

Letter to the Editor of The Way of the World

Gary Fleisher
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Photo date and location unknown

Dear editor:

I, as a conscious Christian, am upset b) your article in February Way of the World entitled "Faith in Time of Crisis, Introduction to the Book of Revelation." Contrary to the article, I believe that: (1) Jesus came to establish the Kingdom of Heaven; (2) John the Baptist came to prepare the way for the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven; (3) This age of evil is not a figment of our imaginations, but the real manifestation of Satan; (4) The last days are far worse than other times in history; (5) The book of Revelation was given to man by God to reveal the events at the time of the second advent of Christ; (6) God has not abandoned man to Satan; rather, He is working every moment, anxiously wanting to save man.

Revelation, to me, is much more than a "valuable monument" or a nice story. It shows the events and manner of the second coming of Christ and the marriage of the Lamb. In the Last Days reason alone cannot restore man to God. It is man's individual relationship with the Father through the Messiah that brings restoration or salvation. I pray that you will read the articles published by Rev. Moon; he has given me so much light on this subject.

As a Christian, I must disagree with Miss Frink's assertion that Jesus did not come to establish the Kingdom of Heaven. On page 17 she states, "Likewise, most passages dealing with the Kingdom of God, as taught by the Pharisees, John the Baptist, and Jesus do not come under apocalyptic literature, since they, too, deal more with this age, not an entirely new age to be created by God."

The Kingdom of God cannot be of this age, since Satan is the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4). His reign is not totally ended until after God, Christ, and their followers destroy Satan (Rev. 20: 10). Hence, Jesus must have been talking of a new age when referring to the Kingdom of Heaven, unless God and Satan can have peaceful co-existence, which is not a Biblical doctrine.

Jesus in his own words attests to the fact he came to establish the Kingdom of Heaven, "From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, 'Repent, the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand'" (Matt. 4: 17). Jesus says in John 12:31, "Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out." He states in Luke 10:9, "Heal the sick and say to them, the Kingdom of God has come near to you." In Matt. 10:7, he tells his disciples, "and preach as you go, saying 'The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.'"

If Jesus did not come to establish the Kingdom of Heaven why did God send Gabriel to Mary to say, in Luke 1:32, "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High and the Lord God will give to

him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever and of his kingdom there will be no end"? And why did the Jewish priests and wise men quote Micah 5:2 saying, "And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah are by no means least among the rulers of Judah, for from you shall come a ruler who will govern my people, Israel," when speaking of Jesus' birthplace?

The scriptures clearly show that John the Baptist was to prepare the triumphal way for Jesus. In Luke 1: 17 John the Baptist was prophesied to "Make ready for the Lord a people prepared," and in Luke 1:76, John was to "Go before the Lord to prepare his ways." To this end, he said in Matt. 3:2, "Repent, the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Not a long time away, but at hand. John described Jesus saying, Luke 3: 17 and Matt. 3: 12, "His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear the threshing floor and gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with the unquenchable fire."

This clearly shows that Jesus came to end Satanic dominion and create the Kingdom of God.

In the Old Testament, we find many many prophecies that Jesus would create the Kingdom of Heaven. Just look up some of the following verses: Psalms 2:6, 2:8, 22:27, 22:30, 72: 11, 86:9, 89:4, 102:28; Isaiah 9:6, 11:4, 60: 12; Jeremiah 23:5; Daniel 2:44, 7: 14, 7:27; Micah 4:7, 5:2; Zechariah 3:10, 6:12, 14:17, and a host of other verses.

On page 18, Miss Frink says "Because of the belief in two distinct and opposing powers, the necessity for two separate ages also arose." It is clearly not man's belief in evil that makes evil exist anymore than it is man's belief in God that causes God to exist. It is man's fall which created evil. By man leaving God's side and coming under Satan's dominion man created this kingdom of hell. In that case, we must say that it was man and Satan who made two ages necessary, since it was always God's will to create a Kingdom of Heaven, not an evil Kingdom. Otherwise, why would he have given Adam and Eve the command in Genesis 2: 17?

Later on the same page she writes, "God has temporarily abdicated and has left the world to Satan and his evil agents." I don't see how any Christian can say God has abandoned him. God has worked tirelessly since the fall to restore man. Who but God would raise up so many great men and prophets to restore man? I know that materialists, following the thinking of Descartes and Herbert, must deny God's work in the world, since they cannot physically sense His presence. But, I know that if you pray with the proper heart that you must feel God. He has not abandoned man. God still wants all to be saved. (Matt. 18: 14)

Still on page 18, she states, "At the point at which the world can become no worse, when it has reached the ultimate evil and corruption, the Apocalypse or Revelation is given." This shows a lack of historical and Scriptural understanding.

Revelation was written at a time when there were no world wars, nor worldwide plagues or famines; there was no great social upheaval at that time. Even though the Christians were persecuted by the Roman government, only 5,000 were martyred. A small number, looking at modern death tolls. It seems to me that the last days are much more terrible than the days when the Roman Empire kept world peace for 200 years. You've only to read II Peter, Revelation, or other descriptions of the last days to see what I mean.

Miss Frink flatly states on page 20, "...a vision of things to come. This is often just a literary device to give the writing impressiveness." Later she implies that sometimes these visions might possibly come true, by chance. If you read Revelation and look at the situation around us, you can see that many of those things prophesied are coming to pass. If you look around you, you cannot deny that these are the last days. You can see this from so many standpoints both Biblical and secular. I suggest that you read the Divine Principle, chapter three, published by the Holy Spirit Association, for more details.

Miss Frink further asserts, "What is the value of Revelation? For its own time and readers it had great value in enabling them to withstand the persecution under the Roman Empire. It supplied them with the support they needed to remain loyal and faithful to the Christian religion. Today it is a valuable monument to all people of faith in time of crisis. It is a testimony to their courage and steadfastness, as pioneers of Christianity in conflict..."

The description in Revelation of the Last Days is far more than a "monument" or "testimonial" to the past. The prophecies in Revelation have not all come to pass as yet. Revelation certainly had value in the past, but it has even more value now. Without it how would we know of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, the Great Beast and his Prophet, the Witnesses, or so many other things? The Bible is valid today. If you compare a Christian family or individual with an ungodly family or individual, which will have higher morality? Which will have the best children? Which will be the best neighbor? Why? Because of God's Spirit, and His word as shown in the Bible.

Scholarship is a wonderful thing; however, it is outward and physical in outlook. In order for knowledge to have value, it must be used for the Godly side. Knowledge apart from God can have no value (John 5:39-40).

Contrary to what many believe, God is alive and active in the world today. He is bringing His children together to meet with Christ at the Second Coming. He is active in world events, and is guiding His forces to the ultimate victory and complete salvation.

Yours in Christ,

Gary Fleisher
Birmingham, Alabama

Note looking back on this letter to the editor

I wrote to the editor because I was surprised that the most important English language Unification Church publication of its time, The Way of the World, was starting to publish a lot of articles that weren't founded in Unification Church teachings and theology.

I was amazed at the reaction my letter received from Unification Church members. I wrote the letter tongue in cheek, thinking that the authors already knew what I was saying, since it was strait from the Divine Principle. But it looked to me as if it shook some authors into realizing that what modern (1974) scholarship was saying isn't what the Unification Church believed. The reactions I received made me think this letter caused some to re-evaluate their faith and their relation with the Bible, True Parents and Jesus.

*Gary Fleisher
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