



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Presenting every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume 38
Issue 933

Things I Misunderstood

Part 5

7 Things I Misunderstood about Prophecy

An Exposé of Evangelical Prophetic Interpretation

Personal Reflections by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Key Points:

The genealogies in Scripture are not complete and contain numerous generational gaps..... 7883
Inaccurate translations are wrong about their genealogical dates by hundreds of years..... 7884

It's dangerous to base Scripture prophecy on manmade timelines..... 7885
The history and future of the Earth envelopes many thousands of years, not a mere seven..... 7888

What about the end times?

What about the end of the world?

What about the last days?

What about the rapture?

Are any of these near?

Section 2, Installment 1

I Misunderstood that 7-Millennialism Was but a Human Theory



7-Millennialism is a theory regarding a week of one-thousand-year days. The idea supposedly is based on II Peter 3:8.¹

As the theory goes, the first six days of this “week” were from Adam to the present (6,000 years), with the final week being the Millennial Reign of Christ (1,000 years), completing the “week” (of 7000 years).

As a Baptist, I was raised on this theory, and taught it enthusiastically for 15 years as a pastor. I know all too well how it makes for sensational, dramatic teaching and preaching.

1. “Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (II Peter 3:8).

Not only would I come to see that 7-Millennialism was a mere theory, but sadly, that it was a poor one at that.²

A.E. Knoch (1874-1965) also came to reject his own Brethren tradition of 7-Millennialism:

When I definitely came to reject the substitution of a year for a day, as a theory unwarranted by faith in God's Word, I looked forward to the pres-
(continued on page 7883)

2. For more on this theory, see:

— “The Seven Millennium Theory,” Otis Q. Sellers, *Bible Student's Notebook 498*.

Things I Misunderstood: 7 Things I Misunderstood about Prophecy (Part 5, Section 2, Installment 1)	7881
Tidbits of Truth #44	7886
Our Mailbox.....	7887



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Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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Scripture education in a weekly format!

This free electronic publication is dedicated to:

- the absolute sovereignty and deity of God (Romans 11:36);
- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation that God will save all through the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the universality of death and resurrection (I Corinthians 15:21);
- the unique gospel of Paul – which he calls "my gospel" (Romans 2:16; 16:25; II Timothy 2:8; I Corinthians 15:1-4; Acts 13-28; Acts 20:24);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past" (Romans 16:25);
- the epistles of the present Secret Administration being Ephesians & Colossians (Ephesians 3:2, 9; Colossians 1:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the One Body (Ephesians 4:16);
- the Secret Administration, being the operational revelation for today (Ephesians 3:9);
- the unprophesied, Celestial hope and calling of the One Body (Colossians 3:4);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Ephesians 3:1-3);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
 - total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);

- union in His death, burial and resurrection and ascended seated position among the celestials (Romans 6; Ephesians 2:6);
- adult sonship position (Ephesians 1:5).

This publication is the product of humble efforts of ordinary men intended to stimulate the earnest study of Scripture. We do not claim infallibility for the contents of this publication; thus they are not meant to imply finality on any subject discussed, or that further research would not add further light from the Word of God. God's storehouse of truth is inexhaustible, so draw on its wealth by prayerful study. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "church," "denomination," "movement," "organization," "mission," "creed," "meeting," "school," "conference" or "fellowship."

We are always open for discussion, but never for disputation. – André Sneidar

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ent time, beyond all “dates,” and hoped that the theory would be so utterly discredited that no one would care to countenance it any further. But, alas, even experience does not teach those who do not wish to learn.³

I would eventually come to see that there were six important facts that I had ignored while holding to this traditional 7-Millennialism theory.

I IGNORED THE NATURE OF SCRIPTURE GENEALOGY

While embracing 7-Millennialism, I ignored the actual nature of genealogies found in Scripture – and thus, significantly underestimated the date of Adam’s creation.

Archbishop James Ussher (1581-1656), in his *Annals of the Old Testament* (1650), popularized the 4004 B.C. date for “creation.”⁴ However, there were two issues that significantly compromised his research.

Seamless Genealogies Assumed

First, Archbishop Ussher’s work was based on the assumption that biblical genealogies were seamless. His premise was that genealogies presented in the Scriptures were complete and without generational gaps. However, there is clear scriptural evidence that these genealogies often omit certain generations.

When Scripture tells us that “A begat B,” our Western

3. *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 27 (1936).
4. We certainly agree with A.E. Knoch (1874-1965) that “Ussher’s date is not inspired, and is not even in the Bible, only a deduction from it” (*Unsearchable Riches*, volume 37).

mindset assumes that we are being presented with direct, unbroken genealogy. Such an assumption is misleading. The Hebrew word for “begat” is *yālad*, which means simply that one is an ancestor of another. Regardless of how far down the line, a descendant was always considered in the loins of their ancestor and having been “begotten” of them. Subsequently, the word “father” carries the meaning that one was another’s ancestor. “Father” is not limited to one’s immediate paternal parent.

Likewise, the word “son” is not limited to a first-generation offspring. For example, Jesus Christ was said to be “*the Son of David, the Son of Abraham*” (Matthew 1:1), yet many generations were between them. David to Christ is at least 1,000 years, Adam to Christ at least some 4,000 years.

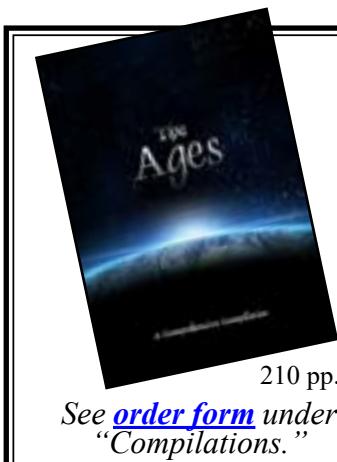
Thus, Scripture genealogies cannot be presumed complete unless explicit contextual evidence is available.

As L. Thomas Holdcroft (1922-2018)⁵ wrote:

It would appear to be best for the Bible student to avoid dogmatic conclusions concerning the date of the *creation of man*. As cautious an evangelical scholar as Griffith Thomas (1861-1924) has written,

The chronology is probably not complete ... The Jews often shortened their genealogies (see Matthew 1), so long as the connection was clearly maintained. The antiquity of the world and of the human race is not a biblical problem. And no computation is found based on

5. *The Pentateuch* (1951); page 6.



The Ages (A Comprehensive Compilation)

To know and understand “*the ages*” is to embrace God’s design from beginning to end. This vital work’s authors include: Arthur P. Adams (1847-1920), Thomas Allin (1838-1909), Leon A. Bynoe, (1895-1983), Edward Henry Clayton (1887-1972), E. Lynwood Crystal (1872-1946), John Dokas, Bob Evely, Joseph E. Kirk (1904-1974), A.E. Knoch (1874-1965), G. Campbell Morgan (1863-1945), Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., Frank Neil Pohorlak (1907-1988), André Sneidar, Alexander Thomson (1889-1966).

any figure prior to the time of Abraham.⁶

Professor William Henry Green (1824–1900), of Princeton Theological Seminary, in his research *Primeval Chronology*, advocated that,

Genealogical abridgement was not just common, but in fact the general rule of Scripture chronology.

There is an element of uncertainty in a computation of time which rests upon genealogies, as the sacred chronology so largely does. ... In fact, abridgement is the general rule.⁷

So, by simply comparing Scripture with Scripture we know that there are large gaps in father-son genealogical chronology, resulting in Archbishop Ussher's traditionally accepted date of Adam's creation being significantly underestimated.

An Inaccurate Hebrew Text

A second issue with Ussher's work is that it was based on a corrupted Hebrew text.

There are clear differences between the Hebrew Masoretic genealogical dates and that of the original Hebrew text.⁸ Thankfully for us, the *Concordant Literal Old Testament* has the correct ancestral dates restored.

A significant discrepancy is plainly seen in Genesis 11, where there is a variance of 650-750 years be-

6. William H. Griffith Thomas, *Through the Pentateuch Chapter by Chapter*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1957, p. 35.

7. *Bibliotheca Sacra* (1890).

8. As evidenced in the Greek Septuagint (LXX) and the Samaritan Pentateuch.

tween the two texts.

		<u>KJV</u>	<u>NASV</u>	<u>NIV</u>	<u>CV</u>	<u>LXX</u>
:12	Arphaxad	35	35	35	135	135
:14	Shelah	30	30	30	130	130
:16	Eber	34	34	34	134	134
:18	Peleg	30	30	30	130	130
:20	Reu	32	32	32	132	132
:22	Serug	30	30	30	130	130
:24	Nahor	29	29	29	79	79, 179*
Total		220	220	220	870	870, 970*

* LXX A; LXX B.

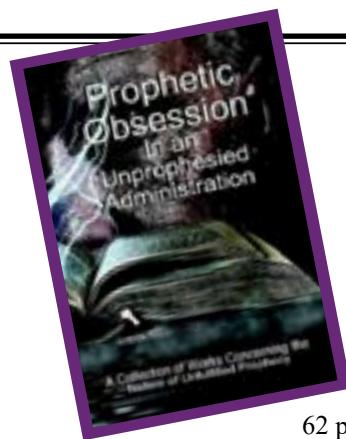
What this means is that almost all English Versions (KJV, NASV, NIV, etc.) are wrong about their genealogical dates – by hundreds of years in fact. **The reconstruction of the original dates, even using subsequent conventional⁹ dating, results in the placement of Adam's creation as being around 7500 years ago (5554 B.C.).¹⁰**

A.E. Knoch (1874–1965) addressed this shortfall of some one thousand plus years.

Since comparing the whole of the Hebrew text of the book of Genesis with its Greek translation (which goes back to a Hebrew text a thousand

9. We say “conventional,” as there is obviously no *scriptural* evidence for any dating past the biblical record. This means that, beyond the early first century A.D., we are at the mercy of errant human history.

10. E.g., Henry B. Smith, Jr., *The Case for the Septuagint's Chronology in Genesis 5 and 11*, Associates for Biblical Research, International Conference on Creationism, Volume 8, Article 48, pages 117-132 (2018).



Prophetic Obsession in an Unprophesied Administration

(A Collection of Works Concerning the Nature of Unfulfilled Prophecy)

List of authors contained in this work are: Sir Robert Anderson (1841-1918), Cecil J. Blay (1906-1976), A.E. Knoch (1874-1965), J. Vernon McGee (1904-1988), Andrew Miller (1810-1883), Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727), Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., Otis Q. Sellers (1901-1992) and C.R. Stam (1909-2003).

62 pp.

See [order form](#) under “Compilations.”

years older) we have come to accept almost all of its additions and alterations. They commend themselves to everyone who examines them. In the Greek the ages of the patriarchs, when their sons were born, is nearly always a hundred years greater than in the Hebrew and our English versions. Consequently, the time from Adam to Christ is about a thousand years more, that is *five*, rather than *four* thousand. According to this we are near the end of the *seventh* rather than the *sixth* thousand, and, if this is the millennium, we are nearly through with it already!¹¹

Error in Premise Equals Error in Conclusion

I would come face to face with the fact that if one's hypothesis is wrong, then of necessity the outcome of one's research must be so as well. Sadly, Ussher's work has been used as the foundation of two misguided systems of dating: the Seven Millennium Theory of prophetic prognosticators, as well as the Young Earth Theory. These theories are set aside by a basic understanding of biblical genealogy and the reconstruction of the Hebrew text.

I IGNORED THE NATURE OF HUMAN ACCOUNTS OF HISTORY

Then there were man's faulty accounts of history from the close of the New Testament until today. I would come to see that there is no justifiable reason for be-

11. *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 34 (1943).

lievers to build doctrine based on human histories and chronologies, as prophetic prognostication often does.

How much confidence can we really place in human accounts and timetables of history? Are they absolute, immovable facts?

How can we be so sure of ancient history, when there is dispute about even modern history? Are there not plausible dissenting views of traditional history?

Moreover, can we trust these manmade timelines enough to legitimately base the interpretation of Scripture prophecy upon them? Are Divine Scripture and human scholarship worthy of such a marriage?

For example, some scholarship claims mounting evidence of errors and deceptions within the field of history. Some even assert a "calendar inflation" of some 300 to 700 "phantom" years during the first millennium A.D. alone.¹²

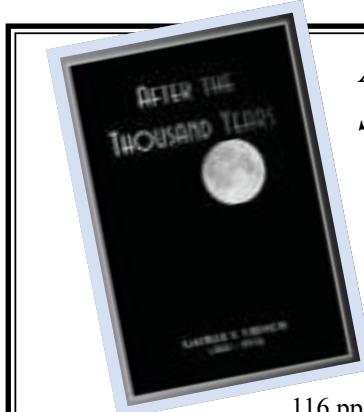
I IGNORED THE FIRST AND FIFTH AGES

I would come to realize that 7-Millennialism does not take the first and last ages into consideration.¹³

(see *PROPHECY*, page 7888)

12. E.g., Dr. Hans-Ulrich Niemitz: "Forgeries in the Middle Ages," "Did the Dark Ages Never Exist?" "Did the Early Middle Ages Really Exist?"; Dr. Heribert Illig: "Who has Turned the Clock? How 300 Years of History Were Invented," "The Invented Middle Ages - The Greatest Time Falsification in History;" Emmet Scott: "A Guide to the Phantom Dark Age."

13. There are a total of five ages (or eons) in God's revealed plan. We currently live in the third "evil age." For a further look at God's



116 pp.

See [order form](#) under
"Other Authors."

ness of times" (Ephesians 1:10), that KINGDOM of the Son of God's love, that KINGDOM that cannot be shaken, which it is Christ's to enjoy as Heir of all things, and Head of the new creation. George F. Trench was an associate of Dr. E.W. Bullinger.

After the Thousand Years: The Glorious Reign of Christ as Son of Man in the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times

by — George F. Trench (1841-1915)

In Revelation 20 the closing period of the Millennium is foretold as one of general insurrection against Christ as King, thus revealing the true condition of the population of the world, taken as a whole, throughout the thousand years. A Kingdom such as this cannot be the KINGDOM described in the epistles of Paul. According to I Corinthians 15:24, our Lord will not reign forever, but will deliver up His mediatorial KINGDOM to God at its end, that God will henceforth be "All in all." If the reign of Christ in its perfection cannot be millennial, and shall not be eternal, it follows that between the end of the one, the millennial, and the beginning of the other, the eternal state, must of necessity intervene that "dispensation of the fullness of times" (Ephesians 1:10), that KINGDOM of the Son of God's love, that KINGDOM that cannot be shaken, which it is Christ's to enjoy as Heir of all things, and Head of the new creation. George F. Trench was an associate of Dr. E.W. Bullinger.



Tidbits of Truth #44

“Tidbits” is a column dedicated to short comments, thoughts, studies and excerpts.

Ambassadors

“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ” (II Corinthians 5:20 KJV).

[To A.S.:] Another issue that I recently worked through was that of “ambassadors.” It seemed to dawn on me one day that an ambassador, being a representative of one nation to another, so aptly described Paul’s priestly ministry – an ambassadorship of Israel to the nations. This was, until I remembered that Paul said that he was an “ambassador in bonds” (Ephesians 6:20, KJV). Then, of course, I had to ask myself: What nation was he representing when writing Ephesians? Of course, the answer is NONE! Thus, this whole illustration of an “ambassador” broke down.

Upon further investigation, I realized that the “ambassador” translation was inaccurate. The Greek word translated “ambassador” is πρεσβεύω (*presbeuō*, G4243). It is used only twice in the Greek Scriptures, translated once in the *King James Version* in the singular, “ambassador” (Ephesians 6:20), and once in the plural, “ambassadors” (II Corinthians 5:20). However, the word simply means “senior”¹ (SEC) and has as its root πρεσβύτερος (*presbuteros*), meaning “elders”

1. “Be-SENIOR” (CKC), “an old man” (TGL, RWP), “to be older” (TGL, LSJ).

(G4245), and is so translated 66 times, and once as “old men” (KJV).

When Paul writes that he was an “ambassador in bonds” (Ephesians 6:20, KJV) he was using πρεσβεύω (*presbeuō*, G4243), which is the equivalent to his expression “Paul the aged” (Philemon 1:9). Interestingly, “aged” here is πρεσβύτης (*presbutēs*, G4246), also taken from the same root πρεσβύτερος (*presbuteros*, G4245), “elders.”

When Paul says that he is an “ambassador (πρεσβεύω, *presbeuō*, G4243) in bonds” (Ephesians 6:20, KJV), it means that he was a “senior in bonds” (SEC), or “an old man in a manacle”² (JMNT).

Even Paul’s II Corinthians 5:20 reference is to “old men,” not “ambassadors.” This of course, makes perfect sense as well: “old men” entreating for conciliation.

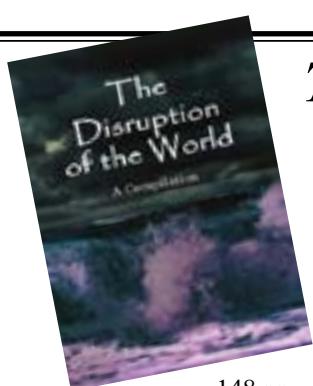
How easily we build doctrine on inaccurate translations!

— Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

2. “A metal device attached to a prisoner’s wrists or legs in order to prevent him or her from moving or escaping.” – *Collins Dictionary*

The Disruption of the World

A Compilation



A broad study of the crucial, but all-too-often overlooked teaching of Scripture of the events between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2. Sometimes known as “The Gap,” “The Overthrow,” or “The Disruption,” this key event in God’s ages lays the important foundation for the ministry of Paul, the Apostle.

This critical compilation of 13 chapters from 8 authors will be an essential part of a Bible student’s library. Authors include: E.W. Bullinger, A.E. Knoch, Edward Clayton and John Essex.

148 pp.

See [order form](#) under “Compilations.”



Benefits From Suffering

It's normal to avoid suffering, but our Father takes us through it to build more of His good spirit into us. The results speak for themselves: genuine love, true happiness, inner serenity, enduring patience, things like these. If you're not yet enjoying benefits like these, you haven't yet reached the bottom of things. Not to worry, there is a bottom, and you'll be there before you know it. About the time the self-guided tour turns into a nightmare, it's time to relax, take a deep breath, and be ready for a little foretaste of the good Destiny your infinite Source has in store for you. All is going as planned. Death is nothing but a stop along the way. Some of us get to enjoy a taste of the good things to come even while in these dying bodies. Others don't. But the message I'm here to say is that no one will be left out. Jesus died for everyone, not just a few. His death is reckoned as our death, his resurrection, our resurrection, including not only us, but all creation. The good news is better than we thought, WAY better, but that

doesn't mean we don't have some humanly impossible things to go through. The good thing is, we're no longer mere humans on the other side, and perhaps, we never were.

— Jeff Bohlender

Could Jesus Have Sinned?

[To S.M.:] Jesus was a man, a part of God's creation, and did not have free will. Relatively, He could have sinned, but absolutely He could not have sinned – since that is not what Father wrote for Him. Whereas, on the other hand, Adam, relatively could have *not* sinned, but absolutely he could not *but* have sinned – since that is what Father wrote for him.

— Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

BSN

TOPICS:

Major: [Ambassadors:] Ambassadors; Elders [Benefits from Suffering:] Sequel; Suffering [Could Jesus Have Sinned?:] Jesus Christ; Sin, Sovereignty



Thank you again for giving us the chance to translate [into French] this life-changing book. ... Thanks to you my brother, my wife and my son now understand *the Salvation of All*. We have been reconciled by the cross of Calvary once and for all. "Thank you, Jesus, for your ineffable love you had for us." A greeting to your beautiful little family from us. – *Canada*

I know I've told you before how much I appreciate the [Facsimile Project](#). I especially like the edition of [The Unselfishness of God](#).¹ I've looked for this unabridged edition for some years at used books stores without success, so was very happy to see you had republished it.

And I also love your project to repackaging certain

1. See the [order form](#) under "Other Authors."

writings from Mr. Knoch and others from *Unsearchable Riches*. I read [Studies in Acts](#)² and now look forward to [Rooted and Grounded in Love: Studies in Ephesians](#).³ I think this makes these writings so much more accessible, rather than combing thru my entire library of *Unsearchable Riches* to pull together the writings on Ephesians, or Acts, or any other book of the Bible or topic. Keep them coming! – *KY*

[[BSN 927: God Is Both "Responsible" and "Accountable"](#)] Precious truth to come to the realization that all is from and for our Father. It is His Story. Only the weak or arrogant would assume otherwise ... by design. Wonderful, precious truth to rest in. Thank you. – *IN*

I am going to order the *Bible Student Notebook* soon. Your material is eye-opening. I am no longer stuck in the mud with religion [...] I'm] on the road to heavenly places. – *NH*

BSN

2. By H.W. Martin (1883-1959), see the [order form](#) under "Other Authors."

3. By A.E. Knoch (1874-1965), see the [order form](#) under "Knoch."



PROPHECY (continued from page 7885)

The history and future of the Earth envelopes many thousands of years, not a mere seven.

For example, the length of the prehistoric age, prior to the disruption,¹⁴ is anyone's guess – and that is what it would be, since its duration is not a subject of Scripture revelation. Any attempts at addressing the length of this period are simply futile.

Also, the length of the final age (which we will deal with at length next) is a monumental period of time – much more epic than many have even dared contemplate.

So, 7-Millennialism, as well as the Young Earth theo-

plan of the Ages (or Eons), see:

- [VIDEO] "The Five Ages, *Bible Basics* #6, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.;
- [ARTICLE] "The Five Ages", *Bible Basics* #6, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., *Bible Student's Notebook* #852;
- [BOOK] *The Ages: A Comprehensive Compilation* (available on the [order form](#) under "Compilations").

14. "The disruption of the world" (CV: Matthew 25:34; Luke 11:50; John 17:24; Ephesians 1:4; Hebrew 4:3; 9:26; 1 Peter 1:20; Revelation 13:8; 17:8), but mistakenly referred to as "the foundation of the world," was the catastrophic overthrow of God's original creation.

"A whole eon (age) had gone by before humanity came into being, and all the events of that eon, whatever they were, had terminated in 'the disruption of the world,' that is, the disruption of the society as it existed at that time. That society was clearly a Celestial one, for it was in being before the Earth was even founded, as Job 38:4-7 makes plain." – John Essex, "The Vessel of Humanity," *Unsearchable Riches*, volume 73 (1982).

For more information about "the disruption," see:

- [The Disruption of the World](#), see on the [order form](#) under "Compilations;"
- [Without Form and Void: A Study of the Meaning of Genesis 1:2](#), Arthur C. Custance (see [order form](#) under "Other Authors").

ry, begins its dating with the *re-creation* phase of the Earth, *i.e.*, Genesis 1:3, leaving much time before and after unconsidered.

(continued in the next issue)

NOTE: For the video version of this study, [Things I Misunderstood about Prophecy](#), go to our Biblical Resources channel on YouTube.

NOTE: See the previous installments from this series:

- Part 1** – "3 Things I Misunderstood about God," [BSN 917](#);
- Part 2** – "3 Things I Misunderstood about Salvation," [BSN 918](#);
- Part 3** – "3 Things I Misunderstood about Christ's Sacrificial Work," [BSN 919](#);
- Part 4** – "4 Things I Misunderstood About the Rich Man & Lazarus," [BSN 920](#).

TOPICS:

Major: Genealogies; History, Human; Prophecy; Prophetic Teachers; Seven Millennium Theory; Theories; Ussher

Minor: Calendar Inflation; Middle Ages; Young Earth Theory



These Are God's Sons

by — Warren Young Kimball
(1909-2002)

134 pages.

(See [order form](#) under "Kimball.")

This book was the product of an intense desire of more than thirty years to tell the story of the Evangel of Christ, and more particularly the "Secret of the Calling on High in Christ Jesus."



World Affairs and National Politics ***and the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus***

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

When did nationalism begin? What is God's purpose for nationalism? Is the United States a Christian nation? Does any government have *Favored Nation Status* with God today? Should believers support Israel? What did Paul have to say about our citizenship? What is our role in relation to nations? Is our job to rid the world of evil? What should the believer's attitude be toward earthly authority? Should all obedience to earthly magistrates be absolute? Are believers to pay their taxes? Where does voting and jury duty fit in? Why was the apostle Paul executed?

These and many other questions are addressed in this groundbreaking work!