

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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Updates from Rusty Hancock

Since the passing of Otis Q. Sellers almost 25 years ago, The Word of Truth Ministry has encouraged all students to continue his work and rightly divide the word of truth. Bible study is an endless study, with much work to be continued.

During the past couple of years, it has been the honor of The Word of Truth Ministry to bring aboard some new writers, dedicated to build upon the hard work that has been achieved in the past. I believe it important that you get to know them a little bit personally, to give you (the reader) a better understanding of their commitment, knowledge, opinion, and faith. Why should you value and trust their Seed & Bread contributions? How can their articles enhance your knowledge and lay the foundation for your own future study?

It is my pleasure to introduce you to Robert Juneau. Bob lives in the Twin Cities area of Minnesota and has been married to his lovely wife, Angie, since 1979. By trade, Bob is an airline pilot. By passion, Bob is a student of the Bible.

Bob and Angie have been believers for over three decades. They attended Acts 28 churches, but never received any real guidance. They discovered the mid-Acts doctrinal position through a TV ministry. About 12 years ago they met Nathan Johnson and his family. Nathan explained to Bob his views on the Acts 28 position, which centered on his understanding of the Kingdom of God.

Bob was cautious, yet open minded to Nathan's views. Bob respected Nathan's knowledge of the Word, and his relationship with God, as seen in his "worthy walk." Bob and Angie were then exposed to the writings of Otis Q. Sellers. Here they found the Kingdom of God for what it really is, instead of the warped and misunderstood teachings in the church. It took several months of arduous study, but Bob began to see the Scriptural backing for all of Mr. Seller's teachings.

Bob told me, "Looking back, we now know why we struggled so to make sense of our Bibles throughout the years. It was because, instead of being offered the in-depth Biblical study, instead of being offered the knowledge of God, instead of being offered the keys needed to make sense of Scripture, we were served 'church.' The busy work that churches want done always seemed to be more important than a serious study of God's word, which for us, resulted in a superficial understanding and a frustrated inability to 'put it all together.'

"We soon began to become disillusioned with "do-

ing" church. While we loved and enjoyed the people, it became clear to us that the rituals and religious nature of it all was in reality, a disservice to God. We soon found it necessary to sever our association from the supposed 'authorities' found there. We, instead, find sweet fellowship with those who are willing to set aside their religious ideas in exchange for the truth found only in the word of God.

"If we are not willing to do the hard work of studying God's word, rightly translated, rightly understood, and rightly divided, we will be destined to live out our lives as teenagers at best; instead of the mature adults God would have us to be. While I have by no means reached that goal, I am finally on the road that will result in progress being made. I have much, much more to learn. It is an awesome truth that we never fully 'arrive at' the knowledge of God that is available to us through His Word."

Bob's relationship and friendship with Nathan flourished. He began to work with Nathan on Biblical outreach programs. It was Angie's idea, and encouragement, that prompted Bob and Nathan to begin the radio program, *Knowing God in the Word*. Originally airing on just one station in the Twin Cities area, *Knowing God in the Word* now broadcasts on 11 stations throughout the country.

Bob is appreciative of his association with The Word of Truth Ministry, saying, "Any serious student of the Word will eventually demand answers to tough questions. The answers on various subjects that I was given by those in religious circles were often not sufficient or satisfying for me. Even though, when I first started to look into Mr. Sellers' material, I thought it was 'out there' and even sort of 'weird,' I couldn't help but see the consistent and comprehensive Biblical support for all he put forth, instead of scant vague references, as is the case for much of orthodoxy.

"I almost immediately saw the lack of support for the orthodox viewpoint on 'heaven, hell, death, and the soul.' It is hard to unlearn what you have already inaccurately learned, but I decided that truth is truth, and the hard work of unlearning and re-learning was not only worthwhile, it was necessary. Mr. Sellers' teaching on the Kingdom of God is the logical answer to and fits in perfectly with all of God's truths about 'death, hell, the soul, heaven, Israel, the Law,' etc. When I came to understand that the book of Acts is a record of the early 'blade' stage of the Kingdom, it caused an explosion of clarity, and for the first time in my life, the Bible started to be a complete and cohesive record of

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Is Heaven Boring?

By Nathan C. Johnson

Quite a few of the Christian singles I know have expressed to me the following sentiment: "I would like to get married before the rapture happens." These young people believe that there will be no marriage in the life to come, and they apparently are hoping for such marital bliss in this life that it would make them wish to postpone experiencing the joy they hope to find in heaven in order to experience it.

Ignoring their belief in the rapture (see MSS10, *The Imminency of the Rapture: Fact or Fiction?* by John C. Ribbens for a fuller examination of this doctrine), it is clear that the mental picture these young people have of what awaits them in heaven is not as real or compelling to them as the picture of what they hope to experience in married life. The same attitude can extend far beyond single people. Married people too might wish to raise their children first, or retire, or see their grandchildren. And no wonder, when one considers the picture that is commonly painted of heaven. It is pictured as a colorless place where everything is black and white (with a little gold mixed in). People in heaven wear simple white robes and sit around on clouds playing harps. No wonder anything that seems exciting or compelling in this life, like marriage, might seem like a good reason to postpone such a colorless and uninteresting future.

Quite frankly, the picture most people have of heaven is boring. No wonder then that it has little power to motivate people to look forward to it. The most I have heard the average Christian manage to grasp at as something to anticipate about heaven is seeing dead loved ones again. Yet in what circumstances will this happen? The picture implied seems to be of a bland social gathering where everyone sits around talking and nothing gets done for all eternity. Others speak of the glories of seeing Christ, gazing on His beauty for all eternity. While I would not like to deny that actually seeing our wonderful Lord Jesus will be an experience like no other, I still cannot feel very motivated by the idea of simply staring at Him, mouth agape, for all eternity. I do not believe that the One Who made us capable of doing so many different things really intended us to spend all eternity staring at anything, even Himself.

Ultimately, our preachers and Bible teachers have sold us far short on the glories of what God really has in store for us when they convinced us to expect a future home in heaven. The information God has actually given us about heaven is sparse, and there is a reason for that. God never holds out heaven to His people as the reward they are to anticipate receiving. If He had done so, no doubt the Bible would be full of teaching on the glories of what we have in store there. Yet that is not the hope God holds out to us. Instead, the life we are to anticipate is that which we will live in the coming Kingdom of God. This glorious Kingdom that we anticipate will take place on earth, not in heaven.

If we would examine the Hebrew word *shamayim* and the Greek word *ouranos*, both of which mean

"heaven," we would find that together they occur 703 times in the Scriptures. Yet these occurrences would be searched in vain for a single one that declares that the future home of any one of God's people is going to be heaven. On the other hand, the Bible is full of statements that declare the earth as the future home of God's redeemed. Psalm 37:9 declares, "*Those who wait on the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.*" We know the earth as a colorful place, and it will be just as colorful then. The people who live there will not find it dull or boring. Psalm 37:11 makes us a promise regarding this: "*But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.*" The Kingdom will be a delightful place, not at all uninteresting. Moreover, it will be a great blessing to live on this future earth, as Psalm 37:22 concludes: "*For those blessed by Him shall inherit the earth.*" No wonder, then, that Christ Himself proclaims, "*Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth*" (Matt. 5:5).

The Kingdom of God on earth will be no second prize next to a glorious future in heaven. Compared to the picture the Bible paints of the future earth, the idea most people have of heaven pales in comparison. The Bible is replete with verses that extol the glories of the coming Kingdom. One of these will be in our own bodies. The sins and sicknesses that plague us now will no longer be a part of our lives there, as Isaiah 33:24 makes clear: "*And the inhabitant will not say, 'I am sick'; the people who dwell in it will be forgiven their iniquity.*" This is because our lowly bodies will be changed to conform to His glorious body, as Philippians 3:21 declares.

The blessings of the restored earth will not just be internal, for the physical environment of the Kingdom of God will likewise be wonderful. War will be a thing of the past, as Psalm 46:9 sets forth: "*He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariot in the fire.*" This peace will extend to the animal kingdom as well, according to Isaiah 11:6: "*The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the felling together; and a little child shall lead them.*" Even the plant kingdom will be greatly improved by the wonderful conditions on earth in the Kingdom of God, according to Isaiah 35:1: "*The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.*"

The sad reality of corrupt and sinful governments will also come to an end, for the earth will be governed by God at that time, as Psalm 67:4 makes clear: "*Oh, let the nations be glad and sing for joy! For You shall judge the people righteously, and govern the nations on earth.*" As for the corrupt financial systems and institutions of this world, they will no longer be a problem on the Kingdom earth either. The book of Acts gives us an idea of what this will be like, as we read in Acts 4:32, "*Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in com-*

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An Excerpt from A New Book

By Louis J. Tonetti

(One of The Word of Truth Ministry's board members, Louis J. Tonetti, has been writing Biblical soft-cover books for the last ten or so years. Here is an excerpt from one of his books that he is currently working on.)

Jeremiah Asks a Question

Enter JEREMIAH.

"Shalom! Do you practice idolatry today? Are you sure? People certainly did in my day. It was a way of life not only for most of the various civilizations scattered throughout my particular region of the world back then, but especially among my people, the Israelites--both the northern and southern kingdoms.

The Merriam Webster online dictionary (we didn't have this in my day) gives the following double definition of the word 'idolatry':

1) The worship of a physical object as a god.

2) Immoderate attachment or devotion to something.

Pay particular attention to the second definition.

Today, it looks like idol worship often involves a priest, a pope, a building called a 'church,' statues, denominations, etc. As my future good friend, the currently late Otis Q. Sellers, perpetual and progressive Bible student and teacher, often stated, 'An idol fashioned by the mind is just as offensive to God as an idol made by hands.' Anything placed between you and God is an idol. Let me ask once again, do you practice idolatry today? Shalom!" (JEREMIAH exits.)

Reading through the Book of Jeremiah, certain facts stand out loud and clear: God loved His chosen people, the only people who had a special set of laws from Him which constituted a divine religion. The LORD desired to bless and prosper them above all others. God performed many incredible acts on behalf of His special people during times of war and times of peace. But, as Jeremiah sorrowfully pointed out, these beloved people subsequently turned their backs to the LORD their God.

They went after strange gods, instead of worshiping, revering and respecting the God who loved them so very much. God even sent His prophets to warn them of their misconduct towards Him; however, they would not hearken to these prophets of God, but mocked them and even killed them. God pleaded repeatedly with them to change their ways and return to Him. They simply would not listen.

How could they abandon and turn away from the LORD God of all creation? How could they turn to and worship pieces of wood, rocks and stones that had no life in them at all? Even though these pieces of wood, rocks and stones were decorated with gold and silver and precious stones, they could not move, they could not talk, they could not do anything except sit there, often requiring that they be nailed down so they could not topple over, or be stolen away. Can you just imagine worshiping a god that had to be nailed down so it wouldn't fall over?

God made it very clear that He detested their practices of burning incense to other "gods" and worshiping in

the "high places," even causing their children to pass through the fire to Molek, an act so despicable that it never even entered into God's mind.

Yes, God was talking to them repeatedly through Jeremiah, but I believe He was also talking to us today. Why? No one worships idols these days, right? Referring to the above definition again, it would seem many people most certainly do. If God hates this practice so much, shouldn't we pay attention, shouldn't we make sure we are not found guilty in His sight?

But didn't these idols represent or express God to the idolaters? God gave us His Expression, His only Expression. There is one and only one Expression of the living God. There is only one who declares the living God. There is only one visible image of the invisible God. Yes, God gave us this Expression which came forth from Himself. This Expression is *Ho Logos*.

Who is *Ho Logos*? The One who is the creator of all that is seen and all that is unseen. The One who stretched forth His hand and made all that has been made. The One who did this all by Himself. The One who always was and who always will be. The One who emptied Himself, became flesh, and dwelt among us. The One who subjected Himself to death in order to accomplish His many purposes, among which was to save us from our sins, to reconcile us unto Himself, to change us "down along certain lines," to metamorphose us. Why? So we could be equipped to perform the service He will have us perform when He establishes His kingdom here on this earth. He rose from the dead to triumph over the worst that man could do to Him. You may know Him by his other name, a name that is above every name: Jesus the Christ.

Can you begin to appreciate why they called Jeremiah "the weeping prophet"? He was a true patriot who loved his nation, Israel, and only desired good for its people. But when the Lord began to speak to the people through Jeremiah, the words were not what the people wanted to hear. Just like people today do not want to hear what they don't want to hear—even if it's the truth. God's words to the people spoke of dire consequences if they did not change their reprehensible ways; but the messages also contained wonderful promises of blessings and goodness, if they should turn to the LORD their God. It troubled Jeremiah greatly to speak God's words to these people when the communications were not glad tidings of comfort and joy. However, speak the words of the LORD he must, and so he did, although often reluctantly.

It's the same today when God's word is proclaimed honestly and truthfully. People just do not want to hear what they don't want to hear. (The Word of Truth Ministry certainly can attest to this.) I think people must be terribly afraid God will make them do what they don't want to do, and that He will not let them do what they want to do. They forget that God said His burden was easy and light.

God wants to bless us, and yet we don't want to hear about it. That's the way it was then, and that's the way it is now. How sad! How insane! Therefore, I am suggesting that we all become acquainted with Jeremiah, the Prophet of God. Listen to what he was saying then, and listen to what God is saying to us now through Jeremiah.

Let us not practice idolatry today.

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Updates from Rusty Hancock

what God would have for me to know. Ever since coming to understand the truths that I have learned through Mr. Sellers' teaching, I continue to be excited and motivated to know God more fully, more accurately, and more truthfully."

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Is Heaven Boring?

mon." Imagine what it will be like when the whole earth is like this!

This is not to deny the reality of some of those things for which most people are hoping. We will see our loved ones again in our future life on earth. Christ even told His enemies about an aspect of this in Luke 13:28: "There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out." To His friend Martha, our Lord promised this hope when she was facing death: "Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.'" And what a world he will rise to!

If what we truly look forward to the most is greater knowledge of God in the life to come, Malachi 1:11 shows this to be a wondrous reality in the Kingdom on earth: "For from the rising of the sun, even to its going down, My name shall be great among the Gentiles (nations); in every place incense shall be offered to My name, and a pure offering; for My name shall be great among the nations," says the LORD of hosts." Closer fellowship with God will extend to individuals living in the Kingdom, as Isaiah 30:21 makes clear: "Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it,' whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left." This closeness to God will extend to all inhabitants of the future earth of the Kingdom of God, as we can see in Isaiah 11:9: "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea."

As for marriage in the Kingdom, consider Psalm 145:4: "One generation shall praise Your works to another, and shall declare Your mighty acts." How exactly will one generation praise God's works to another if there is no marriage and there are no new generations in that life to come? There will be marriage then, but marriage in the Kingdom will truly be "what God has joined together," not the often mixed-up relationships of this world.

Is heaven boring? So what exactly is there in this life that is so good that you would want God to postpone the Kingdom? (New King James Version used throughout.)

Is the Bible Fake or Real?

By Joanne L.H. Johnson

Some people who may or may not go to church question whether the Bible is fake or real. Many Bible scholars may or may not believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God.

Now, I have read many, many books in my lifetime, and I believe that the Bible is *the only inspired Word*. As unusual as it seems, the Bible is the *ONLY book* that was written by *various God-inspired men*, including a particular number of records about a man called "Jesus Christ" (meaning "Jehovah Messiah"; see **Seed & Bread** No. 002, *The Lord Jesus is Jehovah*, by Otis Q. Sellers).

You must decide whether to believe or not believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. What does Scripture say? 2 Peter 1:20-21 declares, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (Spirit)" (King James Version used throughout).

About sixty years ago, Otis Q. Sellers started an academy or school for Bible students. One of his Bible students was a young man, who started off on the "right foot" by believing in Christ and the Bible, yet ended up on the "wrong foot." In later years, he became a minister of a large church, and over time totally lost all faith in God and the Bible. He claimed that the Word of God had holes in it and was written by ordinary men who knew more than God. And, sadly, he became an atheist.

Sellers said that the whole Bible is *The Book of the (future) Kingdom of God*. We find that the New Testament (N.T.) complements the Old Testament (O.T.), and the O.T. has predictions about a wonderful Savior, Jesus Christ. He died for all our sins (and everyone else's with resurrection in view; see 1 Cor. 15:20-22) about 2,000 years ago. In John 5:39 Jesus Christ says, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye (you) think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify about Me."

Jesus Christ came directly from God (John 1:1-14) and was God-incarnate. He came as a Man to die for our sins. He went to Judea and the rest of the nation of Israel teaching and doing miracles, including healing the blind, deaf, and those with evil spirits or other illnesses. John 20:30-31 reiterates, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His Name."

Here is what Scripture declares about itself: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine (teaching), for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man (or woman) of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). The only way you can know about God in Christ is through studying the pages of the Bible, since God is both invisible and inaudible today: "God is Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in Truth" (John 4:24).