

# BULLETIN

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

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## **Updates from the Director**

Thank you to everyone who attended our 2022 conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin! This was our first conference in Milwaukee since 2019, and was well attended, with around forty people joining us at least part of the time Saturday and Sunday. The topic, "Difficult Passages Regarding Human Destiny," was well-received. We had not spoken on the topic of man's nature and destiny in seven years since our 2015 conference, and considering the good response we may have to be sure not to wait as long until the next time.

Andrew Brown kicked us off with an outline of our views called "Conditional Immortality," and then I started in with the difficult passages, taking perhaps the hardest one first, II Corinthians 5:1-10, and the famous line "absent from the body, present with the Lord." Carol Brown was a new speaker this year and considered Luke 16 and the Rich Man and Lazarus. Mark Hammond was unable to attend at the last minute, and so Nathan Johnson corroborated with him to present other problem passages from Luke (besides the Rich Man and Lazarus) such as the woman with seven husbands, and the Lord telling the thief on the cross that "today you will be with Me in paradise." Bob Juneau presented on John 14:1-3 regarding "In My Father's House are many mansions." Paul Walberg considered the first chapter of Philippians and "to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Andrew and his wife Virginia Brown led a discussion together considering problem passages in the book of Revelation. I finished out the program with talks regarding "Our Conversation Is in Heaven" from Philippians 3, "Will All Be Saved?" from various passages like Colossians 1:20, and a question-and-answer session.

The conference was videotaped and audio recorded, and at least some form of these

videos or audios are already being posted to our YouTube channel "The Word of Truth Ministry," with the others following every two weeks. For those who haven't checked out the channel yet, or who have not looked at it lately, we are posting something almost weekly, either a video or audio. Besides conference videos, some of our board members have been making videos just for the channel. You can watch my videos on "The Why Question," and Candy Davis began a series on "The Fruit of the Spirit." Audios are also being posted from earlier conferences before we were videotaping them. Some much-older material from Mr. Otis Q. Sellers is also being posted, so far including audios from some of his conferences in New York City from the 1970s.

In the meantime, our radio ministry continues to move forward, currently studying the gospel of Matthew, which we will soon finish. Next we will begin a study of the book of Acts. I was excited to hear recently from a pastor who is also a professor from East Mississippi Community College and General Manager of the nonprofit college radio station EMCC Radio, the Lion. He immediately started broadcasting our program when he heard it, and is using some material from it in his own sermons. It is good to know that our broadcasts are reaching some people who are not only interested in the material themselves, but are also interested in spreading it to others. That means, to my knowledge, we are currently on the air in seventeen radio markets, with many of those simulcasting on both AM and FM stations. We will finish ten years of broadcasting the program in January 2023. For program episodes see our website, [knowinggodintheword.org](http://knowinggodintheword.org).

**Nathan C. Johnson**

## The Prophecies of Daniel: An Introduction to a Series

By Mark Hammond

Defined by its usage in the Holy Scriptures, the word “prophet” (Heb.: *nābī’*, Gk.: *prophētēs*) means “that which conveys the word of God.” This includes the God-breathed/God-inspired words that were uttered by his spokespeople, or the written word. We see this in a multiplicity of Old Testament passages, where the word of the LORD (Jehovah) came to persons in various walks of life in addition to those designated “prophets” of God. For example, we find that “the word of the LORD came to...”: Abram (a Chaldean), Aaron (PR for Moses), Nathan (a prophet), David (an outlaw, poet, and anointed king), Solomon (a king), Jehu (a prophet, an apparent commoner), Shemaiah (a Levite), Elijah (a “major” prophet), Ezekiel (a priest), and Daniel (royal family member). Furthermore, prophecy is certainly not limited to “foretelling the future.” In our proper understanding of Biblical prophecy, we must recognize that the word of God may pertain to time of the past, the present or the future. And we must ask, “to whom is this word of God directed?” Prophecy can be directed to an immediate audience or be directed to some other locale or to some other group of people entirely. In some instances, there is a direct connection with the audience; in other cases, it is difficult to determine what audience is in view and when (at what time) it is in view.

The prophecies of the Book of Daniel exhibit these complications; or perhaps “these complexities” is a more fitting term. Daniel chapter 2 reveals a prophecy pertaining to (Heb.) *acharyth yown* = the sequel of the days. In Daniel chapter 4, the vision of the great tree pertained to a near-future (12 months) for Babylon’s king (Nebuchadnezzar). Progressing to Daniel chapter 5, the supernatural handwriting on the palace wall communicated the word of God associated with the immediate present for the Babylonian King (Belshazzar). Far future events are the subject of the Four Beasts

Vision of Daniel chapter 7, and future events (ancient world empires...and beyond) are conveyed in the prophecy of Daniel chapter 8. This sequence brings us to Daniel chapter 9, which will be our first study. This chapter is perhaps the least understood and poorly interpreted prophecy of the whole collection.

Many of Daniel’s prophetic writings appear to have been fulfilled in the course of history, and as a result, Biblical commentators have rushed to place the prophecy of Daniel chapter 9, the so-called Daniel’s Seventy Weeks Prophecy, in the “fulfilled” category. One need only glance at the World Wide Web’s Wikipedia webpage associated with this topic to see the mad scramble for links to the past. The obvious stretch to link various parts of Chapter 9’s last seven verses with historical events that have taken place in human history; ancient history, Middle Ages history, or otherwise, is very apparent. Obviously, this prophecy was future at the time it was spoken [truth], and obviously, it is now “fulfilled” due to the fragmented arguments which can only be loosely connected [sarcasm].

A series of More Seed & Bread studies is planned in order delve into the Book of Daniel, to mine the “gold nuggets” of truth therein, and to rightly divide those truths; even if this means that we must admit to having only a limited understanding of certain passages. Unlike the commentators quoted by Wikipedia, we will not make the mistake of jumping to conclusions that are speculative or unsupported by clear facts. The Holy Scriptures must be allowed to speak for themselves, but let us not forget that there is a place wherein, like Daniel, we must acknowledge the hierophant’s direction and “shut up the words, and seal up the book, even to the time of the end...”

## Let There Be Light

By Robert Juneau

Light is energy. Light is both visible and not visible along its spectrum. Light can be simultaneously detected both as a particle and a wave. Scientists at the Large Hadron Collider in Switzerland have been successful at accelerating sub-atomic particles up to very near but never reaching the speed of light, which is over one hundred and eighty-six thousand miles per second. This is truly the upper limit of the speed at which any matter or energy can travel through space. Science nerd facts aside, even our limited understanding of light reveals that it is a marvelous creation.

On the first day of creation, darkness covered the deep. When God creates, He speaks. *Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light* (Gen. 1:3, NKJV used throughout). After He created the light, the juxtaposed absence of light was delineated. *And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness* (Gen. 1:4). There is an implication in verse four that darkness is not included in what God calls good. This division between light and darkness not only describes the physical presence of light, or lack thereof in the physical world, but makes for a perfect metaphor.

Light is a commonly accepted metaphor for the presence of knowledge and truth. The dark ages in Europe are so-called due to the scant availability of literature and knowledge during the second half of the first millennia A.D. People criticize others for being dumb or ignorant by stating that they are not very bright. I've always been amused when a light bulb appears over the head of a cartoon character showing that they have had an "aha" moment. Like many proverbial axioms and adages, this metaphor finds its roots deeply grounded in Scripture.

God's truth comes to mankind through His words, His expressions. The expressions of God often come to us using the metaphor of light. Jesus Christ is the personification of the expression of God. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God* (John 1:1). Jesus said, *"I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life"* (John 8:12).

Peter recalls the vision of the parousia of the Lord when He was transfigured before him. *And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts* (2 Pet. 1:18-19).

Paul was blinded by the light of the revelation of Christ. *As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven* (Acts 9:3).

Satan and false apostles bring what appears to be light, but in reality they bring lies. *For such*

*are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light* (2 Cor. 11:13-14).

Blindness is a perfect metaphor for someone in darkness. If we can see, we can navigate the path on which we are walking. Like this, when we have God's light, we can metaphorically see our way on the path we are walking, our spiritual walk with the Lord. *Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path* (Ps. 119:105). *But the path of the just is like the shining sun, That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is like darkness; They do not know what makes them stumble* (Prov. 4:18-19).

God brings light to individuals. *The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple* (Ps. 119:130). God also brings light to nations so that they will be a light to other nations. *Indeed He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth"* (Isa. 49:6).

God brings light through the Law, His justice, and His righteousness. *To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them* (Isa. 8:20). *He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday* (Ps. 37:6). *... For law will proceed from Me, And I will make My justice rest As a light of the peoples* (Isa. 51:4). *Therefore justice is far from us, Nor does righteousness overtake us; We look for light, but there is darkness! For brightness, but we walk in blackness!* (Isa. 59:9).

When God resumes the kingdom, His appearing (Gk.-*epiphaneia*) is the enlightenment of mankind. *I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom* (2 Tim. 4:1).

It is the Lord's brightness (Gk.-*epiphaneia*) at His parousia that destroys the anti-Christ at the end of the kingdom. *And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming* (2 Thess. 2:8).

God's word is God's Light! Whether we are referring to His living Word, His spoken word, or His written word, the light of God that we have lighting our lives is directly proportional to the word of God that we have in our possession. *Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You* (Ps. 119:11). Just as God declared in the opening passage of Scripture, we need to declare for our lives, "Let there be light."

## Relationship with the Holy Spirit

By Lisa Massengill

In Genesis we see that Enoch walked with God (Gen. 5:22-24, Authorized King James Version throughout, unless otherwise stipulated). Later in Genesis we see that Noah walked with God (Gen. 6:9). In Psalm 51:11, David asks the Lord not to take away his Holy Spirit.

While seeking a closer relationship to God, I decided it would be helpful to learn more about the Holy Spirit. I thought it might even be possible to walk with the Holy Spirit today, something like how Enoch, Noah or David did. I knew there wouldn't be manifest signs in this dispensation, but I thought if I opened myself to the experience I might be surprised. Certainly, I wanted to seek to incorporate the Holy Spirit into my own life. There is a beautiful rose garden in Longmont, and I thought, it would be good to walk there, pray, and seek the Holy Spirit. I wasn't looking for signs and wonders; just something unusual, a flicker of something-a breeze, or-well, then again I might see something spiritual, who could tell? Some of my friends had been eagerly discussing the possibilities of other life forms. So much information has recently been made available about Mars. I am interested in Martians too, I thought, and I might as well look for those at the same time. There were some neighbors who had a lovely garden, with gnomes and pink rabbits, and I thought about walking there. There was no telling what I might see!

The good news is, I was not arrested for walking around in my neighbors' yard and turning over the gnomes. Instead, I realized I was looking for the Holy Spirit under rocks and decided to seek information through some of our Biblical resources to learn about the Holy Spirit. Following is a summary of the highlights from the referenced materials about the Holy Spirit:

Otis Q. Sellers, in his *Seed and Bread* #138, "Identification with the Holy Spirit," warns against trying to "produce some grandiose and pretentious emotional experience." We must also guard against declaring "with much bombast" that our experiences are something about the Holy Spirit from the word of God (especially overt public displays such as what some today call speaking in tongues). Mr. Sellers further declares that "the Apostle Peter," speaking about the origin of the Bible, writes that "Holy men of God spake as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21, Resultant Version). He adds that Biblical text originated "from the Holy Spirit made by men who were permeated by the Spirit of God, even as the dye permeates the cloth into which it is dipped." In teaching about identification with the Holy Spirit, Mr. Sellers states, "When John announced that the Lord Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit, those who heard his words knew exactly what he meant. The word 'baptism' had become familiar to them. It spoke to them of being identified with, being merged with, being related to the Spirit of God."

In the radio program *Knowing God in the Word*, Ephesians 5 Part 3, Episode 3-12, "Walk

Wisely," Nathan C. Johnson emphasizes that, although we will not see manifest miracles of the Holy Spirit today (since we are post-Acts 28:28), we can be filled with the Holy Spirit by studying the Word of God, the Bible. Nathan states, the Spirit of God works with the Word of God today – a powerful combination. "Being filled with the Holy Spirit changes us. The outcome of being filled with the Spirit and the Word is a changed life." ... "The work of the Holy Spirit today is changing the lives of his people." We are then motivated to *walk worthy of the vocation wherewith* we are called (Ephesians 4:1). Nathan adds that the Holy Spirit produces a song in our hearts, which comes out when we sing hymns. "It is not our singing voice the Lord is looking for; it is the love in our hearts that is important."

In Precepts Audio Romans 8:1-8, Series 10, 4/6/2013, PA 147 (website: precepts.wordpress.com), Nathan teaches us that we walk in the Holy Spirit today by knowing, understanding, and living according to the Word of God. He emphasizes that the things of the Holy Spirit are the things of God. When we put aside the things of this world and set our affections on the things of God, we will be spiritually minded, i.e., have life and peace. Peace is true union with God (Rom. 8:6). And through believing in Christ, righteousness is imputed to us (Rom. 4:11-16).

In the radio program *Knowing God in the Word*, "Activities of the Holy Spirit" (Episode 4-34, Second Coming of the Holy Spirit 2), Nathan C. Johnson discusses that the Holy Spirit has actually come to the earth many times, and He "imbues us with power today" (Eph. 3:16). The Holy Spirit empowers the inner person, "the inner being, that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith" (Eph. 3:17), *Knowing God in the Word*, "To Know His Love," (Episode 3-3, Ephesians 3 Part 4). Nathan says that the power of the Holy Spirit makes us staunch with the power to love with *agape* love, and to grasp the vastness of the love of Christ himself (Eph. 3:18-19). We are *sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance* (Eph. 1:13-14). Also on the website *Precepts - Audio*, "Activities of the Holy Spirit," Nathan discusses how Romans 8:26-27 tells us, "The Holy Spirit gives us access to God the Father. He is our direct link to God today through Christ. The Holy Spirit will pray for us when we don't know how to pray." (*Precepts - Audio*, "Activities of the Holy Spirit," Holy Spirit 4, 2/28/2015, website: precepts.wordpress.com, PSA 186).

Ms. Joanne Johnson says in her article, *The Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit*, in the May 2010 Bulletin (Vol. 3, No. 1), "We are known by the Holy Spirit." *no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit* (1 Cor. 12:3, NASB). She then reminds us of the closing of the Apostle Paul at the end of II Corinthians 13:14 (NASB): *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.* As we strive to learn more about Him, may the Holy Spirit be with us all! Amen.