

BULLETIN

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

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Otis Q. Sellers, Founder

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JANE SELLERS HANCOCK

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Midwest Bible Conference Review

By Joanne L.H. Johnson and Rusty Hancock

On the weekend of August 27 and 28, 2016, The Word of Truth Ministry (WOTM) conducted a Midwest Bible Conference at the Courtyard Marriott in Bloomington, Minnesota. The theme of this year's Conference was "Making Sense of Bible Prophecy."

The Conference was attended by believers from across the country. Although most of those attending were from the Midwest, guests from Oregon, California, Texas, New York, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and other states also came.

The wonderful folks who attended enjoyed the camaraderie. Being able to have casual conversations over dinner in nearby restaurants, in the hotel lobby, or at poolside was fabulous. Some conversations were spirited discussions, others casual—everything from Biblical interpretations to sharing individual paths to find the Truth.

Several families brought small children, a bright look into our future. Two special sessions were provided by Nathan Johnson where it was obvious that some of the children already had a grasp for the Truth.



Nathan teaches the children about Prophets and Prophecy.

During the Conference Nathan and his father, Steven Johnson, shared the job of Master of Ceremonies. Each one of the two days, the Conference began with a welcome, singing of hymns with Jeremiah Snyder on the guitar, and an opening prayer.

On Saturday morning, Nathan, the first speaker, shared



Steve and Patty Johnson

his take on "Prophecy, Prophets, and Interpretation" which dealt with what prophecy is, who the prophets were, and how to go about interpreting, prophecy using important principles taught by WOTM founder, Otis Q. Sellers.

Next up was Robert "Bob" Juncau. His lecture was about "Prophecy Lost and Found." First he concentrated on three connected theologies: 1) Covenant Theology, 2) Preterism and 3) Replacement Theology. He defined these theologies and highlighted what each believed. He also reviewed what happened to lost prophecies in Scripture, like during the Middle Ages, where there appeared to be a great amount of lost Bible knowledge, because of the need to follow the teachings of the Catholic Church.

During the afternoon session, Nathan spoke again, this time about "Bins for Bible Prophecies," showing that certain prophecies do not fit in "the millennium" where many teachers place them but must instead fit in the premillennial Kingdom of God.

Former director of the WOTM, Milton Hammond, spoke next on the subject of "The End Times of the Kingdom." His subject concentrated on the future premillennial Kingdom of God and what was to be expected, according to Scripture, at that time period.

Bible-themed author and speaker Louis Tonetti's subject was "Jeremiah Speaks To Us Today." He quoted Scriptures from the Book of Jeremiah and gave an overview of what the Prophet may have gone through while he was alive and his warnings to Israelites about God's wrath to come if they did not follow Him.

Through the day, there were breaks between sessions that allowed for one-on-one discussions and personal

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**Candy Davis and Rusty Hancock**

conversations. These included a catered lunch, and coffee and cookie breaks. The conference for Saturday was wrapped up with a closing prayer.

On Sunday morning, after another welcome and a sing-a-long led again by Jeremy, with another opening prayer, Candy Davis, an attendee of Nathan's Bible study, started off the conference for that day with "Fulfilled Prophecy: Declaring the End from the Beginning." She started with comparisons on types of Christ, including Noah's ark, Moses, Samson and Joseph (Israel's son). Then she elaborated about "Written Messianic Prophecies" with information on Christ's birth, ministry and crucifixion.

Andrew Brown's subject was "Clearing the Clouds: Rapture Realities." He examined many of the Scripture verses people use to teach the erroneous doctrine of "the rapture" and showed what they were truly teaching.

Paul Walberg spoke on the subject of "Life Under God's Government—A Sampler." He expounded on Scriptures centered on the future Kingdom of God and invited audience interaction.

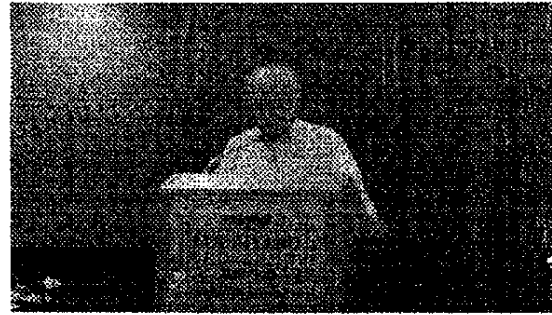
Nathan wrapped up the conference with his dissertation on "The Great Tribulation Test." He introduced many important Scriptures that could be a great starting point for future study. After singing one last time, the conference ended shortly after 4 p.m. with closing words and a prayer.

The Conference was enlightening and energizing. We hope, and pray, that others will be able to make the journey and attend next year's Conference.

Footnote to the Conference

While at the Conference on Sunday morning, Mary Margaret Hyde from Middleport, New York, lost her husband, Robert, who was at a rest home and had died. Betty English and the hotel staff helped with travel arrangements and Gwen Staiger flew home with her. May Mary Margaret see her beloved husband in the future Kingdom of God.

More Conference Photos

**Louis Tonetti****Milt Hammond and Joanne Johnson**

Bob Juneau with wife Angie at his side signs the draft copy of his new book, *The Church That Never Was*.



Bob and Betty English watch as Jeremy Snyder leads singing on guitar.

The Life of a Prophet

By Nathan C. Johnson

Prophets were those who were given the privilege of receiving words from God in order to give them to other people. As Sir Robert Anderson pointed out in his classic book *The Silence of God*, we live in a dispensation in which God is not speaking directly to any person, but is only speaking through His Word. As such, when we consider the office of a prophet, we must look back on something God did in the past that He is not doing currently. We might rightfully judge that it was a great privilege to be a prophet, to be able to stand before men and say, *"Thus saith the LORD!"* Yet along with this privilege also came great responsibility. Let us consider what it would have been like to be a prophet from what we read about them in the Word of God.

As rewarding as it would be to give God's words to those who would appreciate them, we must realize that many people did not welcome receiving God's utterances at all. When a prophet spoke God's words to rulers and those words were unwelcome, the prophet often suffered for it. In 2 Chronicles 16:10, even the good king Asa was enraged with the seer Hanani for rebuking him for relying on the army of Aram rather than on the LORD. King Asa threw Hanani in prison, and oppressed some others (who apparently took Hanani's side) at the same time. E.W. Bullinger in his notes on Exodus 10:28 in *The Companion Bible* lists eleven rulers who were offended with God's prophets for speaking His words to them.

Moreover, it was not just rulers who would resent hearing unpopular words from the LORD. Jeremiah suffered the rejection of the common people of Judah for his unpopular words, as we read in Jeremiah 18:18: *"Then they said, 'Come and let us devise plans against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come and let us attack him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words'"* (New King James Version used throughout). In fact, this hatred for the prophet spread even to his own hometown of Anathoth. The men of Anathoth did not just decide to oppose Jeremiah, but actually sought his life. They said, *"Do not prophesy in the name of the LORD, lest you die by our hand"* (Jer. 11:21). His own relatives, friends, and neighbors threatened to kill him just for speaking the words of the LORD!

During the reign of Jehoiakim in Jeremiah 26, Jeremiah was arrested by the priests and prophets for speaking the LORD's warning words in the temple of the LORD itself. He might have been executed had not certain fair men among the princes taken his side to let him go. During the later reign of Zedekiah he was again arrested, imprisoned,

and put on trial for his life multiple times. The sufferings he endured finally culminated in Jeremiah 38 with him being lowered into a miry pit to die. Even though he was rescued, the people never did listen to his message, and he ended his career in Egypt, where the people had gone contrary to the word he spoke from the LORD. Their last word to him was, *"As for the word that you have spoken to us in the name of the LORD, we will not listen to you!"* (Jer. 44:16).

The persecution against him for speaking God's words became so fierce that Jeremiah considered not even speaking God's words anymore. We read of this in Jeremiah 20:8-9: *"Because the word of the LORD was made to me a reproach and a derision daily. Then I said, 'I will not make mention of Him, nor speak anymore in His name.' But His word was in my heart like a burning fire shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, and I could not."* God did not just allow His prophets to speak His words; He demanded that they do so. Paul found the same thing true as he reveals in 1 Corinthians 9:16: *"For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!"* It was not a matter of speaking to tens of thousands and being showered with praise and money, as we see with so many television preachers today. It was a duty that was often misunderstood and maligned, and yet which could not be neglected.

Yet if the job of a prophet meant one had to pay a price before men, did God at least make it easier by showering blessings and benefits on those who undertook this difficult task? The reality is that often He only made the job harder by commanding his prophets to do difficult, humiliating, or painful things. In Isaiah 20, the prophet Isaiah was commanded to walk naked (or at least half naked) for three years as a sign to Egypt and Ethiopia. This must have been a most embarrassing assignment for the noble prophet! The LORD told Ezekiel that He was taking his wife from him at a stroke, and he was not to mourn nor weep at all publicly. This seems like the opposite of a reward!

If being a prophet was such a difficult and thankless job, why would anyone undertake to do it? It is clear that they did not do so because they were hoping in this life. As the writer of Hebrews concludes about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: *"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."* The same

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In Memory of Robert "Bob" Hammond

By Joanne L.H. Johnson

On August 28, 2016, Robert Dale Hammond, known affectionately as "Bob," died in his sleep in his home at Covina, California. He was 82 years old. He was born on December 17, 1934, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, the son of the late Milton Benjamin and Anna Marie Hammond. He was preceded in death by his lovely second wife of about 36 years, Geraldine or "Jerry" in 2012. Bob is survived by an older brother, Milton; a son, Jeffrey; two daughters, Lisa Greer and Amy Cutler; and two stepsons, Aaron Weeks and Michael Weeks. Bob had many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Bob served over ten years on the Board of Directors for the Word of Truth Ministry. He attended last year's conference in Milwaukee. He resigned from the board about a month before he died.

Bob was an avid Bible student, attending WOTM meetings regularly where he played the piano for the hymns. When the Ministry needed someone to manage its obsolete website, he did it. He scanned all of the Otis Q. Sellers' written collections: 199 "Seed & Bread" leaflets, "The Word of Truth" magazines, "Special Studies," the "Glossary," and the "More Seed & Bread" collection.

Bob's family moved to Edgeworth, Pennsylvania, just before World War II. He graduated from Sewickley High School in 1953, Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh, with a Bachelors of Science in 1958, and the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, with a Masters of Science in 1962; both degrees were in Mechanical Engineering. He was employed by North American Aviation (which later became Rockwell) and was a supervisor of quality control for the Apollo space program.

Bob was liked, loved and respected by many people, and had a great sense of humor. We look forward to seeing him someday in the future Kingdom of God.

*"How can a young man cleanse his way?
By taking heed according to Your word.
With my whole heart I have sought You;
Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!
Your word I have hidden in my heart,
That I might not sin against You.
Blessed are You, O LORD!
Teach me Your statutes.
With my lips I have declared
All the judgments of Your mouth.
I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies,
As much as in all riches.
I will meditate on Your precepts,
And contemplate Your ways,
I will delight myself in Your statutes;
I will not forget Your word."*

Psalm 119:9-16, NKJV

The Passing of James Clifton Witt

By Joanne L.H. Johnson

The passing of James "Jim" Clifton Witt, a good friend of The Word of Truth Ministry (WOTM) and childhood friend of the late executive director David R. Hettema, occurred on July 19, 2016 in Pasadena, California. Jim was 89 years old. He was born on October 7, 1927, in Denver, Colorado, to Dutch immigrants, Jacob and Anna Witt, who then settled in Pasadena around 1931. He was the last in his immediate family of six siblings to die. He was preceded in death by his wife, Geneva "June" Witt, four months earlier. Jim is survived by his children: two sons, Dale Witt and Bryan Witt, and a daughter, Cindy Ciulla.

He loved talking about the word of God, was a great "family man," and came on alternate Sundays with his wife, attending The Word of Truth Ministry Bible Classes.

Jim loved God by singing hymns to honor Him. He had a wonderful gift for singing at an early age. He earned a bachelor's degree in music from Occidental College. His most notable achievement was singing as tenor soloist for the Glendale Presbyterian Church before he suffered from a profound hearing loss in his late 30's. He went on with his life, despite the hearing loss, and was a shining example for those with disabilities, using his faith and good humor. Jim became an insurance salesman for The New York Life Insurance Company and was employed there for many years.

He will be missed by the many people who knew him and his sense of humor. He believed in the resurrection of the dead and will be raised someday in the future Kingdom of God.

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The Life of a Prophet

was certainly true of the prophets who endured so much for the sake of the God they served. Paul tells us of his own conclusion in this regard in Romans 8:18: "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." When we consider the things Paul tells us he had to suffer in 2 Corinthians 11:23-39, we can know that he does not say this because he did not experience much suffering. Paul knew that his ultimate reward was in the kingdom of God to come, and that reward would be beyond comparison with any suffering he had to endure in this life.

So would we too be willing to live the life and suffer the sufferings of a prophet? Does our hope in our future place in God's kingdom motivate us to live for Him while enduring the present sufferings of this world? Let us learn from the brave prophets and live the same way.