

***Now Concerning Spiritual Things***  
an historical account of one man's walk with God

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## A CHRISTMAS PROPHECY

### INTRODUCTION

For several days before December 25, 2002, a Christmas song was on my mind. It may have been "White Christmas," or "I'll Be Home For Christmas" or a similar song with a Christmas theme. I was not impressed with the lyrics. The impression was that of Christmas – the emphasis was on Christmas day, but not necessarily on the song lyrics themselves. Several days before Christmas I may have said something like this to the Lord, as I have done before, "Lord I know it's there." Then I'd forget it. The Lord has ministered to me in song – sometimes prophetically – more than once. It seemed that the Lord was calling to my attention the day of Christmas, for some reason. It is interesting to note that the Sunday following Christmas day, I was to teach on the New Covenant. In my lesson outline I had tied being in covenant relationship with God to (1) the practice of cutting a blood covenant prior to the writing the Bible, (2) the blood covenant cut by God with Abram as recorded in Genesis 15 and (3) the "new covenant in My blood," that Jesus cut on the cross as recorded in 1 Corinthians 11:25. The prophecy treats the importance of being in covenant relationship with God through Christ and confirmed and supplemented in a very forceful way the lesson I was to teach four days later. The subject of this prophetic word is the Rapture. It was exciting to me when given and it is still exciting to me because I believe that the "catching up," as this event is sometimes called, will occur during "this" generation.<sup>1</sup> I believe it's that

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<sup>1</sup>Psalm 95:10 defines a Bible generation as forty years. Certainly this is a somewhat ambiguous or indefinite date "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son but only the Father." (Mark 13:32). On this one event hangs the starting of God's chronological time clock concerning end-time events. Since no one except the Father knows the day and hour, we are left to interpret the signs based on Bible prophecy and Bible students may vary widely in their understanding of the time of this event. You make your own judgement. However I am comfortable with my "this generation" decision.

close – and I know I am not alone in that opinion Hallelujah! Notice in this prophetic word that I am admonished to share it with others. Although this Christmas Prophecy has been published in one of my previous letters, it seems appropriate to release it again in this 2003 Christmas edition. As you read, you may find a surprise or two.

About midmorning on Christmas day, 2002, while Dale was in the kitchen preparing dinner for us and several invited guests, I went in to pray. After I had prayed for a short while I began to pray in the spirit<sup>2</sup> and that continued for a longer period of time than usual. As I did so I realized that the Lord wanted to say something to me. I then picked up my pen and wrote these words in my journal:

### THE PROPHECY

My son I see your need. I have heard your cry. And My response is not overdue but on the way. For I await the timing of My response even as I awaited the timing of My coming as a babe in a manger, an unwanted place for My birth. Even as there was no room in the Inn, there is no room for Me in the hearts of many today and that is what grieves Me. I would that all of My servants would await My coming,<sup>3</sup> even as you, for it is that expectant awaiting of My coming that will hasten it.

So remain faithful. Continue to do My bidding one day at a time, one step at a time, for that more than anything else will usher into being My soon return.

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<sup>2</sup>See 1 Corinthians 14:15.

<sup>3</sup>The terms, "My coming" and "My soon coming" are used synonymously eleven times in this prophecy. These terms do not refer to what is commonly called "the second coming of the Lord." Instead, they refer to believers who "shall be caught up together" with Christ in the air, to join believers previously resurrected, in an event commonly called "the rapture of the Church." See 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17.

As My servants *expect* My soon return, they will be and will remain, expectantly waiting and watching for Me. And it is *those* whom I will call up to Me in the soon to come Rapture.<sup>4</sup> So be not dismayed, things are on course. You are on course. There is enough time to do all the necessary things in preparation for My soon return.

Remember to be watchfully expectant of My soon return. *For only those who are eager for My soon coming are chosen to be raptured.* The complacent, the slothful, the unexpectant will be left behind. That does not mean they will not be saved, it means they will remain until I call those who will receive Me unto Myself, My kingdom.<sup>5</sup>

That is why you are to be diligently about what I have called you to do. As you obey My calling and election on your life, you are unknowingly preparing for and hastening My soon return. My son, I rejoice with you this morning. My peace I bestow on you and those whom you receive as guests today, thus says the Lord of hosts.

Remember, be of good cheer. I have overcome the world. *As you remain watchfully expectant of My soon return to claim My own, that is the sign of My soon coming.*

Those who are watchfully expecting My soon return are those who are being so qualified to serve Me – to prepare them to return with Me to rule and

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<sup>4</sup>The word *rapture*, which is not in the Bible, originated from the Latin Vulgate, a Latin translation of the Greek New Testament. In 1 Thessalonians 4:17, the English translation of the phrase “shall be caught up” was translated from the Greek word “harpazo,” which means to “catch away, seize upon with force” or to “snatch up.” The Latin translation of *harpazo* is rapere which is the root of the English term “rapture.” Latin translations were used throughout much of the history of the Western Church. As a result, a number of theological terms developed out of the Latin language. Trinity, millennium and imminence are other theological principles of similar origin that are not in English translations of the Bible, but are clearly taught in the scripture.

<sup>5</sup>The term “My kingdom” in this prophetic word refers to the millennial reign of Christ when He will triumphantly return to earth with His bride (those raptured) to rule and reign on the throne of David from Jerusalem, the then capitol city of the world and the center of the millennial earth. See Isaiah 2:2-4; Jeremiah 31:6; Micah 4:1; Zechariah 2:10.

reign for a thousand years.

Remember to be watchfully expectant of My soon return is the sign. Teach this My son for blessings to you and those whom you shall teach and those for whom you write.

I am revealing to you secrets hidden from the foundation of the world, secrets that are now being made known to my servants, the prophets, of whom you are one.

So tell these words to others. Proclaim it as My truth to a weary, hungry, lost and indifferent world. A world I long to clasp unto My bosom in love, but this can only be done as they first receive Me – My Holy Spirit within to first atone for sin. For it is only then that I can embrace them – have communion – fellowship with them, for if I should clasp them to Me now, the power and glory of My presence would destroy them, for to them I would be a consuming fire. This is why the earth will need to be cleansed by fire – My consuming fire – to be cleansed and readied for the perfect eternal state. For only as I cleanse that which has been contaminated by sin is the earth prepared in its eternal state.<sup>6</sup> The cleansing will be a cleansing of sin by the fire of My presence. This is the longing of My heart. So be of good cheer today. My peace I give you – I bestow upon you and your guests on this Christmas day. Enjoy My day for I am with you as you do so, says the Lord.

My son warn those who are complacent. Warn those who take commitment to Me carelessly, inattentively. Warn them to turn to Me in total commitment so I May give them My covenant response. Let your warning be given in love. For there will be believers in Me who think not concerning the seriousness of their covenant with Me. For My covenant is unto their death, if required, or it is not covenant. That is why I [Jesus] said, “Let the

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<sup>6</sup>The principle of sin polluting the earth is taught a number of times in the Bible. The cleansing of the earth by fire is found in 2 Peter 3:10-12: “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.” This is the cleansing of the earth in preparation for the final eternal state.

dead bury the dead.”<sup>7</sup> That is why some did not follow Me seriously – they had other things to attend to – worldly things to attend to – and so they missed My call.

It was expedient that I leave first so My Holy Spirit could be sent. It is expedient now that My followers be about My Father’s call and election on their life for that will allow them entry into the blessed communion with Me in preparation to return to rule and reign with Me. To those who will be caught up with Me, the time will be spent in preparation for rule. Assignments will be given, training will be done by the heavenly hosts in preparation to rule and reign with Me. As the raptured return with Me, each will be trained for his assignment and will assume his/her post for the Millennium. And that will be a glorious time for Me and for those chosen to come with Me.

So continue to be faithful. Say, teach, write what I say to you. Warn those who are not saved. Admonish those who take their commitment to Me lightly, for there is a price to pay in commitment that some do not wish to pay. To those who hear, it will be the greatest investment they can make – an investment that will bring exponential returns – beyond their fondest dreams.

I will give you revelation as you ask as My covenant<sup>8</sup> partner – I have no other choice. I must respond to covenant needs even as do you. But covenant partners who understand and take covenant seriously are the most blessed ones.

My son I am obligated to respond to covenant partners with Me – even as they are obligated to respond to Me. For that is covenant. But covenant

obligations are blessings to both. For in covenant response there is blessing for both parties. And that is the purpose of covenant – blessings for both parties. Tell this to My people. Proclaim to them My warning and My blessing that they may be set free, thus says the Lord God to you today, the Lord of hosts says to you. Amen.

There will be believers who are left behind [at the rapture] who are not watchfully, expectantly doing what God has called them to do. Being born again is no guarantee of being raptured. Bring your tithes into My storehouse, says the Lord, tithes of your time, your money, your talents and your gifts. For only as you do so may I reach out and touch them, take them, bless them and return them to you exponentially blessed. For that is My desire for you. That is My call on all to respond to the blessings of My storehouse of treasures. For My storehouse is full to overflowing awaiting My response to your requests. Ask boldly, seek fruitfully, knock expectantly so as to receive in abundance, says the Lord.

My son I am mindful of your requests and they will come as you are able to receive them, thus says the Lord.

#### A FAITH SNIPPET

Strong faith is a necessary ingredient in the life of every believer in order to be victorious against the enemy.<sup>9</sup> Of course the basic essentials, taken for granted, are (1) absolute faith in the Bible as God’s inerrant word, (2) total covenant commitment,<sup>10</sup> (3) an active prayer life and (4) participation in Church and/or ministry activities as led by the Holy Spirit. Even with these attributes, one may also need a *faith booster* to successfully engage the enemy. Jesus gives the prescription:

“A man came to Him [Jesus], kneeling down to Him and said, ‘Lord have mercy on my son,

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<sup>7</sup>See Matthew 8:22; Luke 9:60.

<sup>8</sup>The word “covenant” used nine times in this prophecy is translated from the Hebrew word, **bryith**, pronounced “ber-eeth.” Strong’s #1285 definition is: “A compact made by passing between two pieces of flesh – confederacy – league.” The practice of “cutting a blood covenant” pre-dated the writing of the Bible and is directly related to what Jesus did in instituting the Lord’s Supper when He said, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood.” An understanding of the relationship between what Jesus said and cutting a blood covenant is absolutely necessary to an understanding of the word “covenant” as used in this prophecy.

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<sup>9</sup>The enemy I refer to is Satan, the common foe of the saved and the unsaved alike, the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4) who comes to steal (from), kill and destroy [you] (John 10:10)

<sup>10</sup>For brief insight into the meaning of **covenant** see my letter dated June 25, 2003, entitled **A Brief Treatise on THE LORD’S SUPPER.**

for he is an epileptic and suffers severely, for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. So I brought him to your disciples and they could not cure him.’ Then Jesus answered and said, ‘O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me.’ And Jesus rebuked the demon [s], and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that hour. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, ‘*Why could we not cast it out?*’ So Jesus said to them, ‘**Because of your unbelief**; for assuredly, I say to you if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, Move from here to there, and it will move, and nothing will be impossible to you. However, this kind does not go out **except by prayer and fasting.**’<sup>11</sup>

“Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? He grew up before him like a tender shoot and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely our griefs, He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.”<sup>12</sup>

No one . . .

Came as He came  
Lived as He lived  
Died as He died  
Gave as He gave.

He gives one . . .

Reason to live  
Reason to love  
Reason to write.

He is . . .

The essence of giving  
The reason  
For the season.

To *know* Him is . . .

To love Him  
To wish for everyone  
That blessing.

And indeed, by faith

We offer Him to you  
The greatest Gift to give  
At Christmastime.

Merry *Christmas* from

Jim & Dale Ash

A casual reading of this scripture will likely cause one to conclude that fasting and prayer were necessary preparation in order to cast the demon (s) out of the young man, but this is not what Jesus is teaching. A careful reading of this scripture reveals that the teaching of Jesus here is: **prayer and fasting were necessary in order for unbelief to be cast out of the disciples**. Here Jesus was addressing the question asked by the disciples, “*Why could we not cast it out?*” To which He replied, “*Because of your unbelief.*” He then reveals to them the antidote for unbelief: **prayer and fasting** *for it is prayer and fasting that will cast out unbelief and produce faith as a mustard seed!* More on this subject at a later date.

#### A CHRISTMAS GREETING

The Book of Isaiah, called the fifth Gospel by Augustine, sometimes called “the Bible in miniature,” contains more prophecies about the Messiah than any other book in the Old Testament. The prophet Isaiah wrote the following words more than seven hundred years before the Messiah was born one night in a Bethlehem manger when there was no room at the inn:

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<sup>11</sup>Matthew 17:14-24. Bold emphasis and italics added. See also Mark 9:14-29 and Luke 9:37-43 for parallel accounts of this incident. Matthew’s account carries details that the other records omit.

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<sup>12</sup>Isaiah 53:1-6, NIV.