

The Word of Truth Ministry

BULLETIN

Otis Q. Sellers, Founder

December 2023

Updates from the Director

Once again our world is in turmoil as war is brewing in the Middle East. The nation of Israel is caught in a battle with enemies who wish to wipe them off the face of the earth, and there are rumblings of other nations joining the fight on one side or the other. As those who believe that God has a great and glorious future for His nation of Israel in the coming kingdom of God, what are we to think about this conflict and the implications of it? Could this be a precursor to the coming Kingdom of God on earth?

The Bible makes very plain the future regathering and reign of God over Israel. Ezekiel 20:33-34 states this explicitly. *“As I live,” says the Lord GOD, “surely with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, I will rule over you. I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out”* (New King James Version throughout). Notice that it is Jehovah Himself who will gather Israel. The current nation was formed when various Jews, in their many wanderings, wandered back to the land of their forefathers. Yet this is not the regathering promised by Scripture. The current nation of Israel exists by a decree of the United Nations and by Israel’s own skill in warfare. This nation did not come about by Jehovah Himself using His outstretched arm and outpoured fury.

Ezekiel 20:40 also makes one thing about this new Israel very plain. The future Israel that God will create will be lacking no one. *“For on My holy mountain, on the mountain height of Israel,” says the Lord GOD, “there all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, shall serve Me.”* All the house of

Israel will be in the land, and all will be serving Jehovah. There will be no atheists, secularists, agnostics, or humanists among them. This is very different from the situation we see in Israel today.

It is clear that the nation of Israel as it exists now is not the predicted nation of Israel. None of the citizens can even prove by evidence that they are descendants of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, though many of them probably are. We sympathize with the only nation in the region that tries to be free, as opposed to the nations around them that are all ruled by tyrants. We certainly would like to see Israel succeed, and do not at all desire to see their enemies wipe them out. Yet God’s promises stand no matter what happens to Israel in this dispensation.

I have heard Christians make the radical statement that if anything happens to the current nation of Israel, they will lose all faith in the Bible. This to me is foolishness. God’s promise to regather and restore Israel will come to pass. He will neither be helped nor hindered in accomplishing this promise if some Israelites are already living in the land when He does it.

We certainly pray that this war does not escalate into a major conflict. Yet this has happened in the past, and our ancestors had to face the grim prospect of a world at war. God brought them through it. While we pray this does not happen to us, if it does, He will bring us through again as well. After all, He is the Savior of all mankind, especially of those who believe, I Timothy 4:10.

Nathan C. Johnson

Word of Truth Ministry seedandbread.org [YouTube.com@thewordoftruthministry4126](https://www.youtube.com/@thewordoftruthministry4126)

seedandbread1935@gmail.com Rusty Hancock, Editor-in-Chief

P.O. Box 1609, Canyon Country, CA 91386

Back to Basics - Living on Purpose

Andrew Brown

“For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?” (Matt. 16:26, NASB1995 throughout). It is possible to be deceived. We could “win the world” but lose ourselves! Similarly, Paul said, *“If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing”* (1 Cor. 13:1-2). Paul states he could have God working through Him miraculously, being filled with the greatest faith and knowledge and it all be for NOTHING without love! These privileges were obviously craved by the believer in Acts, so it seems like Paul would have EVERYTHING if he possessed these things WITH LOVE. How do we attain the reward while keeping our souls?

The Creator of all has not left us without insight, and in order to know how to live in a way that pleases Him, we must know His Word. Eleazar, one of David's mighty warriors, *arose and struck the Philistines until his hand was weary and clung to the sword* (2 Sam. 23:10). His strength for this exploit came directly from the Lord. The symbol *“clinging to the sword”* is of obvious application to the truth-seeker. As believers we must cling to *“the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God”* (Eph. 6:17). It is the Word that endures forever, teaches us about the Lord, and shows us what to set our aims on. *Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is* (Eph. 5:15-17).

Jesus prayed regarding His disciples, *“I have given them Your Word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world”* (John 17:14). A life lived purposefully for God is a powerful picture of love in a culture given to sin. If a person is identified with Christ and walking according to the Word, some hostility can be expected. Following God may not meet with approval of the culture, but the shifting praise of the masses is not the aim. It is easier to say “no” to temptations to walk contrary to the Lord's ways if you surround yourself with others who have the same goal. Scripture describes marriage as being *“joined”* to a spouse wherein *“the two shall become one flesh”* (Eph. 5:31). This is the closest human relationship and an integral part of not forfeiting your soul. Paul includes instructions to husbands: *“that He might sanctify her; having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word”* (Eph. 5:26). I cannot read God's Word without understanding the vital importance of

putting every effort into refreshing my spouse with the Word of God. If this union produces the privilege and responsibility of children, a parent's constant, consistent prayers should be that those children walk with the Lord Jesus so that we all will enjoy eternal life together. *“This is eternal life, that they may know You”* (John 17:3).

How do we impact our children for eternity? The Lord gave this vital answer to the sons of Israel: *“so that you and your son and your grandson might fear the Lord your God, to keep all His statutes”* (Deut. 6:2). Our part in impacting those around us to come along in a walk with Christ is living that out ourselves. We need Christ to be alive in us. *“You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might”* (Deut. 6:5). *“All your might”*—this is purposeful effort. *“You shall teach them [the statutes] diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up”* (Deut. 6:7). As the passage continues, it declares this passionate love for God and His Word is to be tattooed on one's hand, branded on one's forehead, written *“on the doorposts of your house”* (Deut. 6:8-9). The focus is clearly on loving God constantly so that it affects all aspects of life. Are we really being diligent? This emphasis must not be taken for granted!

Putting strength into loving God takes our continued effort. When Paul said, *“I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands”* (1 Tim. 2:8), he touched on putting the body into our prayer. Do I do this? Am I mimicking David when he *“was dancing before the Lord with all his might”* (2 Sam. 6:14)? How often am I literally dancing before my Creator and Savior to whom I owe everything? *“But let all who take refuge in You be glad, Let them ever sing for joy”* (Ps. 5:11). To be often engaged in joyously singing puts a life of worship into practice and perspective that flows into the rest of what is done. *“Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God”* (Col. 3:16). Those closest to us see our heartfelt, truthful worship and it benefits them as well. The pressures of a culture of darkness may continuously try to quiet any song, but this is a battle worth fighting. *“That my soul may sing praise to You and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks to You forever”* (Ps. 30:12). The goal is to be enthralled with truthful, joyous praise surrounded by our loved ones in eternity. Herein lies the possession of everything with love and gaining our souls.

Fellowship with the Spirit

Andrew Brown

“You have not lived until...” Marketing campaigns constantly seek to finish this statement for us. Whether billboards or commercials, the goal is to persuade us to try their product or service for a greater life. Ultimately, they serve up reminders of being dissatisfied and then advertise fulfillment. Of course, the short-lived “satisfaction” is lacking the promised allure. True fulfillment cannot be found in this way. Jesus declared, *“I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly”* (John 10:10, NASB 1995 throughout, emphasis mine). Jesus' words certainly come with a guarantee.

Some live for the pursuit of strong drink. Proverbs 31:6-7 speaks on this: *“Give strong drink to him who is perishing, and wine to him whose life is bitter. Let him drink and forget his poverty and remember his trouble no more.”* Too many poor souls do not even realize the poverty and bitterness that comes along with their addiction. Alcohol has tricked them with full stomachs but empty hearts. The Bible instructs: *“And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit”* (Eph. 5:18). What the Bible recommends as an exchange is compelling! Drunkenness gives a false sense of strength. One's sorrows are washed down with one's drinks. Being “filled” with the Spirit gives a true sense of strength, life, and purpose. Being “filled” from alcohol intoxication is short-lived with awful results. Being Spirit-filled is infinitely more addicting with results that bring joy into eternity.

One of the greatest truths since the resurrection of Jesus Christ is that He has given the Holy Spirit to humankind in a lasting way. Jesus spoke of the Spirit as a helper (Gr.: *parakletos*) *“But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you”* (John 16:7). *Paraclete* is a compound word meaning “positioned alongside.” Jesus promised them a helper who was to be positioned alongside these men. The truth that the “Helper” has also been given to believers in our day, the silence of God, is of great significance.

“In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise” (Eph. 1:13). The Spirit seals the believer. The Spirit is given as the *“pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession”* (Eph. 1:14). The Spirit is God's guarantee of our inheritance in His future Kingdom. It verifies the believer is God's possession. Nobody can *“snatch them out of [His] hand”* (John 10:28). *“For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body”* (1 Cor. 6:20). Jesus purchased us when He died on the cross, and upon our belief, He sealed us by placing the Holy Spirit within us as a guarantee of our future place in His plans.

While people debate whether Jesus existed, this question can be put to rest WITHIN the believer. The Spirit indwelling is not meant only for His chosen Israelites, but for everyone believing in Christ today. Colossians 1:27 describes these riches as *“Christ in you, the hope of glory”* (Col. 1:27, emphasis mine). There certainly is *“fellowship of the Spirit”* (Phil. 2:1)! While our lives are hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3:3), the believer can have confidence and grow immensely in the inner person. Paul's inspired prayer is that God *“would grant you...to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man”* (Eph. 3:16). God holds out strength and power WITHIN. Will the individual take Him up on the offer? *“So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend...”* (Eph. 3:17). Christ not only desires to seal us but also to dwell in us. Jesus said, *“If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him”* (John 14:23). He is seeking a relationship so close that the Holy Spirit actually makes a residence **within** believers.

Christ's desire is relationship that grows to become mature and grounded. As in any relationship, we have our part to play. *“Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption”* (Eph. 4:30). Let us not cause the Spirit to suffer within us. Leave foolish pursuits that do not result in authentic life behind. The great privilege of having Him within us requires us to have a strengthened, growing mindset. The believer today does not merely have access into the throne room of the Living God, but *“boldness and confident access through faith in Him”* (Eph. 3:12). Anyone familiar with restrictions the Israelites faced when coming into the presence of God to make offerings realizes this is an unfathomably great permission!

Let me complete my initial phrase, “You have not lived until you have been... *‘filled with the Spirit’* (Eph. 5:18).” While this does not include the portion of power that it did for the Acts Period believers, still so much abundance has carried through. It is a tragedy when we do not realize and partake of what is offered to us. Seeking the joy of the Lord, being invigorated in pursuit of truth, the richness of praise, the Word's counsel, the power to believe what God says, and growing closeness to Christ is all part of the truly abundant life. The opportunity of the gift is incomprehensible. Will we continue to seek distractions and counterfeits from the world? Or will we set out in pursuit of *“the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God”* (Eph. 3:19)? I pray our experience will be FILLED with true abundance.

“A new look for a new generation”

This is how the grandson of Otis Q. Sellers, Rusty Hancock, describes the updated design given to the outreach communications for The Word of Truth Ministry.

Board member Candy Davis worked to create our updated look, first by designing a new logo which you surely noticed when you opened this mailing. The logo is now found on all our outreach media—on our Bulletin, our Seed and Bread website, and our YouTube channel—making each site instantly recognizable as belonging to the Word of Truth Ministry.

Visit our website seedandbread.org and you will discover that it has undergone a complete renovation in design and function. An important goal was to simplify navigation of the site, especially for newcomers. One relative newcomer, until she saw the new navigation link reading, “Written Studies Other Writers,” was unaware that—in addition to studies written by Mr. Sellers—writings by others in the ministry are posted on the Seed and Bread site as well.

If you’re looking for our radio ministry or YouTube channel, no need to remember specific names or web addresses. Just come to our Seed and Bread website and click the corresponding navigation links for shortcuts directly to these sites. An exciting new feature on our website is found in the section, “Audio Messages Otis Q. Sellers.” No more scrolling and scrolling through 570 audio recordings looking for a particular message! A Search feature has been added which takes you directly to the audios you desire. Want to listen to Mr. Sellers teach about the book of 1 or 2 Peter? Just type PETER in the Search and in a flash, you arrive at TL338-346.

We invite you to head over to seedandbread.org and browse around. You never know what new teachings may await you!



Song of the Season – A Song of God’s Kingdom

By Mark Hammond

The lyrics to Handel’s Messiah, Part 1 Movement 2 begin with: *"Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem; and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord: make straight in the desert a Highway for our God."* (Isa. 40:1-3). So begins the oratorio of a holiday season staple, the venerable music of Handel's Messiah with libretto by Charles Jennens. Given the recent warfare that has erupted in Palestine (circa 2023) between Hamas and the modern state of Israel, the libretto's quote from the book of Isaiah speaks volumes for God’s Kingdom prophecy, a future period of God’s dealings with humankind when wars will cease. The holiday season presents in song this opportunity to share with our family and friends the marvelous theme of God's future kingdom.

The Kingdom of God is the positive theme which spans the entire Biblical record; and the lyrical arc of the Messiah's libretto, composed entirely of scripture passages selected by Mr. Jennens, draws frequently from aspects both of the future Kingdom of God and the King of the Kingdom. These passages abound in the KJV (Authorized Version) of the Old Testament, and find some fulfillment in the New Testament. A cursory review of the composition's Old Testament lyrics yields: 21 verses from Isaiah; 15 verses from Psalms; 3 verses from Malachi; 2 verses each from Job, Haggai, Zechariah; and 1 verse from Lamentations. The foundation for all that is said in the New Testament regarding the Kingdom of God was established in the Old Testament. When John the Baptizer, Jesus the Christ, and Christ’s twelve apostles went out to herald the message *"the kingdom of God is at hand"* (Mark 1:15), they did not have to explain this term to the Hebrew people. The Holy Scriptures, the Oracles of God, which Jehovah had entrusted to Israel, proclaimed a future messianic age and messianic kingdom. The Jewish people were familiar with the written Law and the Prophets. These people knew what this term (Kingdom of God) referred to and they were aware of the great blessings associated with it. So that we too may be prepared to share this positive theme, let us revisit several of the illuminating passages quoted in the Middle English of Handel’s Messiah and uncover Kingdom truths which are hidden like jewels (see Matthew 13:45-46).

Handel’s Messiah, Part 1 - Movement 9:

Oh you that proclaim joyful news ["gospel"] to Zion, get yourself up into the high mountain [the seat of God’s government - Zion]. Oh you that proclaim joyful news ["gospel"] to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with enduring power [Strong’s word H3581: kōah]. Lift it up high! Do not be afraid; say to the cities of Judah, behold your Elohim! (Isa. 40:9, A Resultant Version).

It’s interesting to note that if we glance at this verse in the Septuagint (Koine Greek translation of the Old Testament, Third Century BCE), we recognize that the KJV term translated "glad tidings" appears in the Greek as: *evangelizómenos* - a close relative word to the Greek word (G2098) *evangelion*, the common word for "gospel" in the New Testament. The Old Testament was actively proclaiming the gospel of the Kingdom which Jesus’ teaching built upon and significantly expanded during his earthly ministry (see Matthew 4:23, Matthew 8:35, Matthew 24:24, and Mark 1:14) during which the people of Israel experienced a foretaste of God’s Kingdom (see Seed & Bread #67 – "A Foretaste of the Kingdom").

And to complete God’s Kingdom message of joyful news with the next verse from Isaiah: *Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young (Isa. 40:10, KJV).* This is highly figurative language describing Adonai Jehovah as a Shepherd-King, and his chosen people Israel as his flock of lambs. This is the work of God; Adonai Jehovah will accomplish this. His flock (Israel) will be His

center of attention as a reconstituted nation and He will be their Shepherd-King. See Ezekiel 37 which describes the nation of Israel resurrected from the valley of dry bones and the return of the Jews from the nations wherein they are scattered today (see Seed and Bread #155 – “Ezekiel’s Amazing Prophecy”).

Handel’s Messiah, Part 1 – Movement 10: *Rise and shine! For indeed your light has come - and the glory of Jehovah has beamed upon you. For behold! Darkness covers the earth, and a deep gloom covers the peoples. But on you, Jehovah beams his light, and his glory upon you is clearly seen by all. So shall the nations proceed directly to your light, and their kings to the brightness of your illumination* (Isa. 60:1-3, A Resultant Version).

What an amazing, positive passage this is; the world is in darkness (the influence of Satan) and then the glory of God is projected onto the earth. Who is this light beamed onto? There can be only one answer: the spotlight is on the future nation of Israel so that this illumination can be seen by everyone living upon earth. This light will be in stark contrast to past/present Israel which is in the evening news spotlight with its endless struggles and wars, not in the least! The future, resurrected and reorganized nation of Israel will be the “magnet” to which the nations will be attracted and to which their leadership will be drawn.

Handel’s Messiah, Part 1- Movement 12: *For a male child is born to us, a son is given to us; and the governmental order [H4951: miśrâ - the arrangement] will come to be on His shoulder [stabilized by Him]; surely His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty-one God, Everflowing Father, Peace Prince* (Isa. 9:6, A Resultant Version).

To complete this passage, we recognize the direct connection to the next verse from Isaiah (not used in the oratorio of Messiah): *Of the growing increase of his governmental order [H4951: miśrâ] and of peace there will be no end in sight; from David’s throne and throughout his dominion, establishing and sustaining it with justice and righteousness with respect to The Olam; the passion of Jehovah of hosts will accomplish this* (Isa. 9:7, A Resultant Version). In this verse, the Hebrew words H5704 + H5769: ‘ad ‘ôlām appear to be used by the Holy Spirit as a proper noun construct (Hebrew has no capital letters), therefore we render this “The Olam” – another term for the magnificent period of blessing, God’s Kingdom manifest upon the earth. Furthermore, this verse reiterates a truth concerning the Kingdom of God. His government will not be brought about by “the church” or by any act of humankind. Jehovah Himself will accomplish this work. It will be a government of God, by God, and for His glory.

Handel’s Messiah, Part 1 - Movement 33: *Lift up your heads at the city gates, be lifted up you doors of the everflowing procession at your doors, enter in glorious [esteemed] King of glory, enter in. Who is this one the King of glory? Jehovah strong and mighty, Jehovah mighty at war. Lift up your heads at the city gates, be lifted up you doors of the ever-flowing procession at your doors, enter in glorious [esteemed] King of glory, enter in. Who is this one the King of glory? Yahweh of hosts, He is the King of glory* (Ps. 24:7-10, A Resultant Version). In the ancient Middle East, the gates of the walled cities were the public meeting places; this is where public business was transacted, accounts were settled and legal differences were settled. The language here is that of a command to the persons (“heads”) at the gate to take notice. The second clause is another command but on the surface it is a more figurative statement; to quote the KJV, what exactly is an “everlasting door”? This is H5769: ‘ôlām which, being interpreted from the context refers to an out-flow of dignitaries, a royal procession of Jehovah the King; the “doors” of this passage may very well refer to the doors of the Lord’s temple. Given the prophetic nature of this scripture, it is most likely that the scene is to take place in Jerusalem. It is my belief that this prophecy was not fulfilled during Jesus’ earthly ministry. His entry into Jerusalem was celebrated by the common people waving and laying down palm branches, it was not the arrival of a king. Jesus had not yet been glorified, that came later (see John 12:16). Subsequently, we can associate this prophecy with a future period of time: once again the Kingdom of God on earth and the capital city of God’s government, the Jerusalem of the future. This city will be rebuilt along with Jehovah’s temple as prophesied in Isaiah 44:28 (See More Seed & Bread #310 - “Cyrus, An Anointed One”).

These passages are just a short sampling of Old Testament references to the Kingdom of God which appear in Handel’s Messiah. The material selected for the libretto proclaims the manifest, future Kingdom of God on the earth as a future reality. This short study has focused on truths which are available for us to share with our family and friends during the Christmas holiday season. When we hear Handel’s music, the opportunity may present itself to share the amazing truths which have been “hiding in plain sight” in the song of the season. We can glorify God in song as we sing along with Part 2 – Movement 44, “Praise y’all Jehovah! Hallelujah, hallelujah!”