



ISSUE# 9 VOLUME# 4 August/September 1998

The Latter Rain

by Jewel van der Merwe

Could it be possible that God is indeed doing a "new thing", as we draw closer to the end of the 20th Century? Is it true that He has reserved special "gifts" for this time in history? Is He speaking to the church in a new way today that transcends anything that He has said in time past?

It would seem so, according to many of those presently in leadership within the Church. Numerous pastors and ministers would readily agree that there were problems with the Latter Rain when it first surfaced in the 1940's. But, they quickly interject, the movement and teachings died out years ago, and in no way correspond to what we currently see occurring within the church, particularly within the Pentecostal ranks! They believe the problem was in the past and died out.

There is a growing fascination in the church with "paranormal" experiences. Stories are abounding of extraordinary things happening and much is being attributed to a "move" of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is seen by many as a means to experience tangible sensations and physical phenomenon. Doing "carpet time" and "soaking" (lying on the floor and basking in a form of prayer that saturates one's spirit) has become the desired end of many services. There is a sense of deep spiritual attainment manifested when the physical body is under this "power" that is attributed to God.

We hear today about new "prophets" and anointed "apostles" being raised up to lead the church into higher "levels" of anointing and power. These new leaders are supposed to be

so in "tune" with God that they get their guidance directly from the "throne-room". This new spirituality looks with disdain on those who are not "connected" as they. As more and more Apostles and Prophets appear on the scene, there will be an increasing need for discernment. Sadly, this is one area that is being ridiculed as creating division. Christians have lost sight of the fact that there is a great difference between being "critical" or "judgmental" and being "discerning".

Church of Jesus Christ, it is time to adjust your armor! Square your shoulders, make sure your helmet is straight and keep your Sword brandished. We are not seeing anything "new". Heresies have been around attacking the true Church of Jesus Christ since its foundation. The Body of Christ is a blood-bought Body - sanctified through the washing of the water of the Word of God. The Word of God is inspired - breathed - by the Holy Spirit. Any departure from His intent within that Word is moving into "levels" of deception that will clasp unwitting souls in its grasp until they adhere to another gospel, which ultimately will lead them to another Jesus.

The second half of this century has been very interesting in terms of bringing in teachings that have had at their core, Manifest Sons of God teachings. Manifest Sons holds to the doctrine that we are going to come into a perfection here on the earth where we will be "one" with God. So, as Christ was here on the earth, so we will become. When we come into this high level of authority, we will be able to do exceptional miracles - even raise the dead. Already, stories are abounding from those who are telling their "experiences" of raising the dead.

Recently, listening to a set of tapes from a missionary from Mexico, I was amazed at some of his stories. He claimed to have raised hundreds from the dead in remote villages in Mexico. It has happened because he was willing to spend time in fasting and prayer. He spoke like a "Manifested Son" as he talked about his tremendous power with God. This missionary even told a story about a woman who had lost two daughters to a terrible plague. Because so many people had died in this particular village, they could not bury the people fast enough. This woman had to drag her dead girls through the village with a rope to the burial place where they lay waiting their turn to be buried. The woman then went and bought a 45 pound bag of lime and dragged that bag to the bodies where she poured the lime over them.

The grieving mother then walked 9 hours to a village where pastors were fasting and praying. She spent the night and in the morning took the pastors back to her village where they prayed for the dead girls and both came back to life! They had been dead for three days!

The crowd listening to this story cheered and clapped. Obviously, this was a very blessed and holy missionary. (Did he raise anyone from the dead here in the United States where we could all witness such a mighty miracle?)

Now, it is going to be very difficult to tell stories greater than these. But the door has been opened to the realm of the "paranormal". Once folk start equating their unusual experiences with spirituality, it becomes almost impossible to bring them back for a reality check.

As a child of God, I know that the power of God can raise the dead. However, God is Sovereign. Certainly at the time when the graves are opened and the dead in Christ will rise first, the miracle of all miracles will transpire. In the meantime, there is no precedent that we should follow in order to have "power" to command the dead to be raised.

How did we arrive at this point, and where are we now headed as the Church of Jesus Christ? Looking back at the second half of this century reveals some very interesting folk who have been an influence in the development of the broad path within the Christian Church.

Franklin Hall.

Around 1946, Franklin Hall established a major fasting and prayer revival center. He taught that fasting would bring revival and the "restoration" of the church. Allegedly, there were appearances of the Holy Ghost in fire and smoke in the building, with the fire department coming in and getting saved. Hall sold his assets and borrowed against his home to finance the printing and distribution of millions of pieces of literature all over the world. He attributes what subsequently happened in the late 40's and early 50's to his outreach. In 1946, Hall wrote his book, *Atomic Power with God Through Fasting and Prayer*. This book had a significant impact on the neo-Pentecostalism (that is, the new Pentecostalism) that was emerging.

Hall also had occultic influences. He made claims that even the prayers of pagans would be answered if they fasted. He explained that the American Indian tribes sought revelation from the Great Spirit through prayer and fasting. When the Indians had famines, food shortages, lack of rain, etc. the Great Spirit was then sought through prayer and fasting and their prayers were also answered. This demonstrated, according to Hall, that there was power in the act of prayer and fasting.

A later book, *The Return to Immortality*, suggests that Christians can become immortal through stages of spiritual growth. Through experiences with what he calls UFOs, UHOs (Unusual heavenly objects), and the IHO (Immortal heavenly objects), gravitational and levitation control is possible, thus leading to immortality. Hall also instituted "open-eyed" prayer. He said that "immortality blessings" come in more successfully because closed eyes destroy faith.

Franklin Hall was also very involved in "Christian" astrology. He said that in 1848 the Aquarian Age was introduced. He talked about going to Venus or Mars, the power behind the saucers, and an "Immortal Substance" that came on those who attended his meetings. This substance was a dusting like fine gold and silver which would sparkle from the skin. This was brought about through faith-power of *impartation*. (It is important to note that this term has become a normative expression within today's church for the ministry of the Holy Spirit, while it more oft than not finds it's truest expression within occultism. There is some confusion between laying on of hands as an act of faith, symbolic of the ministerial nature of the Spirit, and the need for touch as a point of transference. This latter understanding has transcended the Scriptural intent and is now more akin to occultism).

In another book *Formula for Raising the Dead*, Franklin Hall cautioned that this level of operation, raising the dead back to life, is only for "advanced" Holy Ghost people who have read his other four books.

William Branham.

On May 7, 1946, William Branham was working as a game warden. This is how he tells his experience: *I had come home for lunch, and was just going around the house taking off my gun, when a dear friend of mine approached me and asked me to go to Madison with him that afternoon. I told him it was impossible as I had to patrol, and while walking around the house under a maple tree, it seemed that the whole top of the tree let loose. . . something came down through that tree like a great rushing wind. . . My wife came from the house frightened, and asked me what was wrong. Trying to get hold of myself, I sat down and told her that after all these twenty odd years of being conscious of this strange feeling, the time had come when I had to find out what it was all about. The crisis had come! I told her and my child good-bye, and warned her that if I did not come back in a few days, perhaps I might never return . . . then along in the night, at about the eleventh hours, I had quit praying and was sitting up when I noticed a light flickering in the room. Thinking someone was coming with a flashlight, I looked out of the window, but there was no one, and when I looked back, the light was spreading out on the floor, becoming wider. Now I know this seems very strange to you, as it did to me also.*

As the light was spreading. . . I became excited and started from the chair, but as I looked up, there hung that great star. However, it did not have five points like a star, but looked more like a ball of fire or light shining down upon the floor. Just then I heard someone walking across the floor, which startled me again, as I knew of no one who would be coming there besides myself. Now, coming through the light, I saw the feet of a man coming toward me, as naturally as you would walk to me. He appeared to be a man who, in human weight, would weigh about two hundred pounds, clothed in a white robe. He had a smooth face, no beard, dark hair down to his shoulders, rather dark-complexioned, with a very pleasant countenance, and coming closer, his eyes caught with mine. Seeing how fearful I was, he began to speak, 'Fear not, I am sent from the presence of Almighty God to tell you that your peculiar life and your misunderstood ways have been to indicate that God has sent you to take a gift of divine healing to the peoples of the world. IF YOU WILL BE SINCERE, AND CAN GET THE PEOPLE TO BELIEVE YOU. NOTHING SHALL STAND BEFORE YOUR PRAYER, NOT EVEN CANCER. . . He told me many things which I do not have space to record here. He told me how I would be able to detect diseases by vibrations on my hand. He went away, but I have seen him several times since then. He has appeared to me perhaps once or twice within the space of six months and has spoken with me. A few times he has appeared visibly in the presence of others. I do not know who he is. I only know that he is the messenger of God to me. (From "A Man Sent By God" by William Branham)

Other things the angel told Branham were in reference to two signs that were to be given him. First was the gift in his left hand - with which he would detect diseases and the other would be an ability to discern the thoughts and deeds in the past life of the individual. By revealing these things, the person's faith would be strengthened. Gordon Lindsey's observation of Branham's ministry was that "We have watched the operation of these two

signs and may say with great assurance that the manifestation of these gifts are as perfect as any ever exercised by a human being."

Branham made the claim that the angels to the churches (as recorded in the book of Revelation) were actually men who appeared at various times throughout church history, bringing new revelation to lead the church into progressive revelation - which somehow made him the angel of the Laodicean Church. (This progression is actually recorded on his tombstone).

Branham defined the Latter Rain as the neo-pentecostalism of his day. He taught that the meaning behind God's promise to restore what the locust, cankerworm, caterpillar, and palmerworm had eaten, would actually be the "restoration" of the church out of denominationalism.

He believed the Word of God was given in three forms: The Zodiac, the Egyptian pyramids and the written Scriptures. And, he had a twisted attitude toward women, shown in his "serpent seed" teaching. Branham stated that when Eve said, "The serpent beguiled me and I did eat", she meant the serpent seduced her and out of this affair Cain was born. Consequently, women are responsible for the evil in the world.

Branham was welcomed by many Pentecostal churches and parachurch organizations such as the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship which was in its heyday during the 1950's. In 1961, the editor of their magazine *VOICE* said, "In Bible days, there were men of God, who were Prophets and Seers. But in all the Sacred Records, none of these had a greater ministry than that of William Branham."

Branham's teachings became more and more aberrant and he was used less and less outside his own church in Jeffersonville, Indiana. He died in 1965 from injuries sustained in a head-on collision. His faithful congregation did not bury his body for quite awhile - believing he would raise from the dead. Still today there is quite a "cult" following who adhere faithfully to Branham's teachings.

The "Voice Of Healing" Ministers

In 1947, Oral Roberts went through a time of extensive fasting and prayer. *The magazine, THE VOICE OF HEALING*, published in 1949, quoted Branham as saying that Roberts' "commanding power over demons, over disease and over sin was the most amazing thing he had ever seen in the work of God." Oral Roberts reported that he would feel a manifestation of God's presence in his right hand which would be a point of contact between the believer and God's healing power. Another minister, T. L. Osborn, attended Branham meetings in 1947. Osborn saw a little deaf mute girl delivered of an evil spirit. He seemed to hear a thousand voices saying, "you can do the same". The following spring Osborn launched an independent ministry with Gordon Lindsey giving him financial support and publicity.

During this time there was another stirring in Canada in an "airport" - not in Toronto, but in Saskatchewan.

The Sharon Brethren.

George Hawtin, a teacher at the Bethel Bible Institute (a Pentecostal Assemblies of God of Canada institution) was asked to resign because he would not cooperate with the brethren there in the Pentecostal Assemblies. Percy G. Hunt, another teacher, resigned also - out of sympathy. The two of them took 70 students from Bethel and joined with Herrick Holt who had been teaching that God was getting ready to do a "new thing". They had acquired an orphanage and school on one thousand acres of farmland, 10 miles outside the city limits of North Battleford, Saskatchewan. They were soon joined by George Hawtin's brother-in-law, Milford Kirkpatrick and Ernest Hawtin, George's brother.

Greatly influenced by the teachings of both Franklin Hall and William Branham, several of the school's teachers went to a Branham meeting and had him lay hands on them for an *impartation* of spiritual power. Hall's influence is seen in the following quote from Ernest Hawtin:

*The truth of fasting was one great contributing factor to the revival. One year before this we had read Franklin Hall's book entitled, "**Atomic Power with God Through Fasting, and Prayer**". We immediately began to practice fasting. Previously we had not understood the possibility of long fasts. The revival would never have been possible without the restoration of this great truth through our good brother Hall.*

Revival broke out! People started coming from everywhere to receive spiritual power! In writing years later about what had happened, George Hawtin said: *Soon we found that the familiar doctrines previously taught and the subjects studied had a strange sense of being **removed from us** as though they had become **past truth** instead of **present truth**.* (For a complete transcript of Hawtin's letter, as well as the official statement denouncing the Latter Rain/ MSOG teaching from the Assemblies of God 1948 General Council, please see the January 1997 issue of Discernment newsletter, available from our Lapeer office.)

Unity had been an important theme of William Branham and was also central to what was happening in North Battleford:

As time went by, it became very evident that the true message of the hour was not simply a manifestation of spiritual gifts, but that all gifts and ministries were given by God for one purpose - that the true BODY OF CHRIST might be joined together, not in flesh, but in spirit. That the true BODY OF CHRIST is in truth PART OF GOD'S CHRIST began to be seen, and with this understanding it became increasingly clear why the Lord had begun to move in this new way.

That which was begun by the Holy Spirit in 1948 will end with the Manifestation of the Sons of God at the End of the Present Age. The Adoption of which Paul spoke so often is FULL MATURE SONSHIP. The great apostle told us clearly in Romans 8:23 - that the whole creation is groaning in travail, waiting for the ADOPTION, to wit, the redemption of the body. The redemption of the body is this corruptible putting on incorruption and this mortal, immortality and death being swallowed up in victory. (Emphasis added)

Strangely, a prominent New Ager, Alice Bailey, said something very similar:

If God is God, then His divinity will adapt itself to the emerging divinity of the sons of God, and a son of God today may be a very different expression of divinity from a son of God five thousand years ago. (Emphasis added)

The group from Sharon became a "traveling presbytery" who exercised authority over congregations by personal directive prophecy. Eventually some who had been endorsed as apostles or prophets became disillusioned as the group at Sharon became sectarian to the extreme. They believed no teaching was valid unless it originated with them - they alone were the purveyors of God's truth. However as new people continually went out from Sharon, many other centers developed that became "hubs" for the Latter Rain movement.

George Warnock.

George Warnock took up residence at Sharon in 1949. He had been a secretary to Ern Baxter (an associate of William Branham and later part of the "Fort Lauderdale Five" of Shepherding fame). In 1951, Warnock wrote a book which in was the evolutionary model of the church as seen by the Latter Rain adherents entitled: *The Feast of Tabernacles*.

LATTER RAIN TEACHINGS

We are again hearing quite a bit about the "Feast of Tabernacles". Many spiritualize the Tabernacle and use it for the spiritual tome of their "identification" with the most Holy Place.

According to Latter Rain thought, *The Feast Of Tabernacles* shows the pattern for the progress of the church through time. Starting at Passover (which is Calvary) the church supposedly had been passing through the different feasts, over the years, to Pentecost. Warnock writes that we, the church, still have yet to go through the day of Atonement, the Feast of Trumpets and then come into the Feast of Tabernacles, which to him represented God's consummate purposes for us, the Last Days Church. When we come into Tabernacles, (which was a tremendous time of celebration for Israel), God will finally dwell within His people. (pp. 58-59).

(The New Age movement wasn't really heard of in 1951 - however, Warnock's evolutionary model is remarkably similar to today's New Age futurists who also believe that the human race as a whole is birthing the next stage of man's evolution toward Godhood.)

Warnock taught that the Church was about to usher in the completion of God's feasts through perfection of the saints and their dominion over the earth - or - the church must progress in maturity to reach a point where Christ can incarnate His body in order to establish His Kingdom on earth before His physical return.

It is evident from the nature of what we see being practiced within the churches today that the Latter Rain beliefs did not assuage because of their opposition by the established Pentecostal denominations. The following, commonly seen, progressive teachings can be heard to some degree, resonating from pulpits today:

We are going from level to level in spirituality. Some call it the "Outer Court", "Inner Court" and the "Most Holy Place" experience. There are others who even dare to intimate that God Himself had to reach a level of perfection and that is why He is called "The Most High".

This leads to different levels of Christians. Those who have been "perfected" can truly then manifest Christ. These will be under the "New Anointing". They will be able to perform many supernatural wonders.

They finally reach immortality. Death is actually overcome. . . then they are indeed Manifested Sons. They obtain immortality by incarnating Christ before Christ returns. Signs and wonders will be wrought by the Manifest Sons - leading up to a glorious worldwide end-time harvest.

The celebration of The Feast of Tabernacles fulfills Unity. (This is a unity based on the joining of all like minded believers into a cohesive unit, in preparation for the Incarnate Christ, i.e. the entrance of Christ into the church. It is not a unity based on orthodox doctrine, but rather Latter Rain teaching).

The feast means that "latter rain" revival is the harvest This harvest is the fruition of what has been sown, the first fruits of their labors. It is the emergence of the New Man, the church incarnate with Christ, the 'manifestation of the Sons of God'. It is a replacement for the historical Jesus who will personally return to this earth.

The so called "enemies" of the Church (who are quite evident at this point because of their unwillingness or refusal to participate in either the "unity" or the "harvest") are then defeated and the Kingdom is established. Tabernacles is also understood "spiritually" as the Harvest Festival of joy and gladness (the 'laughing phenomenon' was ascribed as the beginning of this feast). It is also considered to be the invisible and spiritual coming of Christ to indwell His corporate Body - as opposed to Pentecost when He indwelt individuals. This coming of Christ to indwell His corporate body is now expressed through "New Truths". (These new truths are seen today with the recent explosion of signs, wonders, personal prophecy, and the 'revelation knowledge' so hard sought after by so many.) Because of it's attainment of this high level of anointing, the Church supposedly then will inherit the earth and rule over the nations with a rod of iron.

The New Breed Teaching

It was taught by the Manifest Sons that the "New Breed" is going to be raised up especially for the "end-time" church. Approaching A. D. 2000 has caused a momentum that has reached feverish proportions. Visions and revelations are being given equal standing with the Scriptures. Attaining this "higher and deeper" knowledge of God plays such a critical role in the outworking of this plan that spiritual significance can and often is

attached to almost any issue. An increasing level of spirituality will inherently cause the recognition of these 'anointed ones' who are even now anxiously assembling together, when possible, in expectation of their debut - as the elite corps of Christians called "Joel's Army" (notwithstanding the Scriptural account of this group as a renowned army of locusts!)

Joel's Army is thought to be unconquerable. Those who do not buy into the new teachings are of the "old generation". They can not enter in and possess the land. In fact, they believed then and still teach that this newly anointed Joel's Army will have the power to judge God's enemies and cleanse His church by destroying all who refuse to "repent" - or to be part of the "new thing".

A shift has taken place. When honest questions are raised, there is often a hostile, militant reaction. People will draw conclusions without even looking at differing viewpoints. The mindset is preset. Those that raise objections are marginalized and even compared to the horrible disease, cancer.

We have already seen some striking similarities between Latter Rain thought from the 1940's and 50's and the (then little known) New Age beliefs. Here we see a more striking and sobering likeness...the removal or cleansing of the earth from those who refuse to go along with the prescribed mandates This is also called, "The Cleansing Action". In the writing of Charles Simpson, (formerly one of the 'Fort Lauderdale Five' of the Shepherding/Discipleship era) likens this "cleansing" to the removal of cancer cells:

We must work toward wholeness in creation by discovering and recognizing those structures which God has ordained... [T]he material, social, and spiritual universes are created in a modular fashion, and are mutually interdependent.

Structures which are internally sound and secure will naturally seek to harmonize and interrelate with larger structures. . . . If a structure is internally sound. . . it will naturally seek to find its fulfillment in larger structures. . This motivation is intuitive. . in all healthy substructures. It is written into our genetic code. Healthy individuals will naturally seek to relate to families.....; healthy families to churches; healthy churches to communities; and healthy communities to states or nations. Each church will seek to relate to the larger expressions of the Church or the kingdom of God. Healthy nations will form healthy, mutually beneficial international relationships. I firmly believe that this principle is a law of nature, a divine law. A healthy structure seeks expressions and fulfillment outside itself. All material life, all spiritual life, all sociological life, when functioning properly, seeks fulfillment in larger structures.

Failure to integrate

Failure to integrate into larger structures indicates a tendency towards isolation, and therefore reveals an unhealthy condition or a malfunction . . .The condition expresses itself in many ways; sectarianism, fear, doubt, guilt, selfishness. If a cell turns and rejects the physiological structure of which it is a part; if a person turns and rejects the family of which he is a part; or if a family turns and rejects the community of which it is a part; the rejection indicates an unhealthy condition or some sort of malfunction . . .

Cancer is a biological example of what I am talking about. Cancerous cells want to live, but they refuse to integrate with other cells; they will not function with the whole. They draw life from the body, they multiply, but they will not integrate with others. . . .

(Taken from "Integrity: Where Unity Begins" NEW WINE JUNE 1983: 5-9 (Charles Simpson) reprinted in NEW AGE MONITOR, Vol. 2, Nos. 8-12 July, 1988)

New Age "prophets" also contend that mankind is at an important time in history. It is a time where all kinds of "wonders" will seem commonplace. They hold that these wonders will only truly be manifested when there is an "elimination" of "unhealthy" elements:

*The fetus of the New Humanity is already stirring in the Womb of Time and, like the human mother, humanity must learn to eliminate its waste materials and poisons and give the fetus proper nourishment or the life of both the child and the mother will be endangered. . . This is the work of the present transitory conditions. (F. Homer Curtiss and Harriette Curtiss, **Coming World Changes**, p. xi)*

The Djwhal Khul (the entity that New Ager, Alice Bailey channeled) also sees Christians as a dangerously unhealthy blot on humanity:

*A violent streptococci germ and infection . . . makes its presence felt in infected areas in the body of humanity. Another surgical operation may be necessary . . . to dissipate the infection and get rid of the fever. . . let us never forget. . . that when a (life) form proves inadequate, or too diseased, or too crippled. . . it is - from the point of view of the Hierarchy - no disaster when that form has to go. (Alice Bailey, **Education in the New Age (New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1954), p. 111,112**).*

The New Age calls for a period of bloodshed prior to the emergence of Universal Consciousness. The need for this to occur is for the (merciful) removal of those that are incapable of working with the whole of creation toward the Universal Consciousness. This event is the doorway to the next level of the evolution of our species and the progression of the earth. This is called merciful because of the ultimate good that will come from it - those that are not fit to make the quantum leap into the coming Age, who would only hold back other, more highly evolved humans, must needs be eliminated for the good of all others.

Jeremy Rifkin, a New Age writer gives the same call:

*. . . Only the entropy paradigm provides a scythe that is both sharp enough to cut through the tangled debris of this death-bound culture and broad enough to clear a path for the dawn of a new age. . . The specifics of what is to be done can only come after a thorough cleansing away of the last remaining vestiges of the mechanical world view. Our own conversion is the first order of business. Only when we have cast aside forever the old way of thinking and behaving and take onto ourselves the new entropic world view will we be ready to go forth and remake our culture. The new order of the ages must begin with a revolution in science, education and religion. . . " (**ENTROPY: A New World View Bantam Books Edition, New York, 1981. Quoted in A PLANNED DECEPTION The Staging of a New Age "Messiah" by Constance E. Cumbey**)*

Paralleled within Latter Rain teaching is this already mentioned end-time army that has the power to judge, and cleanse the church from, those that will not be a part of their rendezvous with divinity. There are so called prophetic voices being heard today that declare that there will be, there must be bloodshed, literally, because of those that refuse to acquiesce those divisive ideas (i.e. their doctrines). The old order must go so the new order can fulfill it's divine mandate.

Restoration Teaching

The Restoration teachings focus on the belief that the Church has not functioned as God planned since the first century. Therefore it must be "restored" to its original intent and purpose of achieving dominion. This involves the restoration of the offices of Apostle and Prophets. Restoration of the Tabernacle of David (signified by the "restoration" of worship and praise), and the restoration of the power (signs and wonders).

A brief summary of Restoration teaching:

- **The Church Restored** - God is restoring the Tabernacle of David so that His Church might be restored in preparation for the coming Revival.
- **The Church Revived** - God is restoring the Tabernacle to revive His Church in its preparation for the Great Harvest of souls He has promised in these Last Days.
- **The Church Reaping** - God is restoring the Tabernacle of David to bring about the Great Harvest for the Second Coming of Christ.

(e-mail from Paul L. Ward 8/16/98)

A teaching that also summarizes Restoration is :

*But it is impossible for God to dwell with us in all His fullness until the dwelling place is ready. As we have seen, David prepared a dwelling place, and he prepared the people . . . **then** he brought up the Ark of the Covenant, the Power of the Presence of God, to Zion. In like manner, we must seek God for the Restoration first, then will come the revival. There must be a Restoration before the revival in all its entirety comes to the Church." **(The Power of His Presence, Graham Truscott).***

Another emphasis is on purifying the Church through repentance and holy living. In itself, repentance and holy living are good and desirable in the life of a believer. In the view, however, of a Latter Rain Restorationist, this is all critical in order to see God move more quickly in establishing the Church in dominion over the nations. Rather than the light of the humble believer shining more brightly in this sin-ridden, perverse world, the Latter Rain adherent must 'force' righteousness, within himself and within his sphere of influence.

Throughout this framework of aberrant teachings, there have always been undercurrents of other, (often valid) teachings that weave in and out. However, once one allows false teaching of any kind to enter, there is no telling where the path will take you.

The "Dominion/Kingdom Now" Mandate Teaching

Manifest Sons of God teaching came under great attack and no one wanted to be associated with it. Prophets had drawn elitist circles around themselves and became very controlling of other people's lives. However, the influences of the late 40's and the 50's are still felt today. The common thread has been the Kingdom Now/Dominion message. The idea is that the "church has to make herself ready" and the last day church has to be 'birthed'. Deep intercession must be entered into - with fasting for the coming of the Bride into her own. This preoccupation with the state of the Bride and the need for her preparation/revelation is essential Manifest Sons teaching with nothing more than a different name.

Adherents of this Kingdom Now teaching believe that the church is to experience a worldwide revival that will impact entire nations to the point that they will be Christianized. Kingdom Now/Dominion thinking has been gradually bringing the church into a "new worldview". A paradigm shift has taken place. It is often said that if pastors are not willing to go along with this new thing, they will be removed, as we have discussed. Also many believe implicitly that denominations will cease to exist in view of the New Move. Instead of denominations, there will be Apostles and prophets raised up to usurp 'unprofitable' leadership in the church. There is a strong networking here with those that are still an integral part of the Shepherding/Discipleship movement.

Kingdom Now Teaching - The Basic Premise.

When Adam sinned, God lost control of the earth to Satan. God has been searching for a "covenant" people who will be His "extension" on earth to take Dominion back from Satan. This is the Latter Rain's understanding of the Great Commission.

Those who hold to Kingdom Now/Dominion teaching believe that the KINGDOM of God should be in every area - education, science, medicine, arts - but most importantly - *politics or "government"*. The "prophets" that came to the fore in the 1980's were proclaiming that the "apostles" who would be coming in the 1990's would "*have the government upon their shoulders*". This is a twisting of that scripture referring to the millennial government being on the shoulders of Jesus Christ.

The Dominionist interpretation of being a witness means to take dominion, bringing all things (individuals and governments) into obedience to Christ. In order to demonstrate the Kingdom of God, the Church must not only be united under "anointed" men and women, they must also be prosperous, having taken control of a significant portion of the world's wealth. They seriously believe they must be in a position, structurally and substantially, to administrate God's authority throughout the earth.

The Latter Rain movement fell into this group. Their teaching on the restoration of the five-fold offices led to the claim that the Apostolic Office means the government. The Dominion train has many stations at which it stops. Some of these groups are more extreme than others - not all Charismatics are Dominionists. However; through networking, we have seen that there are many streams that have been flowing together steadily to form a mighty river.

Enter - Another Jesus.

A departure from the Word of God always brings confusion in its wake. The tragedy today is that so many pastors and leaders are unaware of the "global" forces within the church that are anxiously attempting an alliance that will undermine the faith that was once delivered to the saints.

The focus of the church has subtly shifted. There is no longer an awareness of the soon return of Jesus Christ. Christians no longer believe that they can be deceived. The focus is now on a triumphant church and a victorious and purified Bride having worldwide dominion...subduing the enemies of Christ so that she might present herself to Him, a bride without spot or wrinkle. The order prescribed by Scripture has been reversed. Rather than the efficacy of the work done by Jesus Christ, the burden lies on the church. The fulfillment of scripture becomes the responsibility of the church, adding a sense of urgency to the fulfillment of the Latter Rain prophecies.

The need to be watchful and prayerful always is removed, as a harlot Church busily builds her own tower toward heaven. The guard is let down. The Word of God warns us about being ready lest THAT DAY come upon you unaware. Kingdom Now teaching makes us careless about the signs we see around us as if they do not matter. Jesus never said, "You will know that I am coming because the Church will be in a Golden Age of Triumph and you will have Christianized the world." He warned instead that we should be on guard lest we be deceived. He spoke of deception, persecution, fearful things - signs in the sun and distress of nations. He said, "When these things begin to happen" - where do you look? Look up? Why would He tell us to look up if the Kingdom was already established here on the earth?

Whilst our Church leaders flit off to Rome to be feted by the Prelates, the leaven is quickly permeating the fiber of the Church. The Catholics and Lutherans have already struck their harmonic chord and others are quickly falling into line to make strange music together.

The only way we can know God is through His Word. His Word is Spirit-breathed. It is our compass, road map, investment plan, Rock of Gibraltar . . . on and on , in fact, all things that pertain to life and to godliness.

When we depart from the Word of God, we enter into the realm of man's wisdom - how he feels. Self becomes the guide or the "inner witness" becomes the compass. Fifty years ago, men who had based their faith on the Word of God were quickly able to discern the magnetic pull of Latter Rain teaching, forcing the compass to give inaccurate readings. They knew that to check this influence, the plumbline of God's Word must be used as the standard against which any apparent direction must be evaluated. Their conclusion was that there were serious problems on the horizon. We have been walking the way of 'self' for these many years that we no longer can recognize the difference. So, therefore, that which pleases the flesh for the moment, must be God? Many today cannot answer this simple question.

In this serious day: ***let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us -***

looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Heb. 12:1)

The Antichrist
The counterfeit Christ and his coming reign of terror

by Johan Malan

Religious ideology

Universal religious unity, i.e. the inherent unity of all faiths on earth, will be the religious ideology of the Antichrist. The starting point for this ideology is theistic universalism; all the faiths worship the same God in different ways and by using different names. Despite the differences that meet the eye, all the religions are allegedly the same on an esoteric level. The logic conclusion from this surmise is that the various religions are awaiting the same universal messiah, even though they use different names for him.

That is indeed the ideology that paves the way for the coming of the Antichrist. He will have many faces; he will be the Christ to the Christians, the Messiah to the Jews, the Imam Mahdi to the Muslims, Krishna to the Hindus, and the Maitreya Buddha to the Buddhists. He will unite these religions into a tight alliance under his supreme leadership. They will take hands to form the ecumenical body referred to as the mother of harlots in Revelation 17:5. She will be recognized, carried, supported, and used by the beast.

The Babylonian inter-faith body (the harlot woman) will be the bride of the Antichrist as an imitation of the church which is the bride of the true Christ. He will give her a position of power, including the right to persecute and even execute the evangelical believers who refuse to worship the beast (Rev. 17:6). He will greatly use her in his campaign to establish world unity. All her followers will be made conscious of their common unity, and that belief will be in the foundation of an international mystical brotherhood of all people. Once this ideology has been established, the realizing of social, political and economic unity will be expedient.

In accordance with his nature as an unfaithful person, the marriage of the Antichrist with his bride (the false religions) will not last very long. After 3 ½ years he will declare himself as God and demand the worship of all people. By then, the different religions, their churches, temples, synagogues and mosques will become redundant and be destroyed. The Antichrist will offer his bride the option to either accept his increased status from universal Messiah to God and worship him as such, or to be executed because of disobedience. The world alliance of religions and their association with the Antichrist will then be terminated:

"And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire" (Rev. 17:16).

The final religious objective of the Antichrist will be for him and Satan to be worshipped as God (Rev. 13:4, 8). Thus, satanism will be the only official world religion during the great tribulation (the second 3 ½ years).

The first phase of the Antichrist's religious ideology is now being implemented in preparation of his coming. It will move through the following stages to its final purpose:

Religious equality. All religions are of equal standing and the one is not better or more important than the other. The playing-field is equalized, and they are all encouraged to join ecumenical bodies such as the World Council of Churches, the World Conference on Religion and Peace, and the World Parliament for Religions. They can collaborate on moral and ethical issues.

Religion unity. All religions worship the same God, and should therefore also give religious expression to their common ecumenical ties. Because of this premise they should reject the evangelical believers who bluntly refuse to join the ecumenical movement.

An intimate alliance of world religions. When the Anti-christ appears as the common messiah of all faiths, he will unite this body as his bride on condition that all of them recognize and worship him. Great power and honor will be bestowed upon them, and they will function as a corporate body. They will use their power and influence to persecute the evangelical Christians who refuse to take hands with them in worshipping the beast.

Forced worship of Satan and the Antichrist. The body of false religions will, to their utter shock and disillusionment, be rejected and sentenced to death by their universal messiah unless they are prepared to denounce their religions and worship the beast and Lucifer as God. If they do that, and also accept the number and name of the beast, their end will be the lake of fire where they will share the eternal condemnation of the Antichrist, the false prophet and the devil. (Rev. 14:9-11; 19:20; 20:10).

The Antichrist will order the execution of all Christians who refuse to accept and worship him. (Rev. 6:9-11; 13:7, 15; 20:4). During the last 3 ½ years of his reign in the great tribulation, he will increasingly and continuously blaspheme the true Christ and the true God while using all his power to destroy those who confess God's Name.

"And there were given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven" (Rev. 13:5-6).

The Antichrist's last big mustering of power on earth will be in Jerusalem where he will await Jesus Christ to wage war against Him. That will be the last desperate bid by the beast to save his satanic world empire from collapse.

The main objective of the Antichrist with the siege of Jerusalem will not be the destruction of the remnant of Israel, but to fight against the Messiah of Israel and to try and conquer Him. That will be his last fatal effort to save his satanic empire from annihilation. What a future exercise will it prove to be to fight the One who has all power in heaven and on earth! That will be the last public appearance of the Antichrist and his evil accomplices on earth. Their demise will be swift and final:

"And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of Him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of His mouth: and all the [birds] were filled with their flesh" (Rev. 19:19-21)

This Booklet entitled THE ANTICHRIST by Johan Malan is available through Discernment Ministries along with other excellent booklets on pertinent subjects. Please see the newly updated catalog for a complete listing of materials that are available. A copy may be obtained by writing to our Lapeer, MI address, or by calling 517.795.2530.

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