none of them are descended from Ancient Israel (see Hoeh's teachings on the Modern Identity of Israel). There are lots of church members that fall into these racial categories that have never been aware of the full implications, or questioned this teaching, even though they have been obedient and have financially backed the organization.

Now let's look at more contradictions by HWA. In chapter 6 of the MOA, we observed in chapter six HWA declaring that only a "minute few" have been called to salvation. In addition, he plainly stated that the majority of people at the inception of the church "believed on Christ" but "didn't believe Christ's message," therefore canceling them out as true believers. As early as Acts 8, HWA claimed that Simon Magus "turned his pagan religion, under the name of Christianity, into a universal religion." (p. 52) Counterfeit Christianity, he said, was already taking root right at the outset of the early church. Then a thick mist began to obscure the early church:

Already the curtain was rung down on the history of the true Church. You read of it in the book of Acts, but it doesn't go much beyond that. (p. 279)

By A.D. 150, HWA states a false church had emerged. HWA taught that Simon and his followers eventually succeeded and this is why the church was observing Sunday by this time. [Note: Read Did Herbert Armstrong Distort Historical Church Documents? by Kelly Marshall which covers Simon Magus and the Gnostic heresy.] Given these facts, we can easily surmise that HWA did not believe that there were millions of faithful believers from the inception of the early church until A.D. 150, and certainly even less from A.D. 150 on especially since this "counterfeit church" was keeping Sunday. Sunday observance, HWA teaches, is the mark of the beast:

And we know what Satan will do. He will enforce, by military might, the branding of the people of the world with Sunday observance—the "mark of the beast"! (Ambassador Correspondence Course, 1967, Lesson 30, p. 9)

From this, we can easily determine that HWA believed that the majority of Christians, since that time, could not be counted as true Christians because they kept Sunday and had the mark of the beast.7 Therefore the "true believers" have always been a "small flock" throughout history to the present day. Now let's compare this to statements made in his other booklets.

Speaking about Revelation 6:9-11, HWA states:

NOTICE that! Here is the GREAT TRIBULATION! And this fifth seal pictures it as a time of martyrdom of saints—of truly converted, begotten children of GOD!
Notice, verse 9. Those that were slain, in a former and typical Tribulation—as actually millions were slain many centuries ago—and crying out, "HOW LONG, O God, before you shall avenge our blood on the powers that martyred us?"...

NOTE IT. NOTE IT CAREFULLY! These martyrs that were killed, centuries ago, allegorically are asking how long before the second coming of Christ and the end of this age? And HERE’S the tremendous answer! It shall not occur until another Great TRIBULATION—another martyrdom of saints—until their fellow-servants and their Spirit-begotten brethren in the Lord shall be killed, as they were... (The Book of Revelation Unveiled At Last! pp. 26-27, 1972) [bolding mine]

Now we see HWA stating that there were "millions" of saints martyred many centuries ago! This doesn't sound much like a "small flock." It is interesting to note that when HWA wants his followers to feel special, he makes them believe that they are among a handful throughout history that understood and obeyed the "truth." But when he speaks against the traditional Christian church, all of a sudden he can find "millions" of true followers who have been martyred! And speaking of martyrdom, this brings us to the next contradiction.

Even though HWA declared that the Great Multitude would be divinely protected (sealed), he cannot prove it from Scripture.

These winds were held back from blowing these seven trumpets until the sealing of the 144,000 and the great innumerable multitude that came out of the Great Tribulation from all nationalities and peoples. (The Book of Revelation Unveiled At Last! 1972, p. 37-38) [bolding mine]

The beginning of chapter 7 shows the 144,000 being sealed, but not the Great Multitude! In Revelation 7:9, 13-14, there is nothing mentioned here about this group being divinely sealed by God. In addition, what the unsuspecting reader also doesn't know is that HWA cut off the rest of the chapter. It should read:

"After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of the great tribulation and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away tears from their eyes. (Rev. 7: 14-17)

Where is the throne of God? Heaven. Where did Jesus ascend to after His Resurrection? Heaven. Scripture plainly states that the Great Multitude would be found before the throne of God, and the Lamb is in the midst of the throne. This throne is in heaven. Why did HWA ignore this, claiming it to be an "allegory"? The real reason HWA claimed the first part of Chapter 7 is literal (the 144,000 and the Great Multitude) and the rest is an allegory is because the remainder plainly dispels his anti-heaven doctrine. We see this great multitude before the throne of God, serving him day and night. HWA taught that "the dead know nothing" but clearly we see conscious beings serving the Lord in heaven. Revelation 6:9-11 clearly shows that martyrs go straight into the presence of the Lord.

Church members knew next to nothing why this teaching of the 144,000 and the place of safety was emphasized:

When those in power in Pasadena discovered, almost by accident that there was a large residue of people in the local churches who still believed in going to Petra as a place of
safety and were waiting for that day, they began to realize the need to capitalize on that market. The leaders were eager to mine this unexpected rich strike. And what better man to mine this vein than Waterhouse. His earlier disgrace in their eyes was forgotten for the moment."...Then gradually as the new time frame of prophecy developed, which centered around 1972, the spin-off doctrine of going to Petra was developed and preached powerfully, especially during the annual fall festivals." (Herbert Armstrong's Tangled Web, David Robinson, 1980, p. 236)

Money was the real motive behind this. "And through covetousness shall they [false teachers and charlatans] with feigned words make merchandise of you" (2 Peter 2:3). As long as HWA could deny salvation to his followers, indoctrinate them with fear, portray a bloody Holocaust, promise them "elite status" and divine protection, he knew members would readily whip out their checkbooks to secure their way to Petra.

AFTER THE MILLENNIUM

Satan Is Loosed

HWA taught that once the thousand years expires, Satan would be loosed for a little while to once again deceive those who have lived during the Millennium. They will amass a great army and surround Jerusalem. Christ will supernaturally defeat this innumerable army, and cast Satan into the Lake of Fire, where he will be "tormented day and night, for ever and ever." After this comes the Second Resurrection, or Great White Throne Judgment, where (according to HWA) billions who have lived will be resurrected to mortal life.

Now let's back up a bit and examine this closely.

Why doesn't HWA ever mention what will happen to all the people who aligned themselves with Satan and were defeated? These people have lived through the Millennium, obeyed the Headquarters Government, and now have rebelled against it. HWA explains that Christ will defeat the devil and he will be cast into the Lake of Fire. But what will happen to the millions who were devoured by this fire? Will they come up in the Second or Third Resurrection? HWA says, "Those who had not been in the first resurrection or called by God" will be in this Great White Throne Judgment (or second resurrection). From this, we can assume that these people have been "called by God" during the Millennium. This means, they had "their chance" at salvation, but rejected it. That leaves only one choice—they must come up in the Third Resurrection. But there's a problem. If this army, "the number of whom is as the sand of the sea," comes up in this final resurrection, then this dispels HWA's teaching that "only a few" would be punished at the Third Resurrection. (See quotes in The Third Resurrection section below).

The Second Resurrection—The Great White Throne Judgment

After Satan is cast into the Lake of Fire, there comes the Great White Throne Judgment. All who lived—from the time of Adam to Christ's second coming who weren't part of the First Resurrection—will be resurrected to mortal life. This will include the nation of Ancient Israel. This is known by members as the Second Resurrection, which they believe depicts the Last Great Day of the Feast. During this Resurrection, mankind will finally have its eyes opened to "The Truth" (HWA's doctrines) and will be offered salvation for the first time:

In this judgment is to be "the book of life," meaning many, perhaps most, shall then find spiritual salvation and eternal life. In the time of their judgment, Satan will be GONE! (The Incredible Human Potential, pg. 158-159, 1978) [bolding mine]

Members believe these people never had a first chance since the Tree of Life (which HWA said represented the Holy Spirit) was cut off from them. Now that Satan is gone forever, these people will supposedly get their first chance at salvation. (This is why members will not listen to "second chance salvation" arguments. They truly believe that people never had a "first chance" in this present life). Of course, according to HWA, the majority will accept Christ (this teaching is known as near-universalism):

Your Bible shows that the vast majority of those who have ever lived will finally be
born into God's Family at the end of their coming period of judgment. ... These billions of people who come up in this resurrection will have 100 years to prove themselves. After this 100-year period expires, "Those who continue to live God's way of life will be changed from mortality to immortality at the end of this period of judgment." (The Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course, 1987, Lesson 31) [bolding mine]

Sounds great, doesn't it? Unfortunately, HWA cannot give a single Scripture to support this "100-year period to prove themselves" theory, and he knows it. In the MOA, he avoids stating this directly:

But the penalty for sin is DEATH in the final last judgment. Since all have sinned, all shall be judged guilty and sentenced. But they shall learn that Jesus Christ paid their penalty in their stead. And in repentance, demonstrated by performance, they will be given an opportunity yet at that time to choose LIFE, and be made immortal. (p. 355)

In 1965, he boldly declared a 100-year probational period, but here, HWA resorts to generic terminology. Could it be that others have caught on to this discrepancy and asked for scriptural references, where none could be found? HWA quoted Isaiah 65:20 as proof in his earlier publications:

No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, nor an old man who has not fulfilled his day; For the child shall die one hundred years old, but the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed. (The Ambassador College Correspondence Course, 1965, Lesson 39, p. 12)

Again, HWA quotes this verse out of context. When the whole paragraph is read, one can easily see that this verse isn't referring to life spans in the Great White Throne Judgment, but in the Millennium! HWA pulled a fast one on his followers. Why would verse 20 be speaking of the Great White Throne Judgment, but verses 21-25 be speaking about the Millennium?

And they shall build houses and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them...they shall not build and another inhabit.... They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble...And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer, and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The lion and the lamb shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock, and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord. (Isaiah 65:25)

Members fully understand this refers to the Millennium. Here is another clear example of how HWA misappropriates Scripture so it will fit his doctrines.

Let's again look at some more interesting loopholes in HWA's theology. HWA plainly states that at the end of the 100-year period of this Judgment, "Those who continue to live God's way of life will be changed from mortality to immortality at the end of this period of judgment." How does this happen? Do these people wake up one day, and "poof!" they've turned into spirit beings? According to HWA: (my comments will be in brackets)

COMMENT: This verse [speaking of Isa. 65:20] strongly indicates that those resurrected then will live for 100 years, no matter how old they were when they died. Further, it indicates that the child (of God) will, at the end of this period, be changed—the fleshly cells of the body will die as the person puts on immortality. [This death of the physical cells of the body also occurs to Christians who are alive at Christ's Second Coming. They, too, die—but do not sleep the sleep of death; they are in the "twinkling of an eye" changed to immortality.] The wicked sinner at the end of the 100 years will be under a curse—will die in the lake of fire. (The Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course, 1987, Lesson 31) [bolding mine]

How is this death of the physical, fleshly cells accomplished? HWA taught that "flesh and blood cannot enter the Kingdom of God," so where does all this flesh and blood go? This transformation will involve over 6 billion people--almost the entire population of the earth. One would think an event of this magnitude would be worth mentioning somewhere in the Scriptures. But it isn't. Furthermore, Isaiah 65:20 makes absolutely no indication that a child
of God will be changed at the end of this 100-year period, or anything at all concerning fleshly cells dying. Here is another example of how HWA's followers believe his interpretations instead of what the Bible actually says. Instead of plainly saying the "physical body dies" he resorts to this kind of ridiculous meandering to palm off a big lie. He doesn't want his followers envisioning 6 billion bodies littered all over the millennial paradise.

And what happens to those who fail the test—those who won't conform to HWA's government? Members are taught that there will be a fire burning in the Valley of Hinnom throughout the Millennium and the 100-year White Throne Judgment period. The unpunished will be thrown into this fire where they will be destroyed. These will actually come up again to the final Judgment—the Third Resurrection. If this was true, then HWA has people dying physically twice—one in this present life and again in the 100-year period—which clearly contradicts Hebrews 9:27: "...it is appointed unto men once to die..."

The Bible does not teach that there will be a "second chance." If men were given a second chance, and they fail again, then they would have to physically die twice, which clearly violates scripture. Those who die in the Lord enter into Paradise (Luke 23:43). Paradise never refers to the millennial earth, but to heaven exclusively—something HWA clearly avoided to point out to his followers. In 2 Corinthians 12:2, Paul speaks of being caught up to the third heaven, which he plainly calls Paradise (v. 4). Again in Revelation 2:7, the tree of life is in the midst of the paradise of God in heaven. Revelation 22:1-2 and 14 tell us that the tree of life is in heaven. God clearly rewards the believer with the blessed privilege of entering heaven where there is peace, rest, beauty and life (1 Pet. 1:4, 2 Tim. 4:18, 2 Cor. 5:1-2, 1 John 5:11-13). But those who persistently engage in evil (1 Cor. 6:9-10, Gal. 5:19, Rev. 21:8) will not be permitted to enter this paradise (Rev. 22:15), nor given a chance to spoil it with sin. They will suffer everlasting shame being eternally separated from the light of God.

The Third Resurrection

Finally, HWA taught that there would be a Third Resurrection, and members and children both have been made to fear it greatly. Along with the incorrigible and the unpunished, their loved ones—who fell out of favor with the church and were disfellowshipped—will be resurrected to their impending doom. This teaching is what keeps them from defecting and makes them compliant. Members are taught that once they have "tasted the Truth" and then "turned their backs on God's true Way of Life," it will result in "Eternal Death" because they have rejected God and His Laws and have proven themselves "unsubmissive" and/or "rebellious" to the "government of God." (This, by the way, is considered the worst sin they can commit.) They are taught that if they come up in this Third Resurrection, they will have to personally face God:

...All of those wicked who have rejected God's ways and died in their sins will be raised to physical life. They will appear before the judgment seat of Christ to receive their reward—to suffer final extinction in the Lake of Fire. For them, this is the second death! They will never again be resurrected!

The much smaller number of rebellious will meet face to face with their Judge in the third Resurrection... (The Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course, 1965, Lesson 39, p. 13) [bolding mine]

Out of all the earth's population, a few people will fail in God's plan. They will fail because they stubbornly insist on their own way—the way of death (Prov. 14:12). They persist in living rebellious, sinful lives, making themselves and those around them miserable. (The Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course, 1987, Lesson 31, "The Last Great Day") [bolding mine]

Nothing invokes a stronger reaction than being rejected by God Himself. This teaching of a Third Resurrection (which is nowhere found in the Bible) has caused untold misery for members and children alike. If a spouse, parent, grandparent, even a child, leaves the church and/or is disfellowshipped, the member in good standing must choose between association with the marked family member/friend, or risking their salvation in jeopardy. Members are taught that those who have been marked from the pulpit are destined for the Lake of Fire if they don't repent. Part of the "repentance" process is to force the ex-member into complete
isolation from the rest of the congregation. If one does not shun a marked member, they are told they will be infected by the "bitterness, bad attitudes, lies, and rebellion" of the ex-member. Members are also warned that "Satan will use this person to pull them out of the true church" and ultimately end up in the Lake of Fire. Since this is their "only chance" for salvation, they understand that the risk is far too great. This defies logic, but the fear internalized by members is the impetus for disassociation toward even their own flesh and blood family.

The god of HWA is a very unjust god. He rewards the wicked while he punishes the good. He allows unrepentant men to die and rest in total unconsciousness while church members are rebuilding the earth into a paradise. They must endure the stench of cleaning up all the dead bodies, and the hard labor of rubble removal of entire wasted cities. Homes must be built and gardens must be planted not only for the current survivors, but also for the future billions who will be resurrected. After a thousand years, these evil men will be resurrected (this includes serial killers, rapists, murderers, etc.) to this beautiful earth and given another chance without Satan around. Not only do they have it easier, their punishment is laughable: They will be beaten with ten stripes, while someone who commits a lesser crime (i.e., adultery) will be beaten with one. But if a church member (or child of a church member) isn't totally obedient to the "government of God," and is put out of the church, he won't get a second chance and is cast into the Lake of Fire. Can this really be called justice? Compare this scenario with the teaching of a "deceived" Christian scholar:

There are certain preliminary facts which should be recognized in the discussion of this subject [the final destination of the wicked]. That it shall be well with the righteous, and woe to the wicked ( Isa. 3:10-11). That there is to be retribution for sin and a reward for the righteous must be held to be beyond question, and must be recognized as an unchangeable law. One cannot very well meddle with that truth without serious danger. (Great Doctrines of the Bible, 1949, pp. 257-258).

Isn't this the truth? When we start to reward the wicked and punish the righteous, there is serious danger that lies ahead. God will reward the believer and protect the righteous from fornicators, idolaters, thieves, drunkards, extortionists, murderers, liars, etc. (1 Cor. 6:9-10, Gal. 5:19, Rev. 21:8). None of these will inherit the Kingdom of God as Scripture clearly affirms. (Rev. 22:14-15) This is proper justice. The supposed "unpardonable sins" of those who were put out of the church for wanting to marry someone the ministry declares "unsuitable," or for breaking the "no-contact rule" by speaking to a blood relative, or getting medical attention for a sick child, can hardly begin to compare. This type of reversed justice practiced by HWA's organization is warped and dangerous.

The Bible only teaches two resurrections, one that occurs before the Millennium, and one that occurs after the Millennium:

And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. (Daniel 12:2)

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. (John 5:29)

And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. (Acts 24:15)

In fact, HWA cannot give a single Scripture to prove there is a Third Resurrection. He simply splits the Great White Throne Judgment into two separate events. HWA created this Third Resurrection to scare his followers into submission. HWA taught his followers to reject Christianity for teaching the "falsehood of hell," but his Third Resurrection is the loaded term he uses for hell. In the above quotes made by HWA, we see him state that only a few would go there (the majority of them being expelled church members). He makes no mention as to what happens to those multiple millions who joined Satan's forces at the end of the
Millisennium. This would certainly contradict his teaching that only a few would be punished.

ENTIRE UNIVERSE TO BE RENEWED

After the Great White Throne Judgment and the Third Resurrection have been completed, God's throne will descend from heaven and be established on this earth. HWA informs his readers, in the final section of the MOA subtitled, "Earth to Become UNIVERSE Headquarters," that mankind will finally be at one with the Father and Son. This implies that Christians are not now one with the Father and Jesus Christ, contradicting the very words of Jesus!

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. (John 17:21)

Why would HWA want Christians to believe they are not now one with God? Is he denying the Holy Spirit here?

From here, man will fulfill his destiny:

Our potential is to be born into the God family, receiving total power! We are to be given jurisdiction over the entire universe!

What are we going to do then? These scriptures indicate we shall impart life to billions and billions of dead planets, as life has been imparted to this earth. We shall create, as God directs and instructs. We shall rule through all eternity! (p. 362)

HWA quotes the 8th chapter of Romans as scriptural proof. Notice how many times he uses the word "we"? It's all about us, isn't it? What WE get out of all of this. This clearly shows that even to the very end of the MOA, the whole focus isn't on how we are to serve, worship, and glorify our Lord and Savior. No, the focus is clearly about us and HWA eagerly promises to deliver. WE will be given total power! WE will rule the universe! WE will be creators! WE will rule forever! One can almost hear the maniacal laughter in the background. Where is the humility? The gentleness? The meekness? Where is there any mention of loving the Lord Jesus Christ with all our hearts, minds, and souls for all eternity? What about the thankfulness for being restored to complete Christ-likeness, our eternal glory? There is no mention of worshipping the Lord because WE are now God, and WE deserve to be worshiped! This is outright blasphemy and is an awful, awful position to be in. We are desperately sinful when we think we can tell God what to do and to equate ourselves to Him.

The reader steps out from the dark, twisted labyrinth and into the light. So relieved to be out of the confusing tunnel, that he hardly notices the shackles that have been placed around his ankles by his trusted guide. He will have to work, and work hard to be a part of the elite force that will rule the world, his guide informs him. A heavy sack has been strapped to his back and a blindfold placed over his eyes. He must carry this heavy burden, blindfolded—trusting his evil guide—until the end.

And thus ends the critique of the Mystery of the Ages. Below is HWA's personal view:

"I candidly feel it [Mystery of the Ages] may be the most important book since the Bible." (Dear Brethren and Co-Worker letter, September 1985)

Mystery of the Ages is a conglomeration of all of HWA's teachings into one volume. Members are taught to esteem it highly. It is the book one needs in order to correctly interpret the Scriptures. Without it, one cannot understand the Bible, they are told. This certainly puts Mystery of the Ages on par with the Bible since one needs to have it in order to decode the Bible. A German theologian and expert on the occult has made the following observation:

"Everything that claims to possess an equal authority to the Scriptures is false teaching." (Occult ABC, Kurt E. Koch, 1978, 1986, p. 30)

HWA is guilty of false teaching. Those who put their trust in the Lord must avoid false teachers. Over and over again, in the MOA, we have seen false teaching after false teaching. HWA epitomizes 1 Timothy 6:3-5. He was known to be very proud and extravagant, disguising
this as, "God loves Quality." Throughout the entire MOA, we have seen him stir up strife with divisive accusations against Biblical Christianity. We certainly see little of the actual words of Christ used in the MOA, leaving out the wholesome words of our Savior. All of this is done for one specific purpose, as Scripture astutely observes: financial gain.

May the reader listen to Paul, and do so accordingly. May the Spirit lead those who have read this review to "withdraw from such" and seek the love, goodness, kindness and gentleness of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is waiting with open arms and gives rest to all who come to Him:

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30)

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**Recommended Articles:**

Where is the True Church?

Prayers for Freedom from Spiritual Strongholds

Very effective in gaining liberation from strongholds and oppressions due to involvement in any harmful, abusive group or occult practices; includes moral issues.

**Footnotes for Chapter Seven:**

1 While Christians since the first century have believed in Christ's millennial kingdom, in a spiritual sense believers are already in the Kingdom of God: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:" (Col. 1:13).

2 "The new covenant prophesied in the Old Testament [will] have its primary fulfillment in the millennial kingdom. ... The future salvation of Israel [referring to the nation of Israel, not the supposed modern day "lost tribes of Israel"] is promised under the unconditional new covenant (Isa. 27:9; Ezek. 37:23; Rom. 11:26-27). This salvation will be accomplished only on the ground of the shed blood of Christ." (Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Major Bible Themes*, 1926, 1953, 1974, p. 146, 148) Note: This book may be read online. (PDF)

3 *The Ambassador College Correspondence Course*, 1972, Lesson 7, p. 13.


5 According to HWA, modern-day Germany is descended from the ancient Assyrians. See author's research article: *The Origins of Assyria and Germany*.


7 This teaching originally came from false prophetess Ellen G. White. Also read: *Sabbath and Sunday (Common Arguments & Misunderstandings)*

8 *Is This the Only Day of Salvation?* Roderick C. Meredith, 1958; *The Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course*, 1985, Lesson 21.


10 "God offered him [Adam] freely the fruit of the TREE OF LIFE -- which symbolized God's HOLY SPIRIT." Ibid., p. 74.