

Anointed Writer Says He's Privileged God Allowed Him to Write 'The Chosen'

As a *New York Times* bestselling author, Jerry Jenkins is well aware of the numerous books (besides the Bible) published about the life of Jesus, and he's seen many, many movies and television shows about our Lord and Savior.

For that reason, Jenkins wanted to write something that would portray Jesus in a much different way—a way that would show his humanity and everyday life. He wanted readers to see Jesus through the eyes of those who actually met Him, and to be changed and impacted in the same way they were.

That became a much easier task when his son, Dallas, a filmmaker, produced the highly-acclaimed crowd-funded television series, *The Chosen*. Jerry Jenkins, the co-writer of the *Left Behind* book series with Tim LaHaye, said he watched each episode of the first series of *Chosen* 20 times to help him write the book.

"Some of those movies and television shows are hard to relate to," Jenkins told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network. "So, Dallas said let's hone in on the humanity of Jesus, His sense of humor, the way He interacted with friends and how they were changed to be something they never were before they encountered Him.

"It's turned out to be a very emotional experience to watch to see how it's rendered. There is some artistic license, and obviously we never want to add or take away from the gospel. But we didn't know what these things might have looked like before they were rendered in Scripture. This series has been seen 140 million times and in almost every country of the world, and I was as moved by it as much as anyone else."

Jenkins says that his son is planning on producing seven seasons of the television show and that he has the good fortune of being contracted by Focus on the Family and Broadstreet Publishing to write the first three books for it. Of course, he says he'll do more if he's asked to, depending upon the success of the television series.

For more of Jerry Jenkins' work with *Chosen* and his story as a lifetime writer, listen to this entire episode of *Greenelines*.
{eoa}

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This Ideal Reflects Something Far Worse Than Replacement Theology

This may be the most important thing I have ever written. Please read it all the way through.

During World War II, Hitler's Minister of Propaganda was a man named Joseph Goebbels. One of Goebbels' rules of propaganda was known as the "Big Lie," which stated: "If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it. The lie can be maintained only for such time as the State can shield the people from the political, economic and/or military consequences of the lie."

This same tactic has been used to affect all of the unbiblical "social changes" we have seen over the past 70 years. This big

lie rule is what convinced people that abortion isn't murder, that marriage isn't between one man and one woman, and as we watch the news today, we hear people espouse the big lie that there was at some point in the past a historical Palestinian nation. But, each of those big lies are the subjects of other articles.

Not one of those big lies would have been possible if it wasn't for the big lie I am writing about today. The big lie I am confronting today has been spoken in many churches and will be loudly proclaimed in churches around the world this coming Sunday as they celebrate Pentecost. When spoken, this big lie will sound something like this: "The difference between the Israel of the Old Testament (The Jews) and the church (New Israel) of the New Testament is that in the Old Testament the Jews had an outward experience with G-D based upon works of the flesh. But, in the New Testament, the church had an inward experience with G-D based upon the infilling of the Holy Spirit."

This big lie says the people of Israel in the Old Testament were moved on by the Holy Spirit, while the people in the church after Pentecost were filled with the Holy Spirit. While this may make for exciting sermons, especially on the day of Pentecost, it is also biblically untrue. There are many verses in the Bible that can easily debunk this big lie, such as Luke 1:15 (TLV), which speaks about the birth of John:

"He will be great before Adonai; and he should not drink wine and intoxicating beverage, but he will be filled with the Ruach ha-Kodesh just out of his mother's womb."

Notice John, a nice Jewish man, who was born over 30 years before the day of Pentecost, was filled with the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*, or Holy Spirit. This one example eviscerates the theory that people in the Old Testament (or pre-Pentecost) were moved upon and not filled with the Holy Spirit. But, for further evidence, let's look at the prophetic words of Joel

3:1:

“So it will be afterward, I will pour out My *Ruach* on all flesh: your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.”

What an exciting prophecy about the pouring out of the Spirit of G-D, which will be poured out on all flesh! This powerful prophecy was declared fulfilled by Peter on the day of Pentecost as we read in Acts 2:16-17:

“But this is what was spoken about through the prophet Joel: ‘And it shall be in the last days,’ says God, ‘that I will pour out My *Ruach* on all flesh. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.’”

Please take the time to read these words spoken by Peter slowly. You will notice that when Peter stood in the temple on the Day of Pentecost, he didn't say: “I know that Joel said that G-D would be pouring out His Spirit on all flesh, but He changed his plan because He found out that pouring His Spirit on people didn't work, so now He is going to pour His Spirit into people.” No, that is not what Peter said that day. Peter stood in front of hundreds of thousands and said, “this is what was spoken about through the prophet Joel.”

Peter went on to tell those gathered that day what we read in Acts 2:38 that they should repent of their sins, be immersed and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit:

“Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let each of you be immersed in the name of Messiah *Yeshua* for the removal of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*.’”

Please take a look closer look at the first two chapters of the book of Acts, and you will find that Act 1:8 promises:

“But you will receive power when the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* has come

upon you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and through all Judah, and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Which is followed by Act 2:1-4:

“When the day of *Shavuot* had come, they were all together in one place. Suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And tongues like fire spreading out appeared to them and settled on each one of them. They were all filled with the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* and began to speak in other tongues as the *Ruach* enabled them to speak out.”

Which is followed by Peter quoting the verses from Joel included above, proclaiming that the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the people.

Please don't read this as if I am saying that all of the Israelites in the Old Testament were Spirit-filled. I am also not saying that all of the Jews of today are Spirit-filled. What it does say is that G-D didn't make a covenant with the nation Israel that He knew was impossible for them to keep, while also telling them that it was not difficult to keep, as we read in Deuteronomy 30:10-11:

“... when you listen to the voice of *Adonai* your God, to keep His *mitzvot* and His statutes that are written in this scroll of the *Torah*, when you turn to *Adonai* your God with all your heart and with all your soul. ‘For this *mitzvah* that I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it far off.’”

Romans 8 lets us know that it is impossible to keep G-D's commandments without being filled with His Spirit:

“For the mindset of the flesh is hostile toward God, for it does not submit itself to the law of God—for it cannot. So those who are in the flesh cannot please God. However, you are not in the flesh but in the *Ruach*—if indeed the *Ruach Elohim*

dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the *Ruach* of Messiah, he does not belong to Him.”

As you can see, in many other verses throughout the Bible, the experiences of the Spirit of G-D being poured out upon someone and someone being filled with the Spirit are synonymous.

I know that some of you reading this may be saying “So what? This seems to be a distinction without a difference.” However, the truth is that saying that the Israel of the Old Testament only had an external experience with the Spirit of G-D, but the church or New Israel now has an internal relationship with the Spirit of G-D is the big lie. This big lie is the root of the rejection of the Old Testament as relevant for believers. It is the foundation for the big lies about abortion, gay marriage, replacement theology, dual covenant theology, Christian antisemitism, and nearly every other false teaching that has become prevalent within the Christian World. It is also one of the reasons Jewish people reject the message of Yeshua.

The biblical truth is that in order to be a true follower of G-D, one must be filled with His Spirit no matter which half of the Bible you are reading. G-D made His Spirit available to Israel of old the same way He does today. The prophets were both moved on and filled. Moses was both moved on and filled. Samson was both moved on and filled. And today, no matter if you are Jewish or non-Jewish, we must be both moved on and filled.

This is why before we read the words of John 3:16, we read the words that Yeshua Himself shared with Nicodemus:

“*Yeshua* answered, ‘Amen, amen I tell you, unless one is born of water and spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit.’”

Before the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2, Yeshua told Nicodemus

that he must be born of the Spirit. {eoa}

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Georgia Pastor Sees Holy Spirit Demolish Demonic Spirit of Abandonment

Pastor Janet Swanson knows what it's like to face severe spiritual warfare. At one point, her marriage began to fall apart, her son became sick, her church suffered a split and the family's finances came under attack.

The enemy continued to speak lies to her, and discouragement became a regular part of her life.

"Everything in our life, it seems, was attacked at one time. We were in it, and everything seemed like it was falling apart," Swanson told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network. "In my head, and then in my spirit, the enemy kept telling me things like, 'Your husband doesn't love you. He's going to leave you.' The church is like, 'You're worthless. Nobody wants you. Nobody cares about you.'

But deep in her heart, Swanson knew because of His promises in the Bible God would never abandon her. On a drive home to Statesboro, Georgia, from visiting a friend in Atlanta, God spoke the truth she needed to hear.

Her spirit began to heal, and she went through the Healing Streams program. She arose from the pit and regained her confidence. She is now impacting the kingdom again through her preaching and through media, including her podcast *One Voice* on the Charisma Podcast Network.

“When we were going through this transition, the Lord was causing these things to surface,” she said. “And I heard the voice of the enemy speak these things to me. I knew it was a demonic spirit. I just said, ‘You know what? I’m just going to get up.’”

“On the way home from Atlanta, the Lord spoke to me and said, ‘I’m going to heal your marriage. The enemy is a liar. When I got home, the Holy Spirit entered our room and began to heal us both at that moment. It was powerful. The voice of the enemy was silenced immediately. Our marriage, our hearts, turned back to each other again and we began to gradually come out of that dark pit. The Lord was bringing us out and bringing us through. He was a faithful God to do that. I’m just so grateful.’”

“God brought us through that time and He walked me through the issues that I was going through, the issues of abandonment, the issues that I thought I wasn’t a good enough pastor and other things. He’s a healer. He knows how to do it.”

For the rest of Pastor Janet Swanson’s incredible story, listen to the entire episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network. And tune into *One Voice* to hear more on how the Lord is working through Pastor Janet’s ministry. {eoa}

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Evangelist Says the Fire of God Is Falling on People in America Right Now

Despite resistance from local law enforcement officials and financial hurdles, Evangelists Caleb Wampler and Joshua Smith have recently encountered all types of God's signs, wonders and miracles during their crusades to the Middle East, especially in the country of Pakistan.

In addition to physical healing—including people with tumors, the blind seeing, the deaf hearing and deliverance from demons, Wampler and Smith experienced thousands coming to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. So, Wampler and Smith have firsthand knowledge of God's impact worldwide.

But what about what's happening in the United States? Can America see revival and recover from the recent COVID-19 pandemic and darkness that has surrounded the culture?

Wampler, the host of the *Awaken the Wonder* podcast on the Charisma Podcast Network, harbors no doubt about it.

"People have been cooped up for so long, and they are ready for a breakthrough," Wampler told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network. "They've been kind of forced back home, and they are looking in the mirror and realizing that they need Jesus even more than they ever did before.

"What we've been finding," Wampler continued, "is that there is just this oil that's on the grace of intimacy with the Lord right now. As we've been traveling, we've been seeing the

intense hunger. We started doing these retreats in North Carolina, these workshops on how to flow in the gifts of the Holy Spirit and baptism of the Holy Spirit. It's really just equipping evangelists to focus on intimacy with Christ as in Matthew 25. God is working in all of the people in all of the places right here in America. And He is healing people right here, too."

"This is the season and this is an hour of awakening," Wampler said. "I felt for quite some time, with all of this presidential stuff ... I never heard from the Lord who the president was going to be or what was going to happen. But what He did tell me is that the fire was going to begin to increase and that the shaking was going to begin. Hebrews 12 very clearly speaks of a shaking that is going to come. What's happening right now is that things are being shaken to the ground. We are seeing it in the church house; we are seeing it in the schoolhouse; we are seeing it in the White House; we are seeing it in all the houses. ...

Wampler further said, "I've been watching people, and there are lots of ministries and people out there that are going through hardships right now. But revival is breaking out in the hardships. The purity of heart is being tested, and the fire of God is falling on people, and they encountering a real and living God."

For more of this fascinating testimony from Caleb Wampler and Josh Smith, listen to this episode of *Greenelines* podcast, and be sure to subscribe so you never miss inspiring content like this. {eoa}

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AG Pastor Says We Will See Awakening to Surpass the Welsh and Hebrides Revivals

As a revivalist, Jamie Morgan knows that it's part of her job to help prepare God's elect for what it is to come.

And that means, as the lead pastor of the Assemblies of God Lifeway Church in Williamstown, New Jersey, Morgan must equip them in every way possible as we head toward the glorifying time when Jesus returns.

"We are in a season, I believe, of the Lord sifting and cleansing and purifying," Morgan told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network. "This is the season of repentance. It's the season where God is preparing His people. He is preparing His bride for revival.

"So, my messages here of late have been along those lines. It's time to repent. It's time to get your spiritual house in order. It's time to submit and surrender to God's cleansing. Place your life and your heart on the altar of threshing so He can prepare you for all the wonderful things He's going to do."

Indeed, even though culturally the atmosphere seems dark, Morgan believes God is stirring up revival in His people. But believers also have to do their part to make it happen.

"We must get all of the above-mentioned things right, coupled with a more passionate crying out to the Lord in prayer," Morgan says. "It creates an atmosphere where the Holy Spirit

not only feels welcome but has full access into our heart and into our lives and our churches.

“Because I believe that, one of the greatest revivals the world has ever seen, one that’s going to surpass the Welsh Revival and Hebrides Revival, is going to take place. There’s going to be a restoration of the fear of the Lord. It’s going to be a fresh revelation of the holiness of God that the church needs.”

For more on what believers must do to ready their hearts for this coming revival, and what Pastor Jamie Morgan believes will happen in this season of cleansing and purifying, listen to the entire episode of *Greenelines* here and subscribe to *Greenelines* on your favorite podcast platform for more spiritual takeaway on modern events. For more on Jamie Morgan’s insights on living with the fire of the Holy Spirit, listen to *Fire Starter* on the Charisma Podcast Network. {eoa}

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Messianic Rabbi: When G-D’s Love Doesn’t Look or Feel Like Love

Since Hurricane Sally hit our area back in September, I have been blessed to have two of my grandchildren living at my

house (along with their parents). One of the advantages of having our small grandchildren living with us is that I have been able to watch as an observer many of the experiences I went through with my children when they were young.

One such experience has been my ability to watch my grandchildren look painfully at their parents when they were told they could not have [fill in the blank].

Those moments when my son and/or daughter-in-law seem, in the eyes of their children, to be horrible ogres whose sole purpose in life is to keep them from having any fun and sweet treats, when those sweet little children hear the word "no," you can see in their eyes that they are questioning the love of their parents. *After all, if you loved me, you would let me have [fill in the blank].*

The reason that this is so meaningful to me isn't simply because I get to watch my son be looked at by his children in the same way he looked at me when he was small. It is because it has provided me with plenty of opportunities to understand a little more about G-D's love for us as our Father, and it provides continual reminders that sometimes G-D's love doesn't look or feel like love to us when we are on the receiving end.

There are many times when we see examples of G-D demonstrating His love toward men when the men on the receiving end of His love probably felt exactly as my grandchildren do. One such example that most are familiar with is found in John 2:12-16 (TLV):

After this Yeshua went down to Capernaum with His mother, brothers, and disciples, and they stayed there a few days. The Jewish feast of Passover was near, so Yeshua went up to Jerusalem. 14 In the Temple, He found the merchants selling oxen, sheep, and doves; also the moneychangers sitting there. Then He made a whip of cords and drove them all out of the Temple, both the sheep and oxen. He dumped out the coins of

the moneychangers and overturned their tables. To those selling doves, He said, "Get these things out of here! Stop making My Father's house a marketplace!"

Just think about this scene taking place as Yeshua weaves a whip of cords and proceeds to drive the money-changers out of the temple. Can you imagine the facial expressions of those being whipped and chased by Yeshua?

Let's think a little deeper into this event. First, this event takes place just before Passover, when all Jews were commanded to travel to Jerusalem. We know this isn't the first time Yeshua was at the temple. He would have visited the temple in Jerusalem at least three times a year every year. We also know that this wasn't the first time merchants and money-changers were in the temple; this had become a regular practice of the second temple period.

So, why didn't Yeshua make a whip on one of his earlier visits to the temple? What made this time different? I think the key to understanding why is found in verse 12. His disciples were with Him. The word "disciples" means "followers." For all intents and purposes, Yeshua's disciples were like His children. He was responsible for their well-being, especially spiritually. Yeshua now had people for whom He was responsible for in the same way my son has children for whom he is responsible.

Yeshua saw the situation taking place and responded in love for His disciples by acting in a way that from the outside could appear unloving, especially to those who were at the painful end of the whip. Even His disciples may have initially been taken back by Yeshua's actions.

However, just as those times when my son tells his children no, Yeshua told His disciples no that day—and not only His disciples who were with Him, but all those who would become disciples in the future.

As much as we don't like G-D's chastisement, we must realize that it is a demonstration of His love and is just as much an outpouring of blessing as when He gives us things. Just as when we read about Yeshua making a whip and driving people out of the temple, we must see it as a demonstration of His love, as we read in Hebrews 12:6-7:

“‘because Adonai disciplines the one He loves and punishes every son He accepts.’ It is for discipline that you endure. God is treating you as sons—for what son does a father not discipline?” {eoa}

Rabbi Eric Tokajer has served the community of Brit Ahm Messianic Synagogue in Pensacola, Florida since 2006. In addition to serving at Brit Ahm, he also helped to establish six other Messianic synagogues along the United States, Gulf Coast. He is also a sought-after speaker for both national and international conferences and events, and has authored 12 books. In addition to his duties as a rabbi, he also serves on the board of several Messianic ministries and as the theology team facilitator for the Tree of Life Version Bible.

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Messianic Rabbi: Why Wrong Questions Lead to Wrong Answers

When I was a young man searching for G-D, within the framework of Judaism that I was raised in, I found myself finding more questions than answers. This in and of itself was not a bad thing because Judaism teaches its followers to ask questions.

Growing up I loved my people, my faith and my heritage. Yet, the more I searched in the Scriptures, the more questions I found that caused me to doubt some of what I had been taught. One such question was concerning Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

Before I get to my question, let me explain a little about Yom Kippur. Yom Kippur is considered the most holy day of the year in Judaism. This is a day when all work ceases, and Jews who may not attend synagogue any other day gather together for worship.

Why is this day considered so holy? During the days of the Tabernacle, and later when the first and second temples were built, this was the one day of the year when the high priest would become the mediator for Israel's sins.

On this day each year, the High Priest would make a special sacrifice, and then he would sprinkle the blood of that offering upon the Ark of the Covenant. Without this sacrifice and sprinkling of blood, there would be no covering of sin, and Israel would be judged unatoned or uncovered before their holy G-D.

Back to my question. If Judaism required a high priest and a sacrifice on Yom Kippur in order to have atonement or be judged righteous before G-D, how do we as Jews today receive

atonement when we have no tabernacle or temple and no high priest to make a sacrifice on Yom Kippur? I searched for years for the answer to this question. I asked many rabbis and read the writings of other rabbis without finding an answer to this question. This is a question that every Jew should be compelled to find an answer to because without this answer, we cannot have an assurance of our atonement.

It wasn't until I began to read a different Jewish book that I found an answer to this important question. This other Jewish book was the New Testament, and within its pages, I was able to find answers to my questions about Yom Kippur. Not surprisingly I found I was asking the right question but from the wrong standpoint. I was asking how we as Jews receive atonement since we do not have a high priest nor a tabernacle or temple in order to have the atonement sacrifice.

After reading the New Testament, I found my question was faulty because the Jewish people were not left without a tabernacle because the Torah teaches we have always had a tabernacle as it stands in the heavens. Moses made a copy of the tabernacle in the heavens from the pattern provided to him by G-D as we read in Exodus 25:40 (TLV):

"See that you make them according to their pattern being shown to you on the mountain."

It is this tabernacle that Paul refers to in Hebrews 8:5:

"They offer service in a replica and foreshadower of the heavenlies—one that is just as Moses was instructed by God when he was about to complete the tabernacle. For He says, ;See that you make everything according to the design that was shown to you on the mountain.'"

We also have a high priest named Yeshua who serves as the mediator for Israel as we see in 1 Timothy 2:5:

"For there is one God and there is one Mediator between God

and men—a human, Messiah Yeshua.”

And Hebrews 8:1-3:

“Now here is the main point being said. We do have such a Kohen Gadol, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. He is a priestly attendant of the Holies and the true Tent—which Adonai set up, not man. For every kohen gadol is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, so it is necessary for this One also to have something to offer.”

Our high priest Yeshua entered the eternal tabernacle in the heavens and sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice upon the ark of the covenant as we read in Hebrews 9:11-12:

“But when Messiah appeared as Kohen Gadol of the good things that have now come, passing through the greater and more perfect Tent not made with hands (that is to say not of this creation), He entered into the Holies once for all—not by the blood of goats and calves but by His own blood, having obtained eternal redemption.”

I realized I was asking the right question: “How are Israel’s sins atoned for?” However, I was asking it the wrong way. After reading the New Testament, I concluded that my belief that we do not have a tabernacle or temple, a high priest, or an atonement sacrifice was completely wrong.

With this new biblically sound information, I was now able to ask my questions with the correct foundation. I then understood we do have a tabernacle, we do have a high priest, and we do have a once and for all sacrifice that provided the atonement for Israel.

Asking questions is good, but asking the right questions is better. {eoa}

Eric Tokajer is the author of *Overcoming Fearlessness, What If*

Everything You Were Taught About the Ten Commandments Was Wrong?, With Me in Paradise, Transient Singularity, OY! How Did I Get Here?: Thirty-One Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before Entering Ministry, #ManWisdom: With Eric Tokajer, Jesus Is to Christianity as Pasta Is to Italians *and* Galatians in Context.

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Prophecy: Let It Rain Salvation, Favor and Vindication

I heard the Lord say, “Let it rain!”

We are in a *kairos* time for prayer answers, and now is not the time to let the pedal off the medal. Now is the time to press in, to press past the weariness and the flesh and make another push, to believe God for the first fruits of the prayer seeds we’ve been sowing—perhaps even for years.

The prophet Zechariah wrote, “Ask for rain from the Lord during the season of the latter spring rains. And the Lord will make the storm winds; and He will give them showers of rain; all will have vegetation in the field” (Zech. 10:1).

In the spirit, I heard the sound of the abundance of rain.

Through our persistent importunity—our refusal to back down from the promises of God—we will see an end to what seems to many like a “prayer answer” drought that has led some cities into spiritual famine. God is saying, “The drought is over.” God has a spiritual awakening in mind.

Consider how this played out in Elijah’s day. After defeating the false prophets at Mt. Carmel with a spectacular display of God’s power, Elijah went to Ahab and announced he heard the sound of a mighty rainstorm coming. What did he do next? He prayed it in. We read in 1 Kings 18:42-46:

So Ahab got up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel, and he threw himself down on the ground and put his face between his knees.

And he said to his servant, “Go up now, and look toward the sea.”

And he went up and looked and said, “There is nothing.”

And he said, “Go again,” seven times.

On the seventh time, he said, “A small cloud as small as a man’s hand is rising out of the sea.”

And he said, “Go up and say to Ahab, ‘Mount your chariot and get down, so that the rain does not stop you.’”

In the meantime, the sky turned black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel. The hand of the Lord was on Elijah, and he girded up his loins and ran ahead of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

Think about it for a minute: Israel had been living under brass heavens because of the wickedness of Ahab and Jezebel (see Deut. 28:23). But when the people of God, the Israelites, repented, the heavens broke open, and God sent the rain, ending the drought and the famine.

Click here to read the rest of this article. {eoa}

Jennifer LeClaire is senior leader of Awakening House of Prayer in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, founder of the Ignite Network and founder of the Awakening Blaze prayer movement. She is author of over 25 books. Find her online at or email her at info@.

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How to Love Your Prodigal Back Home Jesus' Way

Judy Douglass and her husband, Steve, at first weren't too keen on God bringing a third child into their lives—especially a foster child with a history of family issues dealing with drug and alcohol abuse.

But as the Douglasses have learned over the years, you can't say “no” to a prophetic word from God, who said He would bring them a son; he would be a gift, and they would take him with them when they moved from California to Florida.

So, Judy and Steve took the boy on as a foster child into their Christian home. And after many difficult and sometimes heart-wrenching challenges with the boy through middle school, and a great deal of prayer, the boy began to settle down. He

learned Scripture and gave his life to Jesus, but there were still more challenges ahead.

The child went back to his old ways of life and ended up in jail. The Douglasses knew they had a prodigal son on their hands, but they also knew that, with continual prayer and prayer from many others, their prodigal would come back to them. And he did.

Through the experience, Judy and Steve, both of whom were involved with Campus Crusade for Christ for years, developed a strong heart for prodigal children. An author of six books, Judy wrote a book called *When You Love a Prodigal: 90 Days of Grace for the Wilderness*, to help give families with their own prodigals a guide on their journey as God brings their wayward children home.

Judy is also the host of a new podcast, *When You Love a Prodigal*, on the Charisma Podcast Network.

“The message in the prodigal world is tough love,” Judy told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network. “I keep seeing how many of them are so hurt and feel so rejected in the way that tough love is applied to them. There’s very little mercy and grace because you have to be tougher or enable them. ...

“We needed to make the choice that would reveal to [our son] that God was still in his life. He needed to learn that we cared about him, but also about what he would become and what he would do. It took him a long time to learn about those things, and we did not begin to see much change until he was about 27 or 28. He started making better choices, and we’ve just had to keep extending love and mercy.”

To find out more about the Douglasses’ incredible journey with their prodigal, listen the rest of this *Greenelines* episode. Also listen to Judy Douglass’ own *When You Love a Prodigal* on the Charisma Podcast Network. {eoa}

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If Not Put Down Quickly, This Sin Can Destroy Families—and Congregations

The senior pastor of a Dallas-area “megachurch” formally resigned his position recently. Having pastored the church for over 20 years, the evangelical leader had temporarily stepped away from his pulpit late last summer due to “the sin of pride,” which had become problematic for the church leadership and staff.

“I’ve been short and irritable. I’m invalidating at times. I’m impatient enough that people were noticing a difference. And worse, I didn’t hear them when they asked me and said things like, ‘Are you OK?’” he explained. He also noted that he was dismissive of others at times.

His final resignation was submitted to and finally accepted by the church’s elder team in April and followed by an emotional announcement to the congregants.

The Sin of Pride

Pride is “an excessive preoccupation with self and one’s own importance.” In the Bible, the books of Psalms and Proverbs

often speak about pride and its various forms. Proverbs 16:18 says, "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."

In Psalm 138:6 (HCSB), David says, "Though the Lord is exalted, He takes note of the humble; but He knows the haughty from a distance." Proverbs 11:2 (MEV) explains that pride is followed by shame, "but with the humble is wisdom," whereas Proverbs 13:10 (ESV) tells us that "nothing but strife" comes by way of pride. We are warned in Proverbs 29:23 (MEV) that "A man's pride will bring him low, but honor will uphold the humble in spirit."

Those who are proud, arrogant and self-absorbed frequently develop a narcissistic sense of their own importance and privileges. Esteemed author C.S. Lewis correctly observed in his book *Mere Christianity*, in a chapter entitled "The Great Sin," that "It was through Pride that the devil became the devil: Pride leads to every other vice; it is the complete anti-God state of mind."

Another author warns that "Pride—being full of ourselves, 'puffed up' with hot air like a yeast-filled loaf of bread—can ruin us."

Perhaps we should regularly ask ourselves if we are prideful! In other words, are we "full of ourselves?" Are we motivated by hubris or lacking modesty? Do we arrogate to ourselves certain attitudes or behaviors from others?

You may want to join me in taking the "Pride Quiz." It consists of just 25 true/false questions drawn from the Word of God about pride and arrogance, but it may prove to be a critical juncture in our God-designed destinies.

Practical Applications from Paul

Romans 12 begins an important section of the apostle Paul's letter to the "saints" in Rome. Like his other letters, the

first half concentrated on doctrinal teachings (what we should believe) and the second half focuses on practical applications (how we should behave).

It is not surprising, therefore, that he teaches humility in this section. Romans 12:3 (NKJV) says, "For I say ... to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think." Further, he writes "Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion" (Rom. 12:16b). Here, "high things" refers to whatever is haughty, snobbish, high-minded, exclusive (see Rom. 12:16, AMPC) and "humble" suggests those of low social status, position or power.

Having surrendered to those Christ-like qualities, Paul taught believers to honor and bless each other. He writes in Romans 12:10 (NKJV): "Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another." In Romans 12:13, he discusses the importance of "distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality." Additionally, Romans 12:17b states, "have regard for good things in the sight of all men."

We are to be devoted to each other with family-like affection. Remember, we don't choose our family members, but we can choose to love, honor and accept them. We can seek to outdo others in showing honor and support to our brothers and sisters in Christ who may need our help or hospitality.

Living in the Family of God

The beauty of the "family of God" is that—in Christ Jesus—"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, and there is neither male nor female, for you are all one" (Gal. 3:28a, MEV). According to the Word of God and biblical doctrine, there is now to be no distinction among us. There is only one race—the human race. That is the only "critical race theory" to govern our beliefs and behaviors!

Paul admonished the saints in Rome to seek harmony and peace, especially among our Christian family: “Do not pretend to be wiser than you are. Repay no one evil for evil. Commend what is honest in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as it depends on you, live peaceably with all men” (Rom. 12:16b-18).

Again, we must suppress our tendency to selfishness and aim to do those things that others will acknowledge are honest, proper, noble and above reproach. They should be able to honestly say, “That is a fine, good thing you did.”

Living Peacefully With All People

It is in the context of Christ-like living among the family of God that Paul stressed for us to “live peaceably with all men,” at least to the degree “it is possible” and depends on us. We should make certain that if peace breaks down in our relationships, we are not at fault. We may need to give over the right to avenge ourselves to God—in His time and way.

“Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to God’s wrath, for it is written: ‘Vengeance is Mine. I will repay,’ says the Lord. Therefore ‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in doing so you will heap coals of fire on his head’” (Rom. 12:19-20).

Now, Paul taught the Thessalonians that God’s ultimate justice will include repaying “with tribulation those who trouble you” (2 Thessalonians 1:6b) but the apostle also instructed the Corinthians on how to self-judge persistent problems among themselves (see 1 Corinthians 6:1-11) even as Jesus had guided the early disciples in dealing with a sinning brother (see Matt. 18:15-20). So there are avenues for rectification of issues among believers, but we must first seek harmony, peace and the good of all.

We should make every effort to have love be our guiding principle in Christian relationships with our fellow believers

(see Rom. 12:9-13) and also with those who make themselves our enemies (see Rom. 14-21). Paul's concluding concern was that we "not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:21). {eoa}

Gary Curtis served in full-time ministry for 50 years, the last 27 years of which he was part of the pastoral staff of The Church on The Way, the Van Nuys' California Foursquare church. Now retired, Gary continues to write a weekly blog at and frequent articles for digital and print platforms.

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