

A photograph of a person in a light-colored, textured robe holding a red, patterned mantle over a green field. The person's hand is visible, holding the mantle. The mantle is red with a gold or yellow pattern. The background is a lush green field with some rocks. The overall scene is outdoors.

Royal Vision

July-August 2003

The MANTLE of ELIJAH

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About the cover When Elisha picked up the mantle of Elijah, God immediately performed many mighty miracles.
(photo illustration by Joel Hilliker)

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The MANTLE of



By Gerald Flurry

OUR GAINING possession of 19 of Herbert W. Armstrong's works was the greatest victory in PCG history! Now we OWN all those copyrights, just as Mr. Armstrong did.

After six years of litigation with the Worldwide Church of God, on January 16, 2003, 17 years to the day after Mr. Armstrong's death, the WCG agreed to sell us these copyrights.

Why January 16? That date has come up again and again since Mr. Armstrong's death.

Religious Freedom Day

After the initial agreement on January 16, it took 50 days to work out all the details. Fifty is the number of jubilee; every 50 years all the slaves of Israel were freed (Lev. 25). We too experienced a certain FREEDOM after that 50 days—we were freed from the bondage of the WCG.

Something else interesting happened on January 16, 2003. President George W. Bush proclaimed it "Religious Freedom Day." You can read the whole proclamation on the White House web-

Elijah

site at www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030115-11.html.

In short, it says, "Each year on January 16, we celebrate Religious Freedom Day in commemoration of the passage of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom by the Virginia General Assembly, which occurred on this day in 1786. Drafted by Thomas Jefferson, this historic law provided the inspiration and the framework for the religious freedom clauses in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. ... [R]eligious liberty in America is often called the first freedom. ...

"Our Founding Fathers recognized that religious freedom is a right we must protect with great vigilance. ... Now, therefore, I, George W. Bush, president of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the

United States, do hereby proclaim January 16, 2003, as Religious Freedom Day."

Of course, the whole world is deceived about true religious freedom. But that is what we fought for in

our court case. If people would read those 19 works of Mr. Armstrong, they would know all about true religious freedom. Without those works, it's virtually impossible to teach that to people. When Christ returns, He'll direct people to read those works, and for the first time in their lives they'll understand true religious freedom. There will not be competing religions and people proclaiming *personal* "religious freedom." That is slavery! In the truth, WE are free, and we'll be able to teach the whole world how to really be free.

In our court case, we fought for what the whole world will receive very soon. They'll see how Satan was the god of this world, fought against the truth and enslaved this world. The world will see how God's own people fought us. They'll be embarrassed to see how even they fought against us. Meditate on this, and you realize this is how the whole world is going to get to know God. For the first time in 6,000

years, God is going to teach them what joy and wonder and excitement there is in being TRULY FREE!

There is great symbolism in this. I believe January 16, the day God's end-time Elijah died, points to TRUE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM. Do you suppose God chose this date for Mr. Armstrong to die so we could put more emphasis on religious freedom, and begin to tie the world into that date, and into that man? I believe Mr. Armstrong died on that day because God is just *beginning* to put emphasis on this. God does, after all, exalt His men.

I have focused quite a lot on the importance of January 16. In *Malachi's Message* I wrote, "*Malachi's Message* was first received by many people on January 16, 1990, the very day of the anniversary of Mr. Armstrong's death (January 16, 1986). We didn't plan it, but we were happy it happened that way. You are going to see the date of Mr. Armstrong's death take on more significance as time goes on. John Amos and I were disfellowshipped on December 7, 1989—40 days before the anniversary of Mr. Armstrong's death. The number 40 is significant in the Bible. The third 19-year time cycle of the work of the WCG ended in January of 1991—the same month as the fifth anniversary of Mr. Armstrong's death. In the original version of *Malachi's Message* we asked this question: 'Will we see some dramatic event in the world or within God's Philadelphian and/or Laodicean churches then?' THE PERSIAN GULF WAR BEGAN ON JANUARY 16, 1991! God considers the date of Mr. Armstrong's death to be very significant."

Why would we be so interested in that date? This has everything to do with the mantle of Elijah.

The Mantle of Elijah

We need to take note of some of the details about the transfer of power from Elijah to Elisha. This occurred just before Elijah was going to be taken away: "And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground" (II Kings 2:8).

Elijah had a mantle—some sort of cloak that distinguished him as a prophet of God. (Even some of the leaders of the land seemed to understand this; they had more respect, or at least more awareness, of the prophet of God than our leaders do today.) *Lange's*

**God was giving Elisha
some subtle correction:
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He wanted him to
acknowledge the
God of Elijah!**

calls this mantle, "The insignia of the office of the prophetic leader." Elijah struck the Jordan with his mantle and the river opened up so they could walk across. So obviously there was a lot of power in that mantle.

You can read in I Samuel 15:22-28 how Samuel's mantle being rent symbolized the Kingdom of Israel being ripped away from Saul. GOD'S POWER IS ASSOCIATED WITH THAT MANTLE, AND SO IS THE FATE OF THE NATIONS OF ISRAEL.

Note the importance of this symbolism! Today, the nations of Israel are hurtling toward disaster, and God's prophet is the only one on the scene to warn them. The prophet's mantle has everything to do with the fate of Israel! Our modern leaders are going before the pope and other religious leaders, trying to figure out God's view. But, as presumptuous as this may sound, the only place they will find God's perspective today is from me and this Church! They can only find the answers where the mantle is. That may sound like the wildest exaggeration, but it is the truth of God that you can prove from your own Bible.

The time came when Elijah was taken away in a whirlwind to another part of the Earth. Notice what Elisha did: "And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces" (II Kings 2:12).

Elisha understood that Elijah was his "father"—not his physical father, but his *spiritual* father. In this end time, all the foundational revelation came through Mr. Armstrong, *our* spiritual father. The revelation God has given us since his death points us back to Mr. Armstrong. But the Laodiceans refuse to recognize him as the end-time Elijah.

Mr. Armstrong was also a type of Levi, the father of the Levites. Malachi 2:4 shows that God made a COVENANT with Mr. Armstrong. Malachi 3:3 says that God will "purify the sons of Levi, and purge them"—those ministers who trained under him and then turned on him. God is emphasizing January 16 to try to get their attention and get through to them!

"My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof," said Elisha. In other words, if Israel is ever going to solve its problems—if it's ever going to know what true religious freedom is, it will have to look to Elijah! THAT'S THE ONLY "CHARIOT" THAT WILL CARRY THEM INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

In our court case, we were saying the same thing: "My father, my father." And, also as Elisha said, we're saying to Elijah and to God, "I will not leave thee" (II Kings 2:2, 4, 6). That's what our court case was about!

Something else significant happened here: "He [Elisha] took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan" (v. 13). Elijah's mantle fell, and it was obvious to everyone that it fell on Elisha. This was an outward sign that the responsibility of being God's man had shifted.

There are types here. Mr. Armstrong was the end-time Elijah, and God gave him all the works we fought for in court. It makes sense that we would find some outward symbolic signs of where his mantle is now.

Soon the whole world will be educated in the works of Mr. Armstrong that we fought for. And the fact that God is emphasizing this date shows that this process has already started! What good is having all that truth if we don't deliver it to the world?

Taking Action

Elisha had to take some action—he *took up* the mantle of Elijah. Spiritually, I had to do the same thing. All of God's faithful people have had to take up the CAUSE of that mantle. Nobody pushed us to do this. We must reach out and take some aggressive action, or nothing happens.

The copyright victory shows what God will do for us when we do as Elisha did! This means accepting God's form of government.

After Elisha took up Elijah's mantle, notice carefully what happened: "And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters [the first

time], and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters [a second time], they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over" (v. 14). Elisha had the mantle, but the first time he smote the waters, nothing happened. Then, after he said, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" and smote the waters AGAIN, they parted!

I believe God was giving Elisha some subtle correction here: *Elisha, there will be no parting of the waters until you get your priorities straight.* He wanted him to acknowledge the GOD OF ELIJAH!

There is a PRECISION in the way we have to do things, or that mantle doesn't empower this Church. We have to put God first, or it won't work. If we don't get on our knees first, the waters won't part for us. This is about God using a man—but it is GOD'S POWER. That's what He was reminding Elisha about. Of course, Elisha realized his mistake very quickly and corrected himself.

God does give that mantle to a man. Someone had to step out and say, *We're going to print Mystery of the Ages!* Then a group of people had to stand behind that decision and say, *Amen! That message must be taken to the world!* It takes God's government to get that done. It takes a man who has the mantle.

But it's not about the man—IT'S ABOUT THE GOD OF ELIJAH! Is He really alive? The same God who gave Mr. Armstrong that enormous work? Yes, He is! This victory is an outward sign of exactly where the mantle is, and where the God of Elijah is! This is something people can't ignore.

The fact that the WCG agreed to this deal on January 16 is a sign in two ways: First, it points to God's end-time Elijah; second, it points to the Church today that has the *mantle* of Elijah. God wants to make sure people know where that mantle is—where the God of Elijah is! This is something anyone can see.

The Laodiceans are going to have to come to where the mantle of Elijah is, because that is where GOD is! God really wants them to see where the God of Elijah is. Many people have been glued to the court case. They had to see this miracle: The God of Elijah lives! And it is our hope and prayer that this will help them repent.

There is only one reason God has the "mantle" of Elijah: to get people's minds focused on the GOD of Elijah. When we stop looking to the God of Elijah, the revelation and miracles will stop. The major proof of where the God of Elijah is is new revelation. GOD

This boy should have had nothing but life ahead of him—but the Nazis killed him! And they're going to do the same to multiple millions more—people who are too hard-headed to listen to the God of Elijah!

IS SPEAKING! What a blessing to be in the Church where God is speaking.

God has shown with power that the mantle of Elijah is HERE!

How to Be Great

In II Kings 4 is the example of someone God called "a great woman." Why great? She wasn't heading a corporation, or joining the army. The Bible doesn't talk about her doing anything, except that she discerned by the fruits and by the Holy Spirit that Elisha was a man of God. She was great because SHE PERCEIVED THAT ELISHA WAS A MAN OF GOD!

Do you perceive a man of God when you see one? Do you recognize God's ministers? Do you know there is a man of God who has the mantle? What will happen to those who DON'T KNOW THAT? Extreme suffering will be the result. We must KNOW! And God says, if you perceive that, YOU ARE GREAT. That should be encouraging to every single person in God's Church.

This woman prayed for Elisha—probably every day. No telling how many of those prayers God answered for her. She wanted a child, and God gave her one because she was GREAT. When the child was in his late teens, he died. That could have put this woman into a terrible attitude, but instead she went straight to Elisha and asked for his help. She wouldn't leave him until he helped her. Because of her faithful attitude—BECAUSE THIS GREAT WOMAN PERCEIVED THAT ELISHA WAS A MAN OF GOD—God RAISED HER CHILD FROM THE DEAD!

Is this example just ancient history? No—it is for today! This is all about understanding *where the mantle of Elijah is*. The miracles we receive are often different, but this story shows you how to be great.

Tomorrow's Education

Elijah established colleges in Gilgal, Bethel and Jericho (II Kings 2:1-5). Mr. Armstrong taught that the original Elijah will lead the educational system in the World Tomorrow. Then John the Baptist will work under him, and Mr. Armstrong, who taught so much about *true education*, will work under John. The Philadelphia Church will work under Mr. Armstrong. We'll be teaching the world very soon. We'll teach the world about these works, and the battles we fought to have true religious freedom. God wants to motivate us by getting our minds on this future.

Looking at how important education was to Elijah, if you could find the mantle of Elijah today, don't you think, you'd find people who were interested in having a college like Elijah had? After all, Elisha took over the schools of Elijah. It makes sense that they would be training their youth to replace the older people—training dedicated people who will FIGHT AND EVEN DIE for THE TRUTH!

This is another instance where we're demonstrating that *we won't leave Elijah! We won't leave what he taught!* We teach just like Elijah did, and get our students grounded in what Elijah taught—and that is the foundation of tomorrow's education. The school we have founded, Imperial College, is tied directly into the return of Jesus Christ—which will be here in, I believe, 10 years on the outside.

Remember the lesson that Elisha taught one of his students: We never have to fear going into battle. II Kings 6 shows the Syrian army coming after Elisha, and the student was badly scared. But Elisha told him, "Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them" (v. 16). Then he prayed, and God showed the student all the fiery angels that were surrounding them and fighting for them! That made the student feel very secure! Likewise, to keep ourselves from faltering, we have to KNOW that we are being protected and looked after.

Our forefathers had to fight and shed much blood for religious freedom—and that freedom was only on the letter-of-the-law level. It was not religious freedom nurtured by God's Holy Spirit. But regardless of the level of freedom, we won't have it without fighting and possibly even dying for it!

So if we get and keep God's truth, expect fierce battles.

Another monumental event tied to January 16, 2003, was the Columbia space shuttle disaster. The Columbia launched on January 16. It was up in space for 16 days. There were seven people on board. These are interesting numbers.

One woman on board the shuttle, Kalpana Chawla, had e-mailed her family about how beautiful Mount Fuji and the Sahara Desert looked from space. She couldn't get over the MARVEL of it—seeing Earth from space. There really is something special waiting out there for us!

But the Columbia's journey ended in a fiery conflagration. Sixteen minutes before touching down, the shuttle exploded—over North Texas, where Mr. Armstrong had a college (another interesting fact). “‘There are no survivors,’ the president said, but by then we had been watching the endless video of what looked like the shooting stars of August, knowing that those bright, white puffs of star were made of metal and rubber and men and women” (*Time*, Feb. 10).

Is there any symbolism in this? All that emphasis on January 16 and the number 16? Is there any connection with a man who warned Israel for years and years—a man who died on January 16? This is only a type of what is coming upon the whole of Israel if they don't find out where the mantle of Elijah is and take heed!

Bringing the shuttle back to Earth is a difficult job: “‘When you re-enter [the Earth's atmosphere], you're moving at 25 times the speed of sound,’ says former astronaut Dr. Norm Thagard. Hitting the atmosphere at that velocity is not unlike slamming into a brick wall, if you're not at the correct attitude” (*ibid.*). The same is true of us: We must have the right attitude spiritually if we're going to be ready to journey into outer space as spirit beings. This is a law spiritually just as it is physically. “‘Lose your purchase on the air and go into a spin, and there's almost no way to pull out of it. ‘The attitude needs to be very, very precise,’ says Thagard” (*ibid.*). We certainly recognize this in God's Church: Sometimes people sail right out of the Church because THEIR ATTITUDE IS WRONG!

“The spacecraft's engines are shut off for good once it leaves orbit, meaning its descent is powerless. Flying a brick with wings, as the engineers have often called

Colonel Ramon talked about having a spark of hope. But we have much more than a spark—we have a flaming hope of something very real!

the ship, has a very fine margin of error” (*ibid.*). You don't hear these engineers talking about it, but that ship stays up there and comes back BECAUSE OF GOD'S LAWS! They simply won't admit to that—or SUBMIT to God's spiritual laws! God is the great Power that makes all their plans and projects POSSIBLE! But those plans will come to nothing as long as they refuse to acknowledge Him.

Also aboard the Columbia was Ilan Ramon, the first Israeli astronaut, whose mother and grandmother were Auschwitz survivors. He wanted this trip to be, in the words of *Time* magazine, “a happy respite from a hard winter for his embattled country” (*ibid.*). The *International Jerusalem Post* printed an article called “Remnants of a Dream: Symbols Surrounding the Death of Colonel Ilan Ramon.” His dream was to go out into the universe—a great, adventurous dream. That's where God wants to take us! But you know what the “remnants” of this dream are? THE ONLY THING LEFT ARE THE BODY PARTS THAT THEY FOUND OF COLONEL RAMON!

His dream won't HAVE to end just being remnants. But every person who leaves God has that future staring them in the face, and they'll NEVER ESCAPE THAT.

When President Bush spoke after the disaster, he quoted an e-mail by Colonel Ramon: “The quiet that envelopes space makes the beauty even more powerful, and I only hope that the quiet can one day spread to my country.” A *Jerusalem Post* article said, “In a country where the main news stories usually change hourly, not daily, the story of the loss of Ramon dominated TV screens, radio and the press for the whole week” (Feb. 14). And imagine—it was all tied to January 16 and the God of Elijah.

On this trip, Colonel Ramon took with him a sketch of a lunar landscape drawn by a 14-year-old Jewish boy.

“The artist, Peter Ginz, never lived to see such a sight, or even to witness the day when humans first traveled beyond the Earth's atmosphere. He died at Auschwitz, one of the 6 million Jews exterminated by the Nazis during the Second World War” (*Observer*, Feb. 2). This boy was trying to dream, as a boy was created to do. He should have had nothing but LIFE ahead of him—but the Nazis killed him! And THEY'RE GOING TO DO THE SAME TO MULTIPLE MILLIONS MORE—PEOPLE WHO ARE TOO HARD-HEADED TO LISTEN TO THE GOD OF ELIJAH. They ought to be fulfilling their dreams, but that will never happen until they humble themselves before God! Until then, all their dreams will turn into the most horrifying nightmares!

Look at the news: We are so close to REPEATING that dismal history a million times over! This world is on the cusp of nuclear madness! IS THIS THE WORLD WE WANT? IS THIS THE GREAT ACHIEVEMENT OF MANKIND? DO YOU WANT THIS KIND OF FREEDOM?

This world needs a sobering warning! And it won't be easy to give it to them. God sends us through trials like the court case to toughen us up so we can deliver His message.

“I know my flight is very symbolic for the people of Israel, especially the survivors, the Holocaust survivors,” said Colonel Ramon (*Jerusalem Post*, *op. cit.*). If only he knew! It is SO SYMBOLIC! “Because I was born in Israel, many people see this as a dream come true” (*ibid.*). We have such lofty dreams. God gives us the right to dream and dream—but THOSE DREAMS WILL ALWAYS BE SHATTERED UNTIL WE HAVE GOD RULING OUR LIVES! UNTIL WE FIND THAT MANTLE OF ELIJAH.

Elijah has a message for this world! He has the foundational message this world needs if they ever want to fulfill their dreams.

The *New York Times* wrote about the disaster, “For Americans already grappling with a confluence of threatening events, the instinctive reaction was, ‘What next?’” (Feb. 2). We have to tell them EXACTLY what's next! “[T]o a nation still struggling with the aftermath of the most devastating terrorist attack in its history and the abiding threat of another, plus a sluggish economy, nuclear tension with North Korea and the prospect of war with Iraq, this morning's disaster was an especially harsh blow” (*ibid.*). And God says the blows are going to get harsher and harsher until people drop to their knees.

This event made headlines around the world—and it was tied directly to January 16. It was a shocking warning from God about the fiery end our peoples are coming to. Many people are afraid of terrorism. But THEY SHOULD BE AFRAID OF HAVING THE ALMIGHTY GOD AGAINST THEM! THAT'S WHAT THEY SHOULD FEAR—AND THAT'S ALL THEY WOULD HAVE TO FEAR! If they could learn that lesson, they wouldn't need to have any of those other fears.

This relates directly to our copyright victory. Study Habakkuk 1, which details the injustice we experienced in the courts. Then verse 5 talks about our miraculous deliverance. And then, right in that context, comes verse 6: "For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that are not their's." God is raising them up to DESTROY ISRAEL! We can see them rising at a furious pace even today.

Also in that context, Habakkuk 3:16-17 discuss nuclear winter: "When I heard, my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble: when he cometh up unto the people, he will invade them with his troops. Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls." LOOK AT THE CONTEXT! THE COURT CASE IS HISTORY. GERMANY IS ALREADY THE POWERHOUSE OF EUROPE. ALL THIS IS HAPPENING RIGHT BEFORE OUR EYES!

God is doing all He can to help people see reality. He loves those people, just like He loves His loyal sons. But when a parent has a son who becomes disloyal, does the parent stop loving him? God gave His Son to DIE for all His rebellious children! He NEVER STOPS LOVING THEM! He *can't*, because HE IS LOVE.

Colonel Ramon talked about having a spark of hope. But we have much more than a spark—we have a FLAMING HOPE of something very REAL! Those men want to colonize space. That is OUR FUTURE! That is what the mantle of Elijah is all about.

Making a Deal?

In the September/October 2002 *Royal Vision* article on Habakkuk, I wrote, "If you look at the court case physically, it

Those men cast the truth to the ground, and now they want to let bygones be bygones!

is hard to understand why one church would go to such effort and expense simply to destroy what we're doing. But if you understand Satan and his demons, you clearly recognize that there is a force out there intent on DESTROYING God's truth! People have pressured us to make a *deal* to resolve this dispute. But we won't make a deal with such an evil force—we will only fight, using any means at our disposal!"

Did we make a deal with the WCG?

I do believe I was slightly too strong in how I stated that. But in purchasing the copyrights to those works for \$2 million (plus what our insurance company contributed), we did not make a deal. Setting aside what we may have had to pay in damages (the WCG was asking for \$7 million, though I don't believe for a moment they would have received that), we would have spent more than \$2 million by continuing the trial. And, even with a victory in the Supreme Court, we still NEVER would have ended up with OWNERSHIP—the best we could have hoped for was *fair use* of those works.

God says, when you find the pearl of great price, sell everything to obtain it (Matt. 13:45-46). Matthew 19 talks about being willing to give up *anything* of physical value for the Kingdom of God (vv. 21-24). Proverbs 23:23 says, "Buy the truth, and sell it not" That is just what we have done.

In the beginning, Joseph Tkach Jr. said it was his "Christian duty" to keep those writings out of print. Now we OWN THE COPYRIGHTS. That's not making a deal—that's a TOTAL VICTORY for this Church, and a TOTAL, UNMITIGATED DEFEAT for them. They SURRENDERED! Not because of me, but because of God. God gave us this victory, just as He said He would in Habakkuk and many other prophecies.

Destroy the Documents?

To give you an idea of what a surrender it was for the WCG, consider this.

The WCG wanted to include in our ownership contract "paragraph 11," which read, "*Return of Produced Documents*: Each party will, within sixty (60) days after the execution of this Settlement Agreement, either (1) return all copies of documents produced during the litigation to the party that produced the documents (excluding those documents attached to documents filed with the Court), or (2) destroy all copies of documents produced by another party (except those documents attached to documents filed with the Court), and destroy all deposition transcripts and attachments in its possession, custody and control."

I simply would not agree to that clause. Why? Because, as I wrote in that Habakkuk article, God prophesies that we will expose them, and I was convinced that a big reason why God was putting us through this trial, allowing us to obtain so much information in discovery and in depositions about the real story behind the Laodicean falling away, was so we could bring it all to light.

Here is what we wrote back to them on March 3: "*Return of Produced Documents*: PCG was disappointed to see that this provision had been reinserted into the draft that Ralph [Helge] forwarded last week. This litigation has consumed an overwhelming amount of PCG's attention and resources over the last several years; while PCG has already agreed to return or destroy those portions of the record designated 'confidential' under the protective order, PCG will not further relinquish its right to the record that is not 'confidential' under the protective order. The 'return of produced documents' provision was not part of the original deal to settle this case, it would give WCG greater rights than it would have were this case to proceed to trial (in which case there would be even more documents and testimony that would be part of the public record), and it is contrary to principles of open and public access to litigation that have forced many courts of late to cut back drastically on stipulated efforts by parties to shield the litigation process from public view. Moreover, from a risk management perspective, our law firm simply cannot agree to any provision that requires us to return or destroy all records of depositions that we have taken and discovery responses that have been received in litigation. In short, PCG will not sign an agreement that contains a 'return of pro-

duced documents' provision. If this is a deal-breaker for WCG, please advise us of that now, and we will refocus our efforts entirely on preparing for the resumption of litigation."

We received a response from Ralph Helge within 30 minutes: "Upon consideration of the settlement agreement, in the spirit of Christian cooperation, we delete our paragraph 11 from the document we sent you Friday, and insert in its place and stead, the language from your draft, with one slight modification to further clarify the intent"

Why the quick response? Was this really done "in the spirit of Christian cooperation"? We fought them for SIX YEARS as they wanted to destroy these works, and now they talk about "the spirit of Christian cooperation"? John calls it the spirit of *antichrist*! (1 John 2:18). We are at POLAR OPPOSITES: They say it is their "Christian duty" to suppress these works; we say it is our Christian duty to get them to the largest audience possible.

The truth is, God was working things out behind the scenes to ensure the WCG caved in.

Right about the time we were talking about this contract with the WCG, they were having significant problems with their plans for the Pasadena campus. I believe there is dissension within their organization, and everyone can see that they are going down. That isn't going to endear a leader to his people, and I'm certain the man at the top of the WCG is losing some of his power. God is very capable of turning things against them—even turning them against each other. I'm sure that this was a big factor in their wanting to get out of their lawsuit with us. We always must trust that God will work things out.

We held our ground, and they caved in. This was not a "deal," but an abject surrender!

Exposure

Here is the prophecy that made retaining the documents such an important issue for us: "Thou art filled with shame for glory: drink thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered: the cup of the Lord's right hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful spewing shall be on thy glory" (Hab. 2:16). This is a very ugly picture.

"And remember, this is all in the context of the court case," I wrote in that Habakkuk article. "If we had won in the appellate court, this could never

Jesus Christ died for the world—He loved the world that much. Those are the same people we are trying to get this message to. We have to think like our Husband if we're going to be His wife.

have happened. We would not have exposed the WCG and the devil as we are doing now—as Habakkuk prophesied! ... [N]OW WE HAVE LOST THE SECOND ROUND, AND GOD HAS REVEALED VERY SPECIFICALLY WHY: *Satan and those he inspires must be exposed.*" This was a major reason WHY God allowed the case to go on so long—specifically so we could get all of that information through preparing our case.

Habakkuk 3:13 in the Revised Standard Version says, "... Thou didst crush the head of the wicked, laying him bare from thigh to neck." That is a real EXPOSURE!

The WCG wanted to sign this contract and then let bygones be bygones. I believe they thought they could DEMAND that we destroy all those documents, and that way they wouldn't be exposed. But how could we agree to that? We have a responsibility before God, and to God's people, to tell this story to the public! We weren't about to give in on this issue.

Selling Their Birthright

"Buy the truth, and sell it not" (Prov. 23:23). When you have the truth, God says you should not sell it. There aren't many situations where you would *be able* to or *need* to BUY the truth, but this was one of those rare times. People stole those writings of truth and acted like they were their own. God says to buy the truth, and that's what we've done—though it didn't cost us any more than it would have by continuing the court case. That's quite a victory.

But what does that say about the other side? What does God think about what *they* have done?

"The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi. I have loved

you, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord ..." (Mal. 1:1-2). Esau was the man who sold his birthright for a bowl of soup. That is exactly what the WCG has done.

"[Y]et I loved Jacob, And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever" (vv. 2-4).

This is really dangerous. Those people who sell their birthright, God will have indignation against FOREVER! That means they will lose their eternal lives. He will *always* have indignation against someone who would sell His precious truth—for a bowl of soup, or \$2 million, or any amount. They are on very dangerous ground, if they haven't lost their salvation already!

This is dangerous knowledge. You can't turn your back on God like that without God forming a *strong opinion* about it. He is very passionate about His truth, and about getting it to the world. You can only imagine what He thinks about them just throwing it away for some MONEY.

THOSE MEN CAST THE TRUTH TO THE GROUND, AND NOW THEY WANT TO LET BYGONES BE BYGONES!

This was a very dangerous move for the WCG. What was wrong with their thinking? Anybody can say nice words—but God holds us accountable for our DEEDS! The devil may have better words than anybody, but his deeds are atrocious! The leaders of the WCG say they have a "Christian duty"—but what are they DOING? YOUR DEEDS ARE WHAT WILL SEND YOU INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD OR INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE!

Beyond the Border of Israel

What is the real problem with what the Edomite Laodiceans did?

"And your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, The Lord will be magnified from the border of Israel" (v. 5). The RSV translates that, "*beyond* the border." God wants to be magnified BEYOND the borders of Israel—outside the Church. But these people just want to cling to a few things and destroy the rest. God says, *If you don't reach the largest audience possible, you will end up like Esau!*

JESUS CHRIST DIED FOR THE WORLD—HE LOVED THE WORLD THAT MUCH. Those are the same people we are trying to get this message to. WE HAVE TO THINK LIKE OUR HUSBAND IF WE ARE GOING TO BE HIS WIFE. So you can be sure that with His help and direction, we are going to take this message BEYOND THE BORDER OF ISRAEL.

Do we see the big picture like we should? The world is in total darkness. The only thing that can give them light is the truth that God has restored to His Church through Mr. Armstrong. There is no other hope. God wants to teach the whole world what Mr. Armstrong taught us. They MUST be taught it—and WE must LEARN it before this whole world blows up! And if we don't give it to the world, God says their blood will be on our head.

We have new revelation, but people can't understand it without the truth God gave to Mr. Armstrong. If Mr. Armstrong had three fourths of the truth and God is giving us the remaining fourth, people can't understand that fourth without the three fourths. Without what Mr. Armstrong taught, there is a virtual blackout of truth! If we don't get Mr. Armstrong's literature out there, essentially we are ABANDONING THE WORLD!

I saw a video that one of the Laodicean groups produced about itself. On one part of the video, they had a segment showing Mr. Armstrong presenting *Mystery of the Ages* to the sophomore class at Ambassador College. Seeing that, you would think, *These people must really love Mr. Armstrong.* But there wasn't one word on that video about REACHING THE LARGEST AUDIENCE POSSIBLE. They treat *Mystery of the Ages* like a little teddy bear to cuddle up with, but they don't DO ANYTHING WITH IT! They don't even believe what that book teaches!

Those people are just like the folks in Eugene, Oreg., in the early days of the work. Mr. Armstrong knew he had to go to Pasadena and establish a bigger work. *Why do you have to go?* they asked. *Why do you need a college? Why don't you just stay here and minister to us?* They simply didn't see what God saw, and what the end-time Elijah saw. He knew that God had a MUCH BIGGER PICTURE IN MIND.

Read Ezekiel 34, and you'll see the hard words God has for those ministers who FEED THEMSELVES rather than serving the people. They say nice things about Mr. Armstrong—but they are looking at his *personality*—in the same way the world looks at Christ.

God gave the thunder and lightning of revelation from Habakkuk in 2002—a great wonder in itself—and then, just one year later, He fulfilled it!

They talk *about* him, but THEY WON'T DELIVER HIS MESSAGE!

IF WE DON'T COME OUT OF THAT SELFISHNESS, WE CAN NEVER SERVE GOD!

That's why we fought this court case—God wants to know how *precious* this goldmine of truth really is to you, and how much you want to share it!

God has called a few people out of this world to help Him teach the world. Our victory was all about shining this wonderful light to the world. If Christ needed to die for the world, we need to sacrifice for them. God tells us we even need to love our enemies. We wouldn't even be here if not for what Christ did. Can you fathom the love that He has for this world—that He allowed them to savagely beat Him, even though He created them? That is a love beyond human understanding—but we must have that love.

Helping the Laodiceans

God accomplished a lot of different things through the court case and the victory. One big reason why God had us get involved in it is for the Laodiceans.

The Bible indicates that half of the Laodiceans will repent in the Tribulation. I believe that this copyright victory is going to help them. When they are in the Tribulation, they won't be able to talk about "Christian duty." Their only option will be to repent and believe the message Mr. Armstrong proclaimed! The fact that we have all this material is an impressive witness against them. And once they repent, they'll know exactly where the mantle of Elijah is!

In 6,000 years of man's history, there has never been MORE PROOF of where God is working than right now. When Christ was on this Earth, He mostly just taught His disciples. Mr. Armstrong restored ALL THINGS, and God has given

us revelation on top of that.

God is very wrathful about what has happened in His Church. Our work is responding to God's desire. "O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy" (Hab. 3:2). For six years we cried out to God, *In the midst of your wrath, in the middle of this crisis, remember mercy!*

We asked God for more faith to sustain us in this long court battle. We needed God's mercy when we made mistakes—when our faith was imperfect. God's wrath was strong against His Church, but He had mercy on His very elect.

Why did God have us pay \$2 million? Why not just give us the works for free? It's possible that us paying money will give someone who is trapped in deception a kind of plausible deniability. When you look at the facts, it seems undeniable where the God of Elijah is. But this may give our critics a little bit of wiggle room to continue justifying their rebellion—in a way that won't cost them their salvation. Maybe then they can still go into the Tribulation and repent and come back to God. God is doing everything He can to save them.

Revived!

Revive in Habakkuk 3:2 means to deliver from destruction of life. We were in a life-and-death struggle. The antichrist struck a death-blow at us and destroyed our number-one commission. If we had lost and the WCG had received what it was asking for, we could have gone under! But all we have to do is look to our Head, and we will never lose these critical battles. Now we have been *revived*—healed, made to live again.

In the Habakkuk article I wrote, "THE PCG HAS NEVER NEEDED REVIVING EXCEPT IN THE COURT CASE. This is a prophecy about God reviving us. So we need to prepare for a spectacular end! Yes—WE ARE GOING TO GET MR. ARMSTRONG'S WRITINGS." That was a *prophecy*, and it has happened. We have experienced a spectacular end! I was somewhat stunned that we received *ownership* of the copyrights—but I shouldn't have been! We probably should have expected it, the way God was communicating with us.

"O Lord, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save!" (Hab. 1:2). That was our prayer

throughout the court case.

"Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence are before me: and there are that raise up strife and contention. Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth" (vv. 3-4). That Habakkuk article explains how this is speaking specifically of the injustice in the courts that we experienced.

Verse 5, the very next statement, talks about a miraculous delivery from that injustice. What is interesting is that THERE IS NO MENTION IN THESE VERSES OF A VICTORY IN THE COURTS. It's all negative outcomes for us, and then, SUDDENLY, a double wonder! God obviously had something else in mind. He was not going to allow the courts to deliver us! He wanted everyone to know that it wasn't the WCG or the courts that freed us from bondage. It was THE GOD OF ELIJAH!

Of verse 5, I wrote, "God says He wants them to 'wonder marvelously.' The Hebrew says 'wonder, wonder'! ... I believe this has already been fulfilled in general, but is God also saying there will be a specific fulfillment related to the court case, a specific miracle, that will fill God's people with wonder? A miracle that will remove the injustices and destruction? Do we have the faith to believe?"

"I believe we will see something dramatic on the scene very soon! I can't read these verses any other way. This is in the context of a *revival*, and a *court battle*, and God says a DOUBLE WONDER IS COMING. God is going to revive His work, and I BELIEVE IT IS STARTING WITH THIS NEW REVELATION."

THIS COPYRIGHT VICTORY IS THE SPECIFIC FULFILLMENT OF HABAKKUK 1:5. And no one can take any credit for it. The God of Elijah gave us this victory. Period!

What makes it a *double wonder*? Perhaps the best possible explanation is the fact that God gave the thunder and lightning of revelation from Habakkuk in 2002—a great wonder in itself—and then, exactly one year later, He fulfilled it! That is a double wonder, coming very fast!

Specific Fulfillments

Habakkuk 2:3 says, "[T]he vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak" I quoted the *Anchor Bible* as saying, "These few 'prose par-

The way we fought in the court case is the crown jewel of our conversion—a real demonstration of our love for God, for each other, and for this world.

ticles' are enough to show that the discourse is not general, but it is referring to specific topics and concrete objects." I then explained, "God is getting extremely concrete and specific. We now see Habakkuk's prophecy is about a concrete, specific court case at a precise, *appointed* time."

There certainly are many specifics in Habakkuk's prophecy that we can see coming to fruition already. Let's look at a few more prophecies and see how God has brought them to pass.

Habakkuk 2:6 says (in part), "Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his!" I explained how this refers to the leader of the WCG taking *Mystery of the Ages* by using the court system. I wrote, "Why is Mr. Armstrong's literature not his? We could argue this forever, but that's what God says. He may have a court on his side, but God has already ruled on this issue. THE SUPREME COURT OF HEAVEN SAYS IT IS NOT HIS PROPERTY! So we don't have to worry about what the courts of this land say; we look to God."

Looking at Habakkuk, does it even make sense to think God would have had us *license* those works, or rent them somehow? Of course God would just say, *Here—they're yours! They're not his! You OWN them!*

Verse 7 says, "Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall bite thee ...?" I wrote, "Habakkuk tells us that PEOPLE ARE GOING TO RISE UP AGAINST THIS MAN. I don't know exactly *how* this will happen, but I KNOW IT WILL HAPPEN." This has happened—no question. The board of the WCG already has much more power than it used to have.

When I was fired from the WCG, I told Joe Tkach Jr. that this warning was the first sip of a very bitter cup he would have to drink. I believe us winning Mr. Armstrong's writings was another big gulp from that bitter cup.

Speaking of verse 8, I wrote, "Habakkuk says the *remnant* will spoil

this man. That means the firstfruits of God—or, according to *Gesenius*, 'that which is excellent or first.'" Later I wrote, "Through Habakkuk, God is telling us not to be discouraged, because HE IS GOING TO REVIVE HIS WORK BEFORE OUR EYES! And it will be in the context of the court case." Has this happened? Is that fulfilled prophecy? "NOW IS NOT THE TIME TO GIVE IN!" I wrote. "NOW IS THE TIME TO TAKE THE VICTORY!"

Habakkuk 3:3 talks about the Holy One coming from Mount Paran, in the context of the court case. I believe we must have had some special help from Jesus Christ in this victory. I don't know exactly how it happened, but I believe with all my heart and mind that it happened. Amos 9:1 talks about God standing by the altar and wounding the Laodiceans in the head. The commentaries say this is a rare and perhaps *personal* appearance of God. I believe it is a counterpart to Habakkuk's prophecy.

"In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: That *they may possess the remnant of Edom*, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doeth this" (Amos 9:11-12). That has happened! We now possess the spiritual remnant of Edom!

The Appointed Time

This victory is a milestone for the PCG. It is interesting to put it in context with other milestones in the Laodicean era.

In *Ezekiel: The End-Time Prophet*, I wrote, "[T]his first vision [the vision of Ezekiel 2] happened *five years* after Ezekiel went into captivity. Ezekiel's *last* vision occurred in the 25th year of his captivity (Ezek. 40:1). So it appears that Ezekiel was receiving revelation for 20 years. Let's consider that number for a moment.

"The third 19-year time cycle of the Elijah work ended on January 16, 1991. I explain this on page 149 of *Malachi's Message*. Ezekiel talks about a lot of specific dates. If you count one more 19-year time cycle in the Elijah work, that will end on January 16, 2010. That will also mark 20 years for the work of the Philadelphia Church of God—the same amount of time that God allotted Ezekiel to do the work."

Consider the notion that we have only 20 years to do this work. The first seven of those were directed at the Laodiceans specifically, with the deliv-

erance of *Malachi's Message* being the primary commission. The next six—the middle years—were spent in the court case. Do we have only seven more years to distribute these works to the largest audience possible? Whatever the case, 2010 is the end of a 19-year time cycle, and I believe something dramatic will occur. Will the Tribulation begin? Will Christ return?

In the Daniel booklet, I talked about the 1,150 days that occurred between Mr. Armstrong's death (January 16, 1986) and God cleansing the temple—when I understood and began writing *Malachi's Message* (around March 11, 1989). I was able to announce the copyright victory 14 years later, the Sabbath of March 8, 2003, the closest Sabbath to March 11.

I think these dates are interesting. God does talk about "the appointed time."

Overcome

Daniel 11 talks about Antiochus having intelligence with people inside God's temple (vv. 23-31). That is what Satan has done. And the leaders of the WCG have *betrayed the people of God!* That is what we were fighting against.

Christ says that if we overcome as He did, we will share His throne (Rev. 3:21). That means **OVERCOMING SATAN**. The devil's greatest passion is to destroy God's work; Christ's greatest passion is to complete God's work.

In this copyright victory, we have shown all the Laodiceans **HOW TO CONQUER THE DEVIL!** Over this six-year period, we **DID CONQUER SATAN**. II Thessalonians 2 shows that the man at the top of the WCG is very likely possessed by Satan. John calls what we're fighting *antichrist* (I John 2:18-19). To get through this trial, we had to overcome the devil—and we have done it! That should be as encouraging to us as anything! Now we can teach the world what true religious freedom is. The shackles of Satan have been broken.

We are here to build God's character so we can reach every person out there with this message—the largest audience possible! And that extends over into the Millennium and out into the universe! Thank God, we'll be able to teach that to Colonel Ramon, and that 14-year-old boy. We'll be able to tell them, *I want to help you fulfill your dream!*

Daniel 11:31 talks about God's "sanctuary of strength." What amazing strength we have when we use it!

"[T]he people that do know their God shall **BE STRONG, AND DO EXPLOITS**" (v. 32). That means they'll do **HEROIC ACTS**. The Revised Standard Version says they "shall stand firm and **TAKE ACTION**." *Soncino* commentary says they "shall show strength and prevail." And so we have!

Verse 33 warns that many shall fall. Ninety-five percent of God's people have fallen. We are the only ones left standing and fighting for God!

When you go through a war like this, it is also a time of purging. Verse 35 says that even "some of them of understanding shall fall"—even those inside the PCG—"even to the time of the end"—right up until Christ's return. We can't be shocked when someone leaves our Church. Wars create casualties. God will purge us if we get into the wrong attitude. Deserting your post in the midst of a war is not a small sin!

We're all weak, but we can't be weak as a way of life! We have to conquer the devil by getting on our knees and crying out to God for strength. There were many moments I didn't enjoy during those six years. But I knew we would win, and I knew I had to endure.

The real issue is, how much do you love the world? God wants us to think like Christ, who sacrificed His life for the world. "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:34-35). That is why we are here. **THE WAY WE FOUGHT IN THE COURT CASE IS THE CROWN JEWEL OF OUR CONVERSION**—a real demonstration of our love for God, for each other, and for this world. This identifies us to the whole world.

The more you understand that, the more you realize this is the greatest victory we could ever imagine!

A Monumental Victory

We all need to pray and ponder on the magnitude of what happened with this victory. I don't think the PCG will ever experience one greater.

How big is it?

When Daniel was trying to write the book of Daniel, Satan stopped the revelation for 21 days. God had to send Michael and Gabriel to conquer Satan, so the book of Daniel could be written and canonized. We are not on Daniel's level, but we fought for **ALL**

THINGS RESTORED through Mr. Armstrong, and we won! Because Michael and Gabriel fought with us, and Jesus Christ made a personal appearance, we won the battle.

We have to understand who we are dealing with. Satan has been cast down, and we are engaged in real **WARFARE!** And even when you defeat him as we have, he never stays down for long. But the nice thing is, when you see him so angry, you have to believe deep down that you are part of something monumental!

Fighting such battles builds character in us. We have to fight just as the angels do, just as Christ does. We have to fight if we want something so stupendous and wonderful as all that truth. Now, having come through it, our faith is stronger, and we will be able to have a greater impact on this world than ever before! This victory will change us as a people. We can know **FOREVER** that God will give us **ANYTHING** if we will fight for Him!

We have wondered many times whether a part of our work may be added to the Bible, in the book of Acts perhaps. If so, I'm sure this victory will be the highlight. This truly was our greatest hour. I'm sure this victory will burn brightly in our memories forever. What a thrill, not only to be a part of it, but to understand what is really happening!

Why do we keep talking about reaching the largest audience possible? Because the mantle of Elijah is here, and we have to complete the commission God gave the end-time Elijah. Revelation 10:11 explains it: "... Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings." That's **THE LARGEST AUDIENCE POSSIBLE!** This copyright victory is about the world.

We have had to make a few cut-backs in the short term to pay for these works. But I have total faith that we will build up to far greater strength than ever very soon. After all, why did God give us this victory? So we could reach the largest audience possible! That is our **REASON FOR BEING HERE**.

I know God will give us special blessings like we've never had before. And people are going to know by our sacrificing and doing whatever we can for this work that we are God's disciples, and that the mantle of Elijah is here. Because wherever you find the mantle of Elijah, you find the spell-binding miracles of God. ♦