

JOEL'S ARMY

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Second edition, 2006.

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Published 2006
Printed in the United States of America

Individual copies available for \$3.50

Distributed solely by:
Discernment Ministries, Inc.
PO Box 2535
West Lafayette, IN 47996

<http://www.discernment-ministries.org>

PREFACE

This book is a snapshot in time. Originally published in 1991, it was a helpful sketch of the Latter Rain doctrines coming forth from the "Kansas City Prophets" and entering the Charismatic and Pentecostal churches. This movement had existed on the fringes of the Pentecostal community, and there was little reason to worry that these aberrant teachings would affect the mainstream evangelicalism.

In retrospect, this book is so much more important than anyone ever realized. We now know that what was then called the "New Wave Theology" movement has now tremendously grown to become the New Apostolic Reformation.

This book is a still photo, capturing a pivotal moment in history. The new doctrines of the New Apostolic Reformation were still "emerging" fifteen years ago. As such, these new doctrines were much more blatant. None of the church growth movement experts had come in to "tweak" them so that they would be marketable to the greater evangelical community. Nobody had come in to scale them down yet, in order to gradually introduce them as "progressive revelation." In this book, you read the actual doctrines in their most pure, unadulterated form. And it is quite chilling!

The New Order of the Latter Rain, a cult that began in the late 1940s, taught a number of heresies, including 1) an overemphasis on "imparting" spiritual gifts and 2) the erroneous teaching that the Church must be built on a foundation of present-day apostles and prophets. Leaders at that time included William Branham, George Warnock, Ern Baxter, and George Hawtin. This cult eventually developed connections with the Shepherding and Charismatic Renewal movements, and the "Kansas City Prophets."

This self-proclaimed group of modern-day "prophets," at the Kansas City Fellowship perpetuated the doctrines of Latter Rain through the teachings of Mike Bickle, Paul Cain and others. It is here that this booklet picks up the story, for many of the quoted excerpts come from leaders at the Kansas City Fellowship prophecy conferences.

Just at this moment in history, a confluence was beginning which was to have massive repercussions throughout the rest of evangelicalism: John Wimber of the Vineyard Movement connected with the Kansas City Prophets. John Wimber had previously been picked up as an "experiment" by C. Peter Wagner at Fuller Theological Seminary for "signs and wonders" classes. For several decades Fuller had been

laying considerable groundwork for the formation of new doctrines – ecclesiology, eschatology, missiology, soteriology, etc. Wimber’s connection to KCF proved to be the catalyst for the beginnings of what C. Peter Wagner was to later call the “New Apostolic Reformation.” The esoteric doctrines of the Latter Rain movement became an integral part of his post-modern evangelical canon. And because of Wagner’s influence, KCF leaders who would have been obscure in 1991, such as Mike Bickle, are now widely known throughout evangelicalism.

What you are about to read exposes some of the most pure forms of the New Apostolic Reformation doctrines – unadulterated – that can be found. They are wholly heretical and deeply disturbing. As this book goes to press as a second edition, these teachings are rapidly gaining impact and influence in the wider Christian world. What would have shocked fifteen years ago is now easily accepted.

May the Lord use this book to lead many back to His Word.

Sarah Leslie

“And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.” (2 Timothy 3:24-26)

Introduction

There are many new revelations and new winds of doctrine sweeping the Church today. Sensationalism seems to be the guiding light leading souls into extremes that are very far from the Truth that is laid out clearly in the Word of God.

"Joel's Army" is one term among many that are all being used to describe the same teaching. We hear much about the "New Breed," "New Wave," etc. All of the terms cited below represent basically the same teaching.

Where does it come from? Where is it going? This booklet attempts to lay out a clear basis of understanding so that you can further your study.

If you are not willing to have your pet teaching questioned, is it because it will not stand in the Light of God's Word? Beware! The purpose of this writing is to warn the Church – be prepared at all times to give a reason for the hope that is within you! Be willing to stand straight and tall and say, "But, it is written." In other words, back up your stand with Scripture. God has given us His Word for the final authority. His Word is relevant for today.

Joel's Army

New Breed

Overcomers

First-Fruits

Elijah Company

The Bride

Manifested Sons of God

Phineas Priesthood

New Wineskin

New Wave

Latter Rain

JOEL'S ARMY

BLOW THE TRUMPET! Hear the noise of the chariots! The chariots are leaping across the mountains! The army of the Lord is approaching! *The earth will quake before them; the heavens shall tremble.... A great people and a strange; there hath not been ever the like.*

Utterly awesome, this army is mentioned in Joel. This is the verse used by teachers and "prophets" to declare that God is raising up an **army** in these days. The **Endtime army**. Do you want to be a part of it? Just think – you will supposedly be able to climb the wall like men of war. Even when you fall on the sword you will not be wounded. Crowds clap and cheer as they visualize the wondrous feats they will be able to perform in the Name of the Lord! No one wants to miss God and not be a part of what He is doing! It all has such a "spiritual" ring to it. Tears well in the eyes of hungry seekers as they wait for a new experience. Perhaps, they imagine, even tonight the heavens will open and that Endtime "anointing" will be poured out. There is always an expectancy that perhaps this is the time "it" will happen.

The imminence of such a supernatural manifestation was shared with Charismatic Christians overseas. Latter Rain "prophets" from the Vineyard Ministries International visited England as part of their world outreach. Their "prophetic" message was that **God is raising an army in these last days to execute judgment and dominion throughout the Earth**. They declared that the time is at hand for God to pour out His Spirit (the Latter Rain) on the Church in an unprecedented scale, in fulfillment of Joel 2:28, marking the beginning of the great "new thing" God is doing on the earth.

Vineyard Ministries have held conferences overseas and throughout the U.S.A. Churches and denominations have been proselytized and preyed on with a "gospel" that leaders claim is ordained to bring forth:

JOEL'S ARMY

1. the greatest revival the church has ever known;
2. the greatest baptism of the Spirit the Church has ever experienced;
3. the greatest Army (Joel's Army) distinguished by invincibility, immortality and divinity;
4. the greatest purging (inquisition) in the history of the Church;
5. the greatest ministry – the Prize of all Ages; and
6. the greatest miracles, supernatural signs and wonders, far exceeding that of the Apostles and Prophets of old.

This false gospel shows no regard for:

1. Israel as an everlasting chosen nation of God and their national repentance and restoration, both physically and spiritually, in one day at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ (their Messiah). (Gen. 17:7,13,19; Is. 66:7-8; Jer. 31:35-37; Zech. 12-14; Rom. 11:1-2,25-27);
2. The great outpouring of the Spirit on Israel (the Jewish nation) and on all flesh, Jesus Christ returns from heaven with His saints (the Church) at the end of the tribulation period. (Zech. 12:10-13; Joel 2:28; Acts 2:16-21);
3. The Rapture – the catching away of both the dead and the living saints to meet the Lord in the air (I Th. 4:23-18; 2 Th. 2:1; John 14:11-3; Cor. 15:51-56);
4. The Judgment Seat of Christ (II Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10-12);
5. The Seven-year tribulation (Dan. 9:24-27; Matt. 24:21-22; Jer. 30:4-7; Dan. 12:1; Rev. 6-19); and
6. The descent of Christ from heaven with His saints (His TRUE army) at the Battle of Armageddon. (Zech 14:5; Jude 14; Rev. 29:14)

According to this false gospel, the great out-pouring of the Spirit mentioned in Joel 2:28-29 is to have its complete fulfillment in these days (this generation) when God will pour out His Spirit in full measure on an unprecedented scale – even exceeding that of the Disciples and Apostles on the Day of Pentecost. In fact, they believe that this baptism will empower a “New Breed” of people (“Joel’s Army”) with supernatural qualities. Their entire Last Days scenario contradicts orthodox dispensational views. Even more serious, this view undermines the Gospel of the Deity of Christ. Anything that even remotely undermines the Deity of Christ, or ascribes deity to man (or an **army** of men) is an antichrist doctrine.

References in the book of Joel pertaining to Israel and the “Day of the Lord” are spiritualized to apply to the Church. Literal Israel becomes “the Church” and the “Day of the Lord” is seen as the manifestation or “incarnation of God” in this Joel's Army. This is antithetical to the dispensational view which holds that the “Day of the Lord” refers to the literal Second Coming of Christ with His saints. The proponents of the “Joel's Army” heresy are notorious for reading between the lines and spiritualizing Scripture. They are even spiritualizing global events to parallel their outlandish prophetic views. It seems to give them a deep feeling of being spiritually perceptive. In researching their materials, we see this time and again. By all accounts this belief system is “Gnosticism” to the core.

In the New Wave (New Apostolic Reformation) theology, we find that whatever God says or promises Israel is dogmatically applied to the Church; and in some cases this done to such extremes that the Church is deified. The danger is that spiritualizing God's Word in this way can result in idolatry and fanaticism. Because they rely upon the old Gnostic 2nd-century allegorical method of interpreting the Scriptures, the modern “prophets” have come to believe that the Church is the exclusive beneficiary of **all** God has promised to Israel. The Latter Rain false prophets and teachers are so bent on spiritualizing Scripture that even the “sun turning dark,” the “moon turning to blood” and the “earthquakes” in Joel are spiritualized to apply to the Church. It is absurd, if not outright blasphemous, the way these leaders spiritualize God's Word.

This Gnostic approach to the Bible diffuses into the Church to the point where some groups have lost the literal meaning of Scripture completely.

SYMBOLISM FREELY USED

The following quote from a message on Joel's Army was delivered at a Vineyard conference in Anaheim, California, a number of years ago. It clearly illustrates how absurd spiritualizing the literal meaning of the text can become:

...And here's what I think that the sun and the moon mean on a symbolic level. I think this is a horrible thing He's talking about in verse 31 when He says The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood... because in the Old Testament, the sun frequently stands for the Lord or for the Son, S-O-N. See, it's a perfect symbol for Him, because it brings light to the whole world and it has light of its own that radiates out from its being... It's a more powerful source of light than anything in the world. The sun frequently stands for the Lord Himself and what I think He's saying here is that the Lord Himself will cover Himself with darkness during this time. Psalm 18:11 says that, it says that the Lord can and at times will hide Himself with darkness. And so I think that what the Lord is saying is that there's coming a time during the last day ministry when the Son of God will hide Himself from the earth and especially from the rebellious. So there'll be a time when the rebellious will call out and they'll want to come to the Lord, but they won't see Him. They won't be able to come to Him. (Jack Deere, "Joel's Army," Vineyard Ministry International, audio cassette, 1990)

Question: Is there ever a time that the Lord quits knocking at the door? What happened to the verse, "Whoever cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out"? The above quotation from Deere is implying there will be a time when salvation will not be offered. Then why have a Last Days ministry? What is the purpose of this ministry? To what then are they called? Answers to these questions will become clear to you as you read on. Deere continues:

The second thing He says is that the moon will be turned to blood. Now, the moon, I believe, is a symbol of occult power, the powers of evil. The moon is first of all the light of the

night... and there is revelation in the darkness. There is light in the powers of darkness. The powers of darkness, occult powers, do have revelation or do have light, but only it's a light that is characterized by darkness and used for evil, and it's ultimately deceptive. The moon is only a reflector. It has no light in and of itself. Satan has no light in him at all. The moon makes a perfect symbol of occult powers. And the moon is also beautiful. And there is a beautiful side of the darkness and the evil and that's why it's so alluring. So, He speaks of the Lord as the sun and He says, "There's coming a time when I will not be easily found, when I will cloak myself with darkness," but there's also coming a time when the occult powers, the moon—when they'll be turned to blood. Now this could mean two things. It could mean when it says the moon is turned to blood, it could mean the occult powers are put to death, because blood is the sign of two things in the Bible: death or it's a sign of grace and life. And I think He means here the moon is going to be turned into a sign of grace or life. It's the ultimate deception, so that people on the earth will turn to the occult power and they'll look upon it as a source of grace and life just like the blood of Jesus. It will be a counterfeit. (Jack Deere, *ibid.*)

The application is most confusing, to say the least. Does the moon really mean life or death? And is God turning His back on us so all is lost? These are seriously confusing and irresponsible statements. Has this "Joel's Army" now become our salvation?

We are told that we should just accept these radical differences in theology, but not use these differences as an excuse for breaking fellowship. However, strangely enough, it is not **us** who have broken fellowship. Rather, the testimony I receive over and over is that when someone questions the "new teaching" they are called divisive and asked to leave the church – sometimes even thrown out physically.

ENDTIME WITNESSES?

To add insult to injury, the Church is being told that some of these literal signs **do** occur in the Last Days (such as: the sun turning dark, the moon turning to blood and earthquakes), but that they do not come as a result of a sovereign act of God's wrath towards wicked men at the end of the Great Tribulation

known as the cataclysmic phase of the DAY OF THE LORD (The Second Advent of Christ). On the contrary, we are led to believe that these cataclysmic events are caused by the **Last Day "Prophets,"** two of whom are thought to be "Endtime Witnesses" – namely "Prophet" Paul Cain and "Prophet" Bob Jones. We are told that these false prophets will manifest these supernatural signs and much more by their "incarnate" powers. Their powers will supposedly be so great that they will call forth Joel's Army by their prophetic word.

Jack Deere brings out this teaching aptly in his "Joel's Army" message:

You see, everybody, every scholar I know, every commentator I know, knows that these passages in Ezekiel 37; 38, and 39 are all talking about the **Last Day** ministry. They all know it's the **Last Day** move of the Holy Spirit – and how is it going to be? What's going to happen to this lifeless church? How is it going to start? Well God could just speak a word from heaven. He could just cause a revival to start among us. He could just put the conviction of sin in our heart supernaturally by His Spirit. But that's not how He's going to do it. He's going to raise up the prophetic. What brings the bones to life here? It is the prophetic word inspired by God. "Prophesy son of man;" and then it happens. At each stage of the way prophecy, and then life, comes. And then what's the result of that prophetic? **A vast army.** (Jack Deere, *ibid.*) [emphasis added]

Jack Deere continues by proclaiming the "prophets" are now on the scene:

You see, that really is how He's going to end the last day ministry. You see why we're excited about someone like Paul Cain or Bob Jones coming on the scene? Or others that we've met? We're excited because that's how He's going to end. It's a signal that the **Last Days** are very close at hand and this is New Testament also. Revelation 11:3 – you know those two powerful witnesses in Revelation? You know what they are, first and foremost? They are prophets. He said they will prophesy for 1,260 days. He's going to end the last days just before His Son returns with a prophetic movement that will sweep the entire face of the earth and will eclipse anything we have ever seen before... the significance of these signs and wonders. They just happen on the earth. But they don't just

happen on the earth. They come because they are prayed for and they are predicted by God's people. (Jack Deere, *ibid.*) [emphasis added]

SIGNS

Jack Deere continues:

Prophets will predict it. It's already happening. It's like the first time Paul Cain came here. Remember? John told us this story. I was talking to Paul Cain on the phone and I said, "Paul, when are coming to visit John? We've been talking about it for two months." And Paul said, "I don't know, but the Lord told me on the day I come, there'll be an earthquake." ...You know at 3:38 in the morning, the morning of the day he arrived here on Saturday morning, that earthquake came centered in Pasadena and then the day after he left, that earthquake came in Armenia that took all of those thousands of lives. You see, that's not unusual anymore. That's going to be normal for prophetic people that God wants to endorse. He's done that through Bob Jones four or five times – given cosmic signs in the heavens that could not be contradicted. He's done that through Bob Jones. He will do that regularly now.... (Jack Deere, *ibid.*)

Question: Can we build on these signs? Do they prove the authenticity of the prophets? Our Lord Jesus Christ warned, "*A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign*" (Matt. 16:4).

Why do thousands of devotees flock yearly to a small poor Yugoslavian village? The apparitions of Medjugorje give the pilgrims the sense of their own miracles. The pilgrims are enthralled that they can look directly into the sun for several minutes without being blinded. Others say they see the sun pulsating. Some even report physical healing. A seminarian said he saw a red glow emanating from the sun and saw it start to beat. He asked, "What does that mean?" and he heard the words, "Jesus in the Eucharist and spreading his peace around the earth."

What did this sign in the heavens do for him? It caused him to go out to try and increase devotion to the Eucharist. Needless to say, at the heart of the Eucharist is the doctrine of

transubstantiation (the belief that the communion is the actual body and actual blood of the Lord).

Malachi Martin, a Catholic priest who authored many books including *The Jesuits* and *The Keys of This Blood*, said in a radio interview a few years ago that the Pope had a special revelation. This revelation told him that within his lifetime he would be authenticated as a moral and religious leader by a sign in the heaven. This sign would be such a clear happening that all men (from New York, Denver, Tasmanian Jungle, Singapore and Beijing) would know he had this role!

Signs and wonders are not limited to the Vineyard "prophets."

"...An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas." (Matt. 12:39)

SUPERNATURAL BEINGS

The "Day of the Lord" is re-interpreted by the false prophets to mean that Christ will come to His Church and **incarnate** (become God in flesh) an **army** of believers – thus giving them supernatural qualities to execute judgment on the Church. The "Day of the Lord" is also misconstrued to mean a time of judgment, starting with the Church. The key text they love to quote is from I Peter 4:17: "*For the time is come that judgment must begin at the House of God.*" The common orthodox interpretation of the text is that God will punish the righteous when they sin, and punish the ungodly at the coming judgment. This is quite adequate and clear. Ever since the inception of the Church, the Holy Spirit has been in the business of judging and purging the Church. God's sovereign judgment will continue to chasten, cleanse and purge the Church until the judgment seat of Christ when the saints will receive their rewards and the records of service are set straight.

The "Day of the Lord" as seen through the eyes of the New Wave "prophets" will be a time when **Joel's Army**, led by these "prophets," will pour out God's wrath on the church! Then, they claim, for the first time in two thousand years the "pure church"

will come forth. In other words, the blood of Christ did not avail, nor will it, in the last days because this Joel's Army and the "prophets" will do what Jesus Christ's blood could not; i.e., "cleanse" the Church. If indeed it takes this Joel's Army to purify the Church, then all the preaching of the Cross from the early Church to the present was in vain. And rather than the Cross of Christ being God's final answer to "walking in newness of life," we should look for another.

This Joel's Army heresy, as it is applied to the Church and the world, is not only in total conflict with the true Gospel of Christ, but represents a radical new rendition of the doctrines of redemption and purification. By all analyses it is "another gospel." It poses a real threat to unstable churches because it is yet another great deception beguiling the Church.

CLEANSING ACTION

The following is a further account of Jack Deere's "bloody slaughter on the church by Joel's Army" that will turn the scene of the Church to blood and darkness before perfection.

The Scripture never encourages us to warn the unbeliever of the wrath that is to come. When the prophets speak to God's people, they warn God's people about what's to come. And then he says to God's people, not to the unbelievers, but he says to God's people, "let the land, those who live in the land of Palestine, let them tremble" – now how could that be? Our Lord Jesus is coming back, we all believe that. But why should God's people tremble? ...He's going to come TO the Church. He's going to come TO the Church before He comes FOR the Church. 1 Peter 4:17 says that judgment is near and that it's going to begin with the House of God... The Lord Jesus, before He comes and visits judgment upon the earth, He's going to come and **visit it upon His Church**. And no one, no one, in His Church is going to escape that judgment....

You really want the **Day of the Lord to come**? Woe to you, woe to you who long for the **Day of the Lord**. That **Day** will be darkness, not light... He's coming in judgment. He's coming to **purify His Church**. He will not come back for that **Bride**. He will come to **purify that Church** and make it **His Bride** and that's why judgment is going to come....

How is God going to bring judgment upon His Church, and then judgment upon the land after His Church? He's going to do it with a **large and mighty army**. Now what is this **army** like? He says, first off in verse 3, well, first of all He said that this **army** is totally unique. This **army**, there's never been one like it, and there never will be one like it in ages to come... When this **army** comes, He says it's large and it's mighty. It's so mighty that there's never been anything like it before... "Begin the slaughter and begin it in the temple and begin it with the elders, the leaders of my people." And they walk through the land and they start and they begin to slaughter and, you know God has already started that? He has already started with the biggest names in His household? He has already started the slaughter... and it is coming now among the Church. He'll start with the leaders, but He'll move out into the Church. That's why, when He says in verse 2, "It's a day not of rejoicing and happiness, it's a day of darkness and gloom. It's a day of clouds and blackness, like dawn spreading across the mountains." You really want the Day of the Lord to come? Woe to you, woe to you who long for the **Day of the Lord**. That **Day** will be darkness, not light. (Jack Deere, *ibid.*) [emphases added]

This sounds like the mother of all battles!

Reading and listening to the kind of war this Joel's Army is supposed to wage against the Church in the last days, we learn that not only is it totally unscriptural, but it reflects an ominous spirit. Far from being redemptive, it is destructive and even sadistic. It is a spirit that denies Jesus Christ is come in the flesh and that the Church was purchased with His precious blood.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."
(Ephesians 5:25-27)

The Joel's Army "prophets" manifest a bigoted, belligerent and vindictive spirit. "*Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of*" (Luke 9:54, 55). This spirit is identified in the following

statement of Rick Joyner when he uses Phinehas as an example. Phinehas executed judgment with a javelin for the Lord.

The Lord's purpose in preparing for the harvest is to JOIN, not to separate. The dismantling of organizations and disbanding of some works will be a positive and exhilarating experience for the Lord's faithful servants. They will not be just leaving something behind, they will be going on to a much greater work.... Those serving in leadership must trust their discernment and REMOVE the stumbling blocks.

To be distinguished from the "stumbling blocks," the Lord will raise up a great company of prophets, teachers, pastors and apostles that will be of the spirit of Phinehas. Just as the son of Eleazar could not tolerate iniquity in the camp of the Lord, this "ministry of Phinehas" will save congregations, and at times, even whole nations, from the plagues that will be sweeping the earth.... (*The Harvest Trilogy*, The Morning Star Publications, 1989, p. 10)

Repeated and regular reference is made to the death Ananias and Sapphira suffered as a result of lying to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5). Christians are reminded that if they resist or rebel against what God is doing through the "prophets and apostles" they too could suffer the same fate. The Church is being told that the ministry that judged Ananias and Sapphira is being revived and restored to the Church by the "prophets." Fear of this happening is growing widely. Members are afraid to speak out against the errors and abuse. Out of fear, many submit to the "prophets."

Not only is this a very dangerous position, but is tantamount to sinning against the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit. We dare not substitute these false "prophets" for the true ministry of the Holy Spirit – God forbid! We wish that these "prophets" would settle for the Spirit of Jesus Christ – full of Grace and Truth.

JOEL'S ARMY/LATTER RAIN

Joel's Army shares the same mindset as the Latter Rain Movement and they are indeed "birds of a feather." Their bizarre claims of new revelation and deep insight conspicuously lack substance, other than expressing subjective feelings

(passive or emotional). The ingredients that hold their religious beliefs together are: 1) personal experiences; 2) mysticism – understood only by the elite; 3) allegorizing Scriptures; and 4) preaching based on intuition, feelings or perception (as opposed to the criteria of Biblical Truth). These subjective ingredients appeal to Christians who are unstable in the Word of God.

The quotation below is a good example of how the Scriptures are allegorized, taken out of context and applied in a typical cultish manner. Note how the term "Joel's Army" is presumptuously and conveniently applied to the Church with no regard to: 1) the literal interpretation or meaning; 2) the context; and 3) the fundamental principles of hermeneutics (science of interpretation). Throughout the quote an allegorical and mystical meaning is in evidence. False prophet Paul Cain brought this teaching in through his Latter Rain roots. This comes out very clearly in his "Joel's Army" message:

This army is also in the New Testament. It's referred to as the **Manchild**. I know some of you are going to disagree with this. Don't you even stop to disagree. Revelation 12:25... If you disagree, just file it in miscellaneous and check it out. And don't bother with it. When we get to heaven we'll check it out and you'll find out I'm right. Here it is, this great **army** in the New Testament is the **Manchild**, Revelation 12:5; the **Overcomers**, Revelation 2 and 3; the 144,000 **Servants**, Revelation 7:3; the **Bride** or the **Lamb's Wife**, Revelation 19:7 and 21:9; and the **White Horse**, Revelation 6:2; the **Firstfruits**, Revelation 14:4; the **Precious Fruits**, James 5:7; the **Wise Virgins**, Matthew 25:1-13; the **Manifested Sons of God**, Romans 8:19-23. And it's certainly a remarkable fact that none of these names are expressions applied to the saints of God or at any other time in history. But all of them are in their context and promises showing undeniably **that they belong to the end of time... to this present generation**; Matthew 24:34. You know, it's always today. Of course today the Lord says today, today, today... And God wants us to realize once again in closing that there's going to be a great **Company of Overcomers** prepared for this mighty ministry which I call the **Prize of All Ages**. And again, God's offering to the believers of this generation a greater privilege than was ever offered to any people of any generation at any time from Adam clear down through the end of the millennium. (Paul

Cain, "Joel's Army," Kansas City Fellowship, Southside Meeting) [emphases added]

MANIFEST SONS OF GOD

These "prophets" disregard dispensational truth and claim that **Joel's Army is God's Word incarnated, which makes them "Manifest Sons of God."** Essentially, this is Gnosticism. As Charismatics they owe their beginnings to the "Latter Rain Movement" – the mother of present day Manifest Sons of God teaching. History recalls that this mysterious "New Age Army" concept, with all its spiritual trimmings, found its way into the classic Pentecostal sphere through the Latter Rain movement in 1948. At that time the Assemblies of God, as well as others, noted the unsavory nature of it and its potential adverse effect on sound biblical truth. No time was wasted on the part of the Assemblies of God and others to confront it head on. Since that time, relative stability and great progress has been enjoyed. But, once again this "strange fire" has flared up – history repeating itself.

The Gnostic aspect of the "Manifest Sons of God" heresy can readily be identified in four ways:

1. The claim to perfection through progressive revelations beyond the Scriptures;
2. The written Word of God is held in low esteem and experiential knowledge very high;
3. The Word of God is perceived as a symbolic book;
4. The claim that the "god-man" dwells in every member and is waiting to be discovered and manifest by the believers.

There are very strong traces of these characteristics in the Joel's Army and Manifest Sons of God teachings.

Sam Fife was one of the original Manifest Sons of God "apostles" who came out of the Latter Rain movement. He was a leader of the group referred to as "The Move of God" or "The Body." One of his teachings was that "Concerning the miracles that Jesus did while He was on earth, these were done by the

soul power that is inherent in all of the sons of Adam; i.e., that Jesus perfected the best of man's nature and later, after the resurrection He perfected the God nature." He later claimed to be "I AM." An analysis of Sam Fife's teachings was done in the 1970s:

The first premise held is that both the Old and the New Testaments have first a letter (or literal) meaning and then a spirit (or spiritual) meaning. This brings us to progressive revelation of the Scriptures, as they don't claim to have all the spirit mysteries of the Word yet revealed, but it is being revealed precept upon precept.

The next point concerning the Scriptures is that the Bible is not the final authority for Truth. Rather, the "spirit" is their final authority, followed by the witness of the corporate ministry. The Bible becomes secondary to this "spirit" and corporate ministry.

Just to illustrate this point, Sam Fife has said that in these last days that whatever the corporate spirit in them leads them to do – whether or not they have scripture to stand on – that is what they will do. In a private conversation, I asked him if he felt the spirit leading him to kill someone, would he do it? His answer was in the affirmative...

...Sam makes it clear that since Jesus went into oblivion and does not now exist as an individual entity apart from his spiritual body (the Church), that we should not expect to see him come again at the second advent. When Sam speaks of the Lord's coming again, he is referring to the appearing of Christ IN a group of people, God's elect. (Raymond Yenkana, "Report on Sam Fife", June 12, 1978)

A lady called me, gasping in horror. A noted evangelist had just come on a Christian television program, held up his Bible and said that he held it in no more esteem than the *Readers Digest*. This is being done more and more as the "new" revelations take precedence over the written Word of God. Are you gasping in horror, or are you cooing out the soothing words, "Touch thou not the anointed"? As the Church apathetically sits by, the pastors stand in line at The Old Country Buffet or McDonalds. Meanwhile the teaching on **Joel's Army** is taking root in one form or another in many ministries.

Below are a few quotes from other ministries in which the same teaching is emerging loud and clear.

MORRIS CERULLO

Morris Cerullo is also a self-proclaimed "prophet." He had a program in early 1991 entitled "Manifested Sons of God." He couldn't have been more blatant! However, the teachings were indeed more blatant than even the title could have possibly suggested. Yet, the listeners looked very sincere as they chanted out blasphemy on his command.

Jesus, being the brightness of all that God has and is. He was the reflection, image and manifestation visibly of all that God has and is. What is God's purpose and plan and objectivity? Sons and daughters who will manifest all that God has and is. Can you imagine the power in your being when you face the devil? You represent all that God is and all that God has!

Stretch out your hands and say, **"God is going to have a people. I'm a part of god's Endtime Plan."**

"...The disciples were able to see the literal glory radiating... change taking place. They saw Jesus as He really is... Jesus was the visible expression of God. Jesus was the Son of the Living God. Now, **who are you? Sons of God!** ...Everyone say it. What is working inside of us is the manifestation. When you look at me, you are looking at Jesus.

To see Jesus **was** to see God. To see me **is** to see Jesus.

Jesus knew who He was. Don't you think it is about time we know who we are? [emphases added]

At this juncture Morris Cerullo questioned three ministers about what God is doing on the Earth. Their replies were exuberant and followed the same trend.

1. God is duplicating Himself in the earth;
2. God is releasing His life through the Body; and
3. the whole of creation is waiting for the Manifestation of the Sons of God.

The excitement of the people indicated that they believed it was indeed **Joel's Army** that had finally arrived. Morris Cerullo continued:

Today I am a Son of the all powerful almighty God of the Universe. His life flows through me. God has birthed the life of Christ. The fullness of the Godhead dwells. I am a partaker of the **Divine Nature**. I am a joint heir with Jesus. I have inherited all things... Everything Christ has belongs to me... Jesus didn't come to teach you how to defend yourself. He came to lead you in an attack. Jesus went into Satan's territory. The strategy of Christ was not to wait until the enemy came. He taught us how to march out, go into his territory... We are not on the defensive. We **declare war**... "I and the Father are ONE." How's that for taking the offensive! [emphases added]

BENNY HINN

Have we become so used to cartoon characters that do such unusual things that we don't even notice the same type of deception abounding in the Church? Children wake up on Saturday morning to see turtles that have had a "magic potion" or "ooze" thrown over them that transforms them into Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. Benny Hinn blows on his audience and supposedly it is the breath of God that transforms them into "Super Beings." Benny Hinn, on October 20, 1990, aired a sermon on TBN entitled "God's Super Being." Below is an excerpt:

When you were born again God gave you this brand new being. This brand new being was created before the foundation of the... Your spirit, ladies and gentleman, is God-like. He's God-like in every way. Say after me, "Within me is a God-man." Say it again, "Within me is a God-man." Now let's say even better than that. Let's say, "I am a God-man." When you say, "I am a God-man," you're not talking about your flesh or your soul. You're talking about your spirit-man. "This spirit-man within me is a God-man." Say after me, "He's born of heaven, he's a super being." Say, "I'm born of heaven - God-man. I'm a God-man. I'm a sample of Jesus. I'm a super being." Say it! Say it! Who's a super being? "I walk in the realm of the supernatural." Say it! Who walks in the realm of the supernatural? Get the spirit-man renewed. When he's

strong, he'll hold off sickness. You want to prosper? Money will be falling on you from left, right and center. God will begin to prosper you, for money always follows righteousness. Say after me, "I hold my destiny." The reason many of us ask and never get is because our spirit-man isn't strong enough to give it to us. Say after me, "Everything I want is in me already."

JELLO THEOLOGY

So many of the false prophets and teachers today get very upset when told they are teaching "Manifest Sons of God" doctrine. They deny it vehemently. Yet, they go on teaching it! If you hear someone teaching that God is raising up "Joel's Army" or "Super Beings," you are hearing Manifest Sons of God teaching in its purest form.

The theology behind Manifest Sons of God is rather like jello. It just changes its shape depending on the mold you put it into. Yet it is still jello. It comes as "Dominion Theology" or "Kingdom Now" teaching. It even can be called "The Bride." Next time you hear it, it may not be called Joel's Army, but the "Phineas Priesthood" (those who executed judgment in the name of the Lord in Numbers 25).

JOEL'S ARMY CALL-UP

The visitation of the "Joel's Army" false prophets in England (mentioned earlier) was initiated with the following prophecy purported to be of God: "Revival will break out, and then spread through the whole of England and into Europe." This prophecy was also used to advertise the importance of the prophetic conference, thereby raising the level of expectancy to a high pitch. However, Barry Killick, in *Prophecy Today* (1990), with reference to the prophets in England, reported:

Vineyard Ministries international came to Britain. People were blessed, but the promised October revival did not take place.

[John Wimber] testified to God having spoken to him concerning "the Church." The word came, "tell them I have need of it." The issue, he said, "is proprietorship or ownership. We don't own the church, Jesus does, and He wants it back. [When did He lose it? ed.] As Jesus went into Jerusalem on the

back of a donkey, so he will return on the back of a victorious church. One in the eye for any dispensationalists among us!" [Here we have a typical example of allegorical preaching as opposed to the truth, ed.]

John Wimber had brought his four children to the conference, believing that something very significant was going to happen and he didn't want them to miss it. If outpouring had equaled expectation, the promised revival would have swept over us, but I think it fair to say that nothing outwardly remarkable happened during the four days of the Docklands meetings.

Many would view revival as meaning thousands of conversions with the Spirit of conviction sweeping among the people in meeting-places, streets and houses. We didn't see that. There were healings, deliverances, words of knowledge, prophetic predictions, but no apparent sign of revival. One of the organizers observed that "revival" is a very subjective thing. In other words, everyone can interpret it according to their own feelings – rather than objective truth.

Following Wimber's last sermon, there was silence, almost as if he had allocated time for a significant outpouring. Instead, there were a few utterances from the congregation which no one could hear, and the meeting was closed half an hour earlier than expected. Whether anything more happened than at an average Spring Harvest gathering, only time will tell. (Barry Killick, "John Wimber at Docklands," *Prophecy Today*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 1990)

PARADIGM SHIFT

That the Church is experiencing a paradigm shift, there is no doubt. The "gospel" we are hearing coming from the lips of the new popular ministries certainly is not the pure Gospel of Christ nor does it even closely resemble the old-time orthodox Gospel. The unchanging Gospel of Christ was clearly distinguished and defined by the Apostles of Christ. By their definition, the current prophetic "gospel" of Joel's Army with its admixture of error and truth is not only unholy and deceptive, but is accursed. It is what the Scriptures call "another gospel."

The Church is both the heir and guardian of God's precious Word – the Defender of the Faith. Therefore it is not ashamed to say, "Thus saith the Word of the Lord." The true Church

believes the Word of God is "Yea and Amen," absolute, pre-eminent and final! Any beliefs to the contrary cannot represent the true Church. Be careful! Biblical truth is the staple diet the Church subsists on; anything else will cause death! The fundamental doctrines of the Bible are in the foundation of the Church and are the basis on which the orthodox faith rests. Whatever therefore threatens Bible doctrine, the faithful will resist, resent and expose. At least several basic orthodox doctrines determine whether or not a movement or an individual is a true witness to the Gospel of Christ. These doctrines are: 1) The Deity of Christ; 2) Redemption through the Cross of Christ; 3) Salvation by faith according to grace; 4) The resurrection and ascension of Christ; 5) The Rapture (the catching away of the saints out of the earth); and 6) The Second Advent of Christ with His saints.

Over and against these orthodox beliefs, a new gospel with definite "New Age" overtones is emerging within the Church. It is in direct conflict with Scripture and orthodox views Hence the vociferous outcry within the Church. Some of the erroneous teachings of the "new gospel" are as follows: 1) the deification of man - denying the exclusive Deity of the Son of Man (Christ); 2) the perfection, immortality and glorification of the elect (Joel's Army, Manifest Sons of God, etc.) in the absence of the literal presence of Christ; i.e., denying the Rapture of the saints; 3) Scripture is not the only source of redemptive truth, thereby denying the Written Word; 4) doctrine does not really matter as to the true unity of the Church; i.e., denying the foundation of the Apostles' doctrine; 5) the new ministries, that of the so-called prophets and apostles are not to be judged according to the Scriptures, but rather subjectively according to the fruit of their lives, to the extent of totally denying the criterion of the Word of God. Here we have a seed-bed for a hybrid mixture of truth and error.

Does God ever approve the mixture of truth and error? Is it alright to mix truth and error if one is sincere, or if this mixing is done to accomplish Scriptural goals? Of course not! God's Word always demands the separation of truth and error and believers who disregard God's commands in this respect will eventually pay a terrible price even though such a violation of

Scriptural principles might at first appear to produce beneficial results, (*FOUNDATION*, Nov./Dec., 1990, Vol. XI, Issue 6, Fundamental Evangelistic Association)

DOMINION/KINGDOM NOW TIES

If you do not believe in a literal "catching away" or "rapture," a literal anti-Christ, a literal tribulation, a literal Armageddon, etc., then you will get caught up in the words of today's "prophets" who are telling you a very different gospel that has come from allegorizing and spiritualizing the Word of God. Their agenda is political, with a view to take over the Earth. Naturally, they claim to take it over for Jesus. Those recently attending the Docklands conference in England were promised by John Wimber, "There is something higher than being Baptist and that is to be in this **Endtime Army** and involved in **this greater prize** of bringing everything on the Earth and above the Earth and below the Earth to the feet of Jesus." Clifford Hill in his publication *Prophecy Today* summed it up:

The opportunity of joining the "new breed," an elite group of believers endowed with supernatural power that would enable them to be part of the army of "dread warriors" that God was said to be raising up in our generation. According to John Wimber this is a type of "Joel's Army" who will overcome all opposition to the gospel and eventually subdue the nations. This teaching is part of what is known as "dominion theology" which teaches that an elite army of "overcomers" will either destroy or subdue all the enemies of Christ until they eventually gain power and authority throughout the world. The government of the nations will be upon their shoulders and when all the secular authorities, governments, princes and kings have finally submitted to them, Christ will return and they will present the kingdom to him. (*Prophecy Today*, Vol. 7, No. 1, England)

EARL PAULK

Earl Paulk has been teaching along these lines for some time. In *The Wounded Body of Christ* he says:

We have been foreordained of God to become that people who will be so glorified that we can bring Christ back to the earth. This glorified Church must make the earth God's footstool

before Jesus can come again... Let me describe the glorified Church. The glorified Church will be approved of the Father... it may be only a nucleus of people, a firstfruit. Somewhere on the face of this earth, God will find a people – how large or small numerically I do not know. But those people will adequately become a witness of God to the nations of the earth.

The glorified Church will be a mature Church. She will be a Church that is no longer splintered... a Church unified in faith - not in doctrine, mode, practice or organization. She will represent the Spirit of unity in Christ... the Holy Spirit will gather people from around the earth whom the Spirit of God will unite to become the Bride of Christ. They will be mature and able to transcend all doctrinal or organizational differences.

...In the light of that, we must understand that the Church must gain such unity of faith that it will have a profound impact on the world. The Church must speak so that the whole world will listen... When the Pope speaks, Catholics listen in the parts of the world where Catholics are predominant. Before Christ can come again, the Church must take such a strong stand that the whole world will say, "That is the voice of God speaking to us."

...The last enemy to be conquered is death. Who will conquer it? A mature Church will come forth with the kind of authority and power that will be able to stand in the very face of Satan ["Joel's Army," ed.]. When the Church reaches that state of maturity, God will be able to say, "This generation of the Church does not need to die. She has reached a place of maturity. I will translate her because her maturity pleases me." What was the testimony about Enoch? He pleased God. When the Church becomes so mature that as a Body we achieve the unity of faith, God will find her pleasing and say, "She is mature enough now. She doesn't have to die..." ["Manifest Sons of God," ed.]

...The greatest test of the spirit of the antichrist is its attitude toward the church. The attitude isn't directed toward Jesus. Jesus is not personally a threat to any community unless there is a living, thriving church functioning in that community. Therefore, the spirit of the antichrist refuses to recognize that God is here in the flesh. (Earl Paulk, *The Wounded Body of Christ*, Dimension Publishers, 1985)

Does that hit you? Here the true Church is being called the spirit of the antichrist! The ones who do not have their eyes opened to see that the Church is proclaimed as GOD HERE IN THE FLESH Now! Manifested Sons of God! Are you willing to accept that "we are to look for another"? Can you accept the heresy that the Church now coming forth and being manifest is the coming of Christ we've been looking forward to since He ascended into heaven?! And that it is what the two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, "*Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this SAME JESUS WHICH IS TAKEN UP FROM YOU INTO HEAVEN, SHALL SO COME IN LIKE MANNER AS YE HAVE SEEN HIM GO INTO HEAVEN*"?!

BILL HAMON

Bill Hamon has been teaching along these lines for an even longer time. In *The Eternal Church* (Christian International Publishers, 1981) he states:

Each restorational advancement of the Army of the Lord has established denominational forts that are given responsibility to maintain the purity and power of that truth... New recruits are now being drafted and trained and older soldiers and generals are being put through intensified training for the next advancement of the Church Army. They are being purified by the Baptism of Fire... Are you ready? Where do you start? What will you do? A new government must be established, a new way of life for those millions of people. You are now ready to rule and reign on your overcomer's throne! (pg. 374)

So, what is ahead? The **Manifested Sons of God!** Bill Hamon, on page 385 of the same book, lays it out.

The Earth and all of creation is waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God, the time when they will come into their maturity and immortalization.... When the Church receives its full inheritance and redemption then creation will be redeemed from its cursed condition of decay, change and death.... the Church has a responsibility and ministry to the rest of creation. Earth and its natural creation is anxiously waiting for the Church to reach full maturity and come to full sonship. When the Church realizes its full sonship, its bodily redemption will cause a redemptive chain reaction throughout all of creation. ["Paradigm Shift," ed.]

Again, who is glorified? The Church, the Manifested Sons of God! The cry of our hearts should be "*THAT I MIGHT KNOW HIM IN THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERINGS, BEING MADE CONFORMABLE UNTO HIS DEATH.*"

Many of the terms that are being twisted sound so Scriptural. Hence, the deception. This teaching is also heavily promoted in the video called *The Bride*. On viewing this video my seventeen-year-old son was distressed at the distortion of Scripture. The video is full of inaccuracies and completely based on the Kingdom Now/Dominion viewpoint. Pastors must be warned to not allow this video to be shown to their congregation unless they are showing it with disclaimers to teach their congregants how to discern false doctrine. The line-up of commentary in their advertising tells the story:

"...a message of hope and victory for today's broken and wounded Church." – Vinson Synan

"For too long the Church has been crippled by an escapist mentality. [The Rapture, ed.]. *The Bride* confronts us with the fact that, through His people, Christ is presently overthrowing the powers of darkness and establishing His kingdom on earth." – Malcolm Smith

The Church of Jesus Christ is not feeble! By saying this, the Cross of Christ is made of none effect! God **does** have a people. He has those who will not bow their knee to Baal! The Church is alive and well. The blood of Christ has never lost its power!

THE GOSPEL BEING CHANGED

Have we been hearing a distortion of Scripture for so long that we do not recognize error any more? Is the church going to sit complacently by and allow the written Word of God to be corrupted? The "Christ" that is being preached today is a "bloodless" Christ. In fact the basic Gospel is continually and subtly being changed. Jack Deere's theology has also become jello, for he says, "The Scripture never encourages us to warn the unbeliever of the wrath that is to come. When the prophets speak to God's people, they warn God's people about what's to come." (Jack Deere, *ibid.*)

There is a serious problem here. This view is leading people to believe that the simple message of the Gospel is inadequate. The power of the cross of Jesus Christ is being reduced. According to *Biblical Perspective*, (Vol. 111, No.4, July/August 1990), Robert Dean notes that the chorus book at the Vineyard has 83 choruses, but 82 fail to mention the cross. The question is: Is there a departure from the simplicity of the Gospel of Jesus Christ which is the Power of God unto salvation?

We must all be cautioned that the Word of God has very strong things to say about those who do not abide in the Doctrine of Christ.

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." (2 John 9-11)

Sadly enough, those who are duped by this heresy say doctrine doesn't matter. When faced with the evidence, they will shrug their shoulders and say, "Well, that isn't what they meant." Another excuse will be, "You took the quotations out of context." The truth is that the quotations in their full context offer an even more frightening glimpse of what is awaiting these souls who refuse to allow their sound mind to discern according to the Word to God. They will brush aside the realities with, "Oh, you know God does weird things. He did weird things in the Bible and people just don't understand when He does weird things today." Honestly, how weird do you have to get before you wake up? Will it take jello diluted into koolaid in a steaming jungle to bring the church to her senses (e.g., Jim Jones)?

Both the Biblical writers and the early Church Fathers felt it vital to contend for the faith. They did not think it unspiritual or a form of pharisaical religion to stand up for fundamental Biblical truths found in scripture. (Viola Larsen, "The Manifest Sons of God," Apologetics Resource Center)

And I'm certain they would not maintain the attitude that "immediate and heavy discipline will fall on those who take it upon themselves to publicly criticize and attack others' ministries. The world will know God has sent Jesus when they see us acting in love towards one another..." (Paula Sanford, *Elijah House NEWS*, Jan, 1991)

It is **love** that is the motivating force to warn the Church of the errors. I know that many of the teachers are dear men of God. My own father loved the Lord with all of his heart, mind and being! Yet, I remember even he enjoying the idea of "entering immortality" when he heard it taught. It can be exciting to hear a message like Kansas City Fellowship's Mike Bickle proclaiming, "We'll have the power to raise people from the dead, that even death won't stand before the power of the Church. We'll see those four days Lazarus kind of deals. The Lord's going to begin to give those in the days to come." (School of Prophecy, Session 7, Vineyard Ministries, 1989)

FACE REALITY

As Pentecostals we love the moving of the Holy Spirit in our midst. We rejoice when the sick are healed and deliverances wrought, and we pray for revival. However, we look for a revival that changes lives and brings souls to their knees in repentance before God. There are so many non-Gospel ideas and heresies intermingled with the Charismatic message these days that the true Gospel of Christ is losing its effect. The unholy admixture is not only watering down the Gospel, it's also converting Christian thought to New Age. To enhance the effectiveness of certain ministries, spiritual demonstrations and experiences are being sought outside of the Gospel of Christ. As a result of this paradigm shift in the thinking of Christians, the term "repentance" has lost its biblical meaning and the old fashioned altar-call is fading into insignificance. Nowadays, whatever idea, novelty or gimmick attracts a following is latched onto and exploited to the fullest extent. Another ill effect on the Gospel comes when strange doctrines are ministered by popular TV, radio or conference speakers. The euphoria of their charisma and popularity seems to make whatever they say seem like sound doctrine.

If we have been in the evangelical world any time at all, we have all at one time or another expounded doctrine that was merely mimicking some famous evangelist. After further study, we have had to acknowledge that we were merely on a bandwagon, swallow our pride and go on! I must admit to some pretty dumb things myself. But, I must be willing at this point to allow everything I write and say to come under the scrutiny of the Word of God. Every truth and doctrine must be judged according to the written Word of God. This is the only way that we can properly judge the visions and revelations that are pouring forth today.

DON'T BE DECEIVED BY TERMINOLOGY

Another subtle deception currently abounding comes through the use of terminology to lure Christians into thinking that a very high form of godliness will earn them a distinctive place in **Joel's Army** as a potentate. There is a great emphasis on praying and becoming holy before the Lord. It sounds so good – so attainable. Yet when Bob Jones and Mike Bickle discuss intercession, a perfectly scriptural term, they are meaning something quite unscriptural.

Bob Jones: "Intercession releases revelation and revelation will release proclamation - so get on your knees and get what God's wisdom is and then blow the trumpet – and it'll work."

Mike Bickle: "Okay, let's get that... **Intercession releases revelation**... revelation releases the proclamation under the anointing to bring it to pass." ("Visions and Revelations," KCF) [emphasis added]

On the surface, the above discussion sounds as though Bob Jones and Mike Bickle are exhorting Christians to pray for grace, understanding and power to preach the Gospel of Christ with boldness. But, that is not what is being shared. Far from that! The meaning behind this is that Christians should pray to become "Manifest Sons of God" in "Joel's Army," thus becoming the oracle of God and the executioner of God's wrath on those that fail to comply or conform to the "New Order" of the "Manifest Sons."

George Warnock, who was directly involved in the Latter Rain revival of 1948 in Canada, wrote what was called the "bible" of the Latter Rain. It is important to note that George Warnock was Ern Baxter's (one of the leading shepherds of the Shepherding Movement) personal secretary for 2-3 years.

By faith all things are and shall be possible. The very dispensations themselves are but weak barriers and obstacles if men of faith are enabled by the Spirit to reach out and leap beyond them. Enoch did it. So did Elijah. And so shall the Sons of God. The Word of faith shall grip their hearts, and they shall reach out and appropriate the Resurrection and the Life ["Manifest Sons of God," ed.] even now in this life. If they do not, Christ never will return to earth. For God hath said "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." (Ps. 110:1) And the last enemy is Death. (George Warnock, *The Feast of Tabernacles*, 1951, self-published, Canada)

So accordingly, "Joel's Army" would arise to overcome the enemies of both man and Christ. This is also brought about by a "secret inner coming of Christ" to some Christians, which would "transform" them:

Christ should visit the saints in the last great Feast and minister His life "in secret" before He is openly manifested! Christians think it is a horrible thing that Christ's second Coming should be spoken of in this manner... When a Christian comes to that place where he really appreciates and understands and enjoys Spiritual things, then he can truly rejoice in the fact that **Christ is coming back again to be manifested within.** (Ibid, p. 109) [emphasis added]

It is no secret that Warnock believes that Christ's second coming involves "the Church. He wrote,

But a great secret in God's counsels was this: Christ was to appear twice, first in Incarnation, and secondly at the ends of the ages. Now we are awaiting Christ's second Appearing, this time in power and glory in the saints, in the fullness of His Body... Christ's first Appearing was in the Head only, in one Man... Now **Christ will appear in His Church the Body.** (Ibid, p. 107) [emphasis added]

This is what is behind the doctrine you hear today that Christ must come TO His Church before He can come FOR His Church. It has a very spiritual ring to it. The ring speaks of holiness and righteousness before God. We all long for His Righteousness and His Holiness to be manifest in our lives.

However, using Christian terminology does not make the doctrine correct. Bob Jones, a prophet from Kansas City says that

"...the Church is in no condition for the Lord to come today... He's going to come for a church that is mature in righteousness... progressively going in this righteousness until you take on the **very divine nature of Christ Himself** and you begin to see Christ in the Church. Christ won't come for The Church until you see Christ **in** The Church. Until the Church looks like Jesus. **Papa** [God, ed.] planted Jesus, He sowed Him down here in this earth to have a whole nation of brothers and sisters that looked just like Jesus and he will have it. His Son was **Alpha Son**, your children are the **Omega** sons and daughters."

Mike Bickle interjects here, "Jesus was the beginning, but our children and us, we're included in this... we're the end of this thing. ["Manifest Sons of God," ed.] Jones continues:

The Church is asleep, but when she gets woke up, there's not any power... when she gets woke up and joins together in an **army**, there's not any power anyplace that can stop her, for she'll know nothing but victory when she joins hands and becomes one in purpose and that's to reveal the kingdom on the face of the earth. ("School of Prophecy," *ibid.*) [emphasis added]

In these serious days we need more than a jello theology that is always in a state of flux. The deception is so widespread, and has been infiltrating the Church for so long, it is most difficult to get a handle on. The Word of God is very clear in teaching us how to avoid error.

The most important single principle in determining the true meaning of any doctrine of our faith is that we start with the clear statements of the Scriptures that specifically apply to it and use those to interpret the parables, allegories, and obscure passages. This allows Scripture to interpret Scripture.

The Dominionists frequently reverse this order, seeking to interpret the clear passages by using obscure passages, parables, and allegories.

The second most important principle is to consistently interpret by the literal, grammatical, historical method. This means the following:

1. Each word should be interpreted in the light of its normal ordinary usage that was accepted in the times in which it was written.
2. Each sentence should be interpreted according to the rules of grammar and syntax normally accepted when the document was written.
3. Each passage should also be interpreted in the light of its historical and cultural environment.

Most false doctrine and heresy of Church history can be traced to a failure to adhere to these principles. Church is filled with examples of disaster and wrecked lives wrought by men failing to base their doctrine, faith, and practice upon these two principles." (Hal Lindsey, *The Road to the Holocaust*, Bantam Books, 1989)

Let us look at it as simply as possible and point out the "Endtime revival" error and compare it with the truth of the Word of God.

THE FALSE JOEL'S ARMY: AN ELITE COMPANY

In order to have a clear understanding of how this Joel's Army teaching is coming forth, let us go over the background of the teaching. The teaching does not have its roots in the Word of God. The roots are in "revelations" that then find Scriptures to try to back them up.

According to Paul Cain, when he was 19-years-old he saw the Angel of the Lord. The Angel was standing in his majesty like a warrior and he had a bright and shining sword in his hand. With that sword he pointed up to a billboard that had a sign on it that said JOEL'S ARMY NOW IN TRAINING. He asked the Lord what it meant and the Lord took him by the hand and walked him through the book of Joel.

Bob Jones, a "seer" from Kansas City also has "seen" this Army. In talking about the Army he says:

They will move into things of the supernatural that no one has ever moved in before. Every miracle, sign and wonder that has ever been in the Bible – they'll move in it consistently. They'll move in the power that Christ did. Every sign and wonder that's ever been will be many times in the last days. They themselves will be that generation that's raised up to put death itself underneath their feet and to glorify Christ in every way... and the Church that is raising up in the government will be the head and the covering for them. So that that glorious Church might be revealed in the last days because the Lord Jesus is worthy to be lifted up by a Church that has reached the full maturity of the god-man! ("Visions & Revelations," Fall 1988).

John Wimber says this Army is

Those that are humble of heart and those who have entered into the apostolic suffering of the End Times... There will be a time where even as in Acts 2 suddenly, as they were gathered, in the midst of them, the Lord came and with an anointing beyond anything; that has ever been given to man before. Something so astounding, something so marvelous, that God has kept it as a mystery, as it were, behind His back; and He is about to reveal it to the ages. He is about to reveal it. With the judgment of all mankind will come this incredible incarnational endowment of God's Spirit and we will see the Elijahs.... This **Endtime Army** will be made of the Elijahs of the Lord God and the characteristic of that ministry is the turning of the hearts of the fathers to the sons and the sons to the fathers... getting our hearts ready that these that are being prepared by the spirit of God – they are going to receive a visitation. They are going to receive a great light and they are going to be turned to the Church... Soon He will build the temple... There will be a filling of the temple. That is why we are prophesying and saying to you that it is coming soon. While in the midst of our gatherings, while in the midst of our intercessions, while we are praying, while we are doing the things that Jesus talked about – these things – the Greater Things will come. Suddenly, immediately right-away a change – in a moment – without notice – the twinkling of an eye the Lord will fill His temple and the anointing of God, the power of God will come. (John Wimber, Docklands) [emphasis added]

Jack Deere states that

...this army is totally unique. This army, there's never been one like it and there never will be one like it in ages to come... It's so mighty that there's never been anything like it before. Not even Moses, not even David, not even Paul. What's going to happen now will transcend what Paul did, what David did... what Moses did, even though Moses parted the Red Sea... there'll be a numerous company... Revelation hints at this when it talks about the 144,000 that follow the Lamb wherever He goes and no one, no one can harm that 144,000. See, that's a multiple of 12. What's 12? Twelve is the number of the Apostles, 12 is Apostolic government. And when you take an important number in the Bible and you multiply it, it means you intensify it. So, 12,000 times 12,000 = 144,000. [Wrong math, ed.]. That is the ultimate in Apostolic government. Revelation talks about that. Well here Joel is talking about it now in different words, a powerful, a **Mighty Army** with many Pauls, many Moseses, many Davids. ("Joel's Army," Ibid) [emphasis added]

This is portraying an "elite" special group which is exactly what the Jehovah Witnesses teach. The Jehovah Witnesses claim that they are the 144,000 of Revelation 7 and 16.

Mike Bickle also brings this thought across.

There's Apostles, there's Imminent Apostles and there's **Most Imminent Apostles**... There's various levels of Apostles and the Lord was showing that... out of this movement there would be 35 apostles... that will be of the highest level of apostolic ministry... the whole government of this movement in it's highest level in all places it goes... the government rests on Apostles and Prophets... Though I believe there will be hundreds apostles in this movement and every movement will have its apostles and prophets, I believe God. He's merging apostles in a number of movements now, and He's going to add prophets to the prophets that are already there, and He's going to bring us to higher statures. ("Visions & Revelations," Ibid) [emphasis added]

THE TRUE ARMY

It is hard to fathom how this cheap imitation, that does not even take an expert to discern, is being mistaken for the

wonderful, glorious Army that Joel is talking about. In the book of Malachi the Word of God says, *"But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?..."* There is no flesh that will be able to stand in His Presence. This Army spoken of by the Prophet Joel is the TRUE ENDTIME ARMY that will return at the DAY OF THE LORD. This happens when Christ returns with HIS SAINTS (His real Endtime Army) at the end of the tribulation. (Joel 2:10-11; Zech. 14:5; Jude 14; Rev. 19:11-21; II Thess. 1:7-10). When our King of Kings sets His feet on the Mount of Olives. When Israel repents and is saved as a Nation in one day. When all the forces of Hell are let loose at the battle of Armageddon. *"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered the heart of man the things that God has prepared for them that love him."* This marvelous, terrible Day of the Lord will cause every other day in history to dim in comparison. This all happens after the Church has been raptured (or "caught up" to meet the Lord in the air) out of the Earth and glorified in His physical Presence (1 Thess. 4:16-17; Rom. 8:22-25). After the Antichrist has wrought his deadly havoc. After the remnant (144,000 of the Jewish nation) have ministered throughout the time of the tribulation and been translated as the "manchild" to heaven. (Isaiah 66:7-8; Rev. 7:3-8; 12:1-5; 14:1-5).

MESSIANIC JEWS BEING DECEIVED

It is also hard to understand how even Messianic Jews are being deceived by this teaching today. Yet, in Scripture the Antichrist does make a pact with Israel (Dan. 9:27), so obviously he is able to deceive the nation as a whole. Therefore we shouldn't be too surprised at the way this deceptive teaching is taking the Messianic Jews and Church as a whole into an unprecedented apostasy.

Apostate teachings such as "Joel's Army," "New Breed," "Manifest Sons," "Latter Rain," "Elijah Company," "Son of Man Company," etc., all have three basic traits in common.

1. Discredit the Word of God.
 - a. Wrest the fundamental doctrines "as they do also the other Scriptures" (II Pet. 3:16)

- b. Allegorize the truth away.
 - c. Deny the literal meaning of Scripture.
 - d. Compare the Bible to other books and irreverence the written Word.
 - e. Place their revelations on a par with Scriptures.
 - f. Emphasize their thoughts and ideas above Scriptures.
 - g. Esteem the authority of the Church over the Scriptures.
2. Deify Man.
- a. "Change the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped... the creature more than the Creator."
 - b. The Church (man) is the ongoing incarnation of Jesus Christ, in other words, the Church IS Jesus Christ come in the flesh.
 - c. The believer is a god-man, i.e. a supernatural being.
 - d. The focus of the "gospel" centers on MAN – his self love, esteem, glorification and dominion.
3. Disregard Israel (the Wife of God). Israel is an outcast and has been replaced by the Church.
- a. "Ethnic Israel's" rebirth depends on the "Son of Man Company" (The Endtime "prophets") and not the Messiah (Jesus Christ) at His Second Advent.
 - b. "Ethnic Israel's" only hope of ever being restored is contingent on the prophetic word of the prophets and being birthed into the "One New Man Company" of the Church.

Subtlety and deception have always been part of Satan's strategy in "spiritual warfare," but the latest doctrinal maneuver – the Church giving birth to Israel – is a master deception. It is postured to kill two birds with one stone. Kill the belief that Israel is an everlasting people of God, and that Israel

is to be saved and reborn spiritually in one day through the advent of their MESSIAH – Jesus Christ. Satan knows his time is short, that this age is drawing to a close and the advent of the Messiah is at hand. Therefore, he is wasting no time doing everything in his power to cause the demise of the nation of Israel. As in the past, he will go to all extremes to estrange and frustrate Israel's Messianic faith and hope. And what better means can he use than the apostate Church?

The following is an example of yet another distortion of Scripture, the Church and the Messianic message:

"The very nation [Israel] that once gave birth – now is in need to be birthed by another. Who will provide it?... This premise of spiritual revival still hinges upon the rising and completion of the ministry of the prophetic "Son of Man" who is to prophecy the life-giving Word of God. Today the Lord is calling forth a Son of Man Company to corporately prophecy and speak to Israel's lifeless, hopeless white bones until the vision is completed. The church is birthing Israel [He used the illustration of Ruth coming back with Naomi Ruth 4:13, ed.] Who was this son? Who was this male child of whom the neighbor women said, "a son has been born to Naomi." How could it be that old lifeless and bitter Naomi is now given credit for the birth of this child? Boaz was not Naomi's husband, nor was it her womb that brought forth the child, yet the prophetic declaration was that the child was born to Naomi. Young and loving Ruth offered her vibrant womb so that old and wrinkled Naomi could bear a male child one last time. There is a young and loving church whom God is calling forth to lend her womb as a chamber of travail and tears to old and hopeless Israel that she might bear a son. Who is this Son? And what name did they give Him but Obed. He is the father of Jesse, the father of David.

Obed means a worker, a servant, one who perfectly does the will of Him who sent him. [Only Jesus was perfect, ed.] Indeed such shall be the virtue and quality of character which will be evident in Israel's last son ["Manifest Sons of God," ed], Israel is destined to give birth [through the Church, ed.] one last time at the end of the age. And, as that which she birthed at the first century transformed the world so shall it be in the last. Isaiah 26:1,8. (Reuven Doron, *THE MYSTERY OF ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH, An Overview of End-time Dynamics*

Between Jew and Gentile, "The One New Man," 1991, self-published)

If history is anything to go by, it would be fair to say that should Israel fail to fulfill the so-called prophetic view of the Church giving birth to Israel, Israel will be blamed and accused of continued stubbornness and indifference. She could again become the scapegoat for reckless and irresponsible theological views.

Israel's only Hope is her Messiah. If all the Church would accept that Israel's national salvation comes through their Messiah (Jesus Christ at His Second Advent) we would know how to pray for the Peace of Jerusalem and how to preach the Gospel of Christ.

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken" (Matt. 24:29)

"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Math. 24:30)

"the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels" (2 Thess. 1:7)

"Behold 'the day' of the Lord cometh... and his feet shall stand in that day upon Mount Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east... And the Lord my God shall come and all the saints with thee." (Zech. 14:1,4,5)

"...Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints." (Jude 14)

"Behold he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him" (Rev. 1:7)

"And one shall say unto him, what are the wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, These with which I was wounded in the house of my friends" (Zech. 13:6)

"...Prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision when he hath prophesied; neither shall they wear rough garments to deceive" (Zech. 13:4)

"And the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in 'that day' shall there be one Lord, and his name one" (Zech. 14:9)

"Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children" (Isaiah 66:8)

"And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, THERE SHALL COME OUT OF ZION THE DELIVERER, AND SHALL TURN AWAY UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB" (Rom. 11:26)

Israel is an integral part of God's plans and purposes. Even though the 38th printing came out in 1920 – long before the State of Israel existed – Clarence Larkin set out his incredible work, "that it may be of untold blessing to thousands of God's dear children who love the Lord's Appearing, and be an instrument in the hands of the Holy Spirit for the conversion of the unsaved, and of those who 'deceitfully handle the Word of God.'"

The miracle of the preservation of the Jews during the long night of their persecutions cannot be accounted for, only on the supposition that they have been preserved for a purpose. The secret of their endurance is twofold.

1. Their National Law.

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2. Their National Hope.

Amid all the vicissitudes of their history the Jewish people have been upheld by their "National Hope," A "Hope" so radiant, and "Faith" so beautiful, that the world has never seen its like. The "Hope of a **COMING MESSIAH.**"

The "Hope" of the coming of this "Messiah" has flamed like a "Morning Star" through the darkness of Israel's long night, and has turned their thoughts toward the dawning of that day when the **SON OF RIGHTEOUSNESS** shall arise and dispel the gloom and usher in that bright "Millennial Day" when Righteousness and Peace shall cover the earth as the waters cover the deep. (Clarence Larkin, *Dispensational Truth or God's Plan and Purpose in the Ages*, 1920)

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JOEL'S ARMY ERROR!

There is another gospel being taught today which is in total conflict with the Gospel of Christ. Leaders in this movement allegorize the truth away, place their revelations on par with Scripture, place emphasis on their thoughts and ideas above Scriptures, and claim that Israel is now an "outcast" who has been "replaced" by the church in endtime prophecy.

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- The Phineas Priesthood
- The Latter Rain Error
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