The SEVEN KEYS
to understanding the Bible

Because of the requests of so many of our readers,
we are again publishing this eye-opening article

by Herbert W. Armstrong

Do you realize God has purposely closed much of the Holy Bible from human understanding, until now?

Look at the pitiful spectacle!—hundreds of different sects and denominations, all confused and mixed up, each with its own different ideas, beliefs and practices—all disagreeing as to what the Bible says—none understanding its full true Message!

Because none of them possesses the keys needed to open the doors to understanding, and therefore this spiritual Treasurehouse is closed to them.

Locked Up Until Now!

Even the prophets inspired in writing the Word of God did not understand much of what they wrote. Daniel records, in his last chapter:

"I heard this, but I did not understand it." When he asked the meaning of what he was inspired to write, he was told: "Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end"—or, as Moffatt translates it, "still the crisis at the close" (Daniel 12:8-9).

The whole world is now in chaos—we have now entered the world-crisis, at the close of this age! But even now, Daniel was told, "the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand" (verse 10).

Since this very Word of God reveals that "Sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4), those who encourage the breaking of God's law, teaching that it is done away—as nearly all sects and denominations do are, in Bible terminology, "the wicked." And who are "the wise," who shall now understand?

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a GOOD UNDERSTANDING have all they that do His Commandments." (Psalm 111:10).

Again God's angel caused Daniel to record: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Yes, much of the Word of God especially the prophecies, were shut up and sealed until now. Today people run to and fro, all over the world, in automobiles, trains, and planes. Today knowledge has increased. We have reached the world-crisis at the close of this Age! The wise—those who fear God and keep His Commandments—can now UNDERSTAND!

Even forty years ago this true understanding was still closed and sealed! None of the established church denominations has been willing, in these forty years, to admit error, correct false teachings or accept new light now suddenly revealed! No wonder they all disagree! They are in "BABYLON"—CONFUSION!

In the first place, none can understand by himself. The carnal mind cannot "see" spiritual things. These Truths are revealed thru the indwelling of the Holy Spirit—and God gives His Spirit only to them that OBEY Him and keep His Commandments! Only the truly converted can even begin to understand.

But even having that beginning, there are seven KEYS needed to unlock these closed doors of Truth! And just as one key alone will not unlock your safety deposit box at the bank, so no one, no two, or even six of these keys will open the scriptural doors to full UNDERSTANDING. It requires ALL SEVEN KEYS.

Church Leaders Throw Away the Seven Vital Keys

Christ gave His apostles the keys of true UNDERSTANDING, which unlock the Door to the KINGDOM OF GOD.

To Peter and the others, He said: "And I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven" (Mat. 16:19).

But He prophesied apostasy. "Many false prophets shall rise," He said, "and shall deceive many." Paul foretold the great "falling away" from God's Truth and Christ's Gospel, turning unto FAIBLES (II Thes. 2:1-9; II Tim. 4:1-4). It had even begun in Paul's day (II Thes. 2:7). Church leaders only used the keys to lock up the Door of the Kingdom, and then threw the keys away, even as the Pharisees and rulers did before them:

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" said Jesus to them, "for ye shut up the Kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go into yourselves; neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in" (Mat. 23:13).

And so naturally, today no organized denomination, sect, or church possesses these seven KEYS!

Here they are: How many of these necessary "keys" do you have?

1) The True Gospel

Almost no one has this first Key, believe it or not! The Gospel of Christ is the Gospel Christ preached—a particular Message sent from God by Jesus Christ as Messenger. The Gospel of Christ is CHRIST'S OWN GOSPEL—not a story about His Person!

Today people are led to believe that
the Gospel is telling the story about Jesus—telling people about a Saviour, or, they believe it is "the Gospel of salvation," not understanding the true way of salvation themselves! No wonder there is NO POWER in what is falsely preached as "the Gospel" today! The Gospel of Christ is the POWER of God unto salvation. Today most popular denominations do away with all that is vital in Christ's Gospel, saying He was preaching only to Jews under the Old Covenant! WHAT IGNORANCE!

What is Christ's Gospel? What is the Message God sent to mankind by Jesus Christ? It is the GOOD NEWS of the KINGDOM OF GOD! "Kingdom" means GOVERNMENT! It is the Message of Divine Government—government by God's LAWS!

It is the prophetic proclamation of the coming GOVERNMENT to rule all nations and bring today's confused, chaotic, war-weary earth PEACE, and JOY! It is the vital, dynamic, powerful living Message of God's GOVERNMENT, first in individual hearts now in this world, later over all nations internationally in the WORLD TOMORROW!

Of course that power-filled Message includes the knowledge about the Saviour, High Priest and coming King! Of course it includes the true way of salvation, which the churches seem to have lost! And it includes also knowledge of the location of the TERRITORY to be ruled over by the King of the coming Kingdom—the fact it is this earth, and not heaven!

But there can be no GOVERNMENT without LAWS, and so the TRUE GOSPEL also must proclaim the LAW of God, which alone can bring peace to the world and success, happiness and joy to the individual!

The TRUE GOSPEL has to do with the nations of today's world, world conditions today, and Christ's reign over all nations in the WORLD TOMORROW! It is a full, complete, dynamic and POWERFUL Gospel which has been kept by the powers of darkness from the world for 1800 years! This knowledge is the first KEY!

2) Salvation IS Creation

The idea preached in this dark, confused world is that salvation is God's Plan for repairing the damage caused by Satan in "the fall of man" in the Garden of Eden.

God, in the world has been caught by church leaders, had completed His work of creation—man was a finished creation, spiritual, immortal, perfect in character. Then long ago Satan, by cunning he wrecked God's handiwork, thwarted God's purpose, caused man to fall to the low plane of sinful human nature, ruined God's perfect creation! Then God is supposed to have looked down upon this colossal smash-up, and to have thereupon thought out the PLAN OF REDEMPTION as a means of repairing the damage.

Salvation, then, is presented merely as God's effort to restore man to a condition as good as Adam was in the first place. The picture is that God has been doing His very best for 6,000 years, but Satan has resisted Him! God has found Himself unable to avoid a CONTEST with Satan—a "GREAT CONTROVERSY" as one writer phrased it—in which God has done His best, but Satan has continued to outwit Him and now today, with TIME ABOUT UP, the vast majority of people on earth are still unsaved—still on Satan's side! The contest is almost over, and the best God can now do is take revenge, and soon to send Christ to DESTROY ALL THE WICKED whom Satan has kept on his side!

Can you see that that picture could only have come from the deceiving false GOD OF THIS WORLD, Satan himself? It presents Satan at every turn as more powerful than God—as succeeding in his rivalry! This entire concept is a damnable LIE!

The TRUTH is the second important KEY—and it explains GOD'S PURPOSE in placing humanity on this earth!

Salvation is not a "repairing of the damage" done by Satan in the Garden of Eden. Satan never did alter or change God's Purpose or Plan. The devil has never thwarted God's will. All has gone always, and always will, exactly according to God's Purpose!

Salvation is merely the COMPLETING of CREATION! Creation was not completed 6,000 years ago, at the time described in Genesis 1! That was merely the first, or material phase of a Creation now still going on! What God then created was physical—material. The spiritual creation is a process, continuing, according to God's Plan, today!

Man was created physical, not spiritual—MORTAL, not immortal—of the dust of the ground—the "clay model" which God the Master Potter is now fashioning and shaping, spiritually, into the final image! Man was created purposely, with the same human nature he now has! He was first made in the mere PHYSICAL image of God, a free moral agent, with possibility revealed to him of receiving as God's gift the very spiritual nature of God, so that he may by God's power be made into a perfect, righteous, spiritual character, then given immortality as God's gift! There is no contest! Satan does nothing except what God permits! And God permits it FOR A PURPOSE.

Character is created by experience, and experience requires time, and therefore it is a process! As Christ our example learned by suffering, so do we! The fact that SALVATION IS THE COMPLETING OF CREATION—the spiritual phase of Creation—that God's PURPOSE is to create in us, as free moral agents who make our own decisions, the supreme Masterpiece of All His Creative acts—holy, righteous, spiritual, immortal CHARACTERS—resisting the downfall of self-desire, building character by LIVING God's LAWS—that knowledge of God's PURPOSE is the second vital KEY!

3) God's Dual Method

A duality runs thru every phase of God's Plan. First, the material creation of Genesis 1, completed; second, the spiritual creation still in process pictured finally complete in the prophecy of Revelation 21 and 22. There was the first Adam, material—of the earth; and there is the second Adam, Christ Jesus, spiritual, from Heaven. There was the first Covenant with Israel, material and national, devoid of salvation, based upon the Birthright promise; and there is the NEW Covenant, spiritual and individual, with a spiritually begotten Israel, based upon the Sceptre promise. God made man mortal, of the dust, in order to convert him into immortality, composed of Spirit.

In this very salvation process is the
DUAL METHOD—the very word "salva-
tion" means, first, rescuing from the
penalty of eternal death, and second,
the act of preserving, or imparting et-
ernal life as God's gift. And so, in being
saved, we first are now begotten of God
by the indwelling of His Spirit in our
mortal bodies as the temple, or house
of the Spirit—and are now merely the
heirs of salvation; and second, we shall
finally be fully born of God at the
Resurrection of the just, when we shall
inhere the Kingdom.

This same DUAL PRINCIPLE runs all
thru prophecy! First, a former, or pre-
nitory fulfillment which is merely the
type or forerunner of a second, the final
climactic fulfillment occurring, usually,
during this CRISIS AT THE CLOSE we
already have entered! And positively
nobody can understand the Bible prophe-
cies unless this reality of fulfillment is
understood. It is a vital key!

4) God's Holy Days

These were given to God's people to
picture, and to keep them in the under-
standing of, God's PLAN for bringing
about His purpose—His reign over all
the earth whose people shall have been
converted to righteous immortality!

Every sect, organization or denomina-
tion which has lost God's holy days and
fastened its eyes upon the pagan
Romanish holidays instead, has lost the
knowledge of GOD'S PLAN!

God's holy days picture:
1st, Passover, the crucifixion of Christ;
2nd, Feast of Unleavened Bread, put-
ting sin out of our lives, or, keeping
God's Commandments—and during this
festival was the "wave-sheaf" picturing the
Resurrected Christ accepted of God
as our High Priest;
3rd, Feast of Firstfruits, or Pentecost,
picturing the coming of the Holy Spirit
and the completing of this, the merely
first and preliminary harvest of souls,
4th, Feast of Trumpets on first day of
seventh month, picturing the Second
Coming of Christ at the beginning of
the seventh millennium, at the Last
Trump,

5th, Day of Atonement, picturing jus-
tice done by laying Satan's guilt in our
sins upon his own head, removing him
and chaining him in the symbolic "but-
nerless pit," making us finally at ON
with God. Atonement means at-one-
ment.

6th, Feast of Tabernacles, for seven
days, picturing the KINGDOM OF GOD
during the seventh millennium, the
"great fall harvest" of souls.

And 7th, the Last Great Day, immedi-
ately following the Feast of Tabernacles,
picturing the final Great White Throne
Judgment which almost nobody today
understands—and the final COMPLETING
of God's Plan!

5) The Truth about Israel

The fact that the nation Israel became
divided into two nations, the Ten-Tribed
Kingdom, called the Kingdom of Israel,
possessing the Birthright promises, and
The Kingdom of Judah, composed of
Judah and Benjamin and a large por-
tion of Levi, possessing the Sceptre;
and, secondly, the fact revealed during
this "Time of the End" that the Jewish
people today are merely a portion of the
descendants of the Kingdom of Judah;
and the Americans, British, and Democ-
racies of Northwestern Europe are the
so-called "lost Ten Tribes"—or descend-
ent from the House of ISRAEL—and
that Britain is Ephraim, and the United
States is Manasseh, co-holders of the
Birthright, which is the true explanation
of our sudden rise to the greatest nation-
al power and wealth ever possessed by
any nation.

Prophecies cannot be understood
without this vital key.

6) Bible Interpretation of Symbols

God has concealed until now His
prophecies of these colossal end-time
world events now occurring by means of
SYMBOLS used to describe these
events—as well as by the fact of His dual
principle, and that our Israelitic iden-
tity has been hidden from men

Symbols, like parables, were used, not
to make meaning clearer, but to hid, and
conceal God's true meaning until the
time came for Him to reveal the in-
terpretation of the symbols. Just as
Jesus' parables were not understood un-
til Jesus Himself explained them in
plain language, so with symbols. For
generations men have been putting hu-
man interpretations upon God's sym-
ols. An important KEY, therefore, is
that these symbols are interpreted in
plain language in the Bible itself, if not
in the context, then elsewhere, and we
must search for God's own interpreta-
tions, never apply our own.

7) God's Sabbath

Since this is the test commandment
—that one most professing Christians
refuse to obey—the one which causes the
greatest test of faith and reliance
upon God to be able to keep it, it
stands as the final completing basic key
—for "A GOOD UNDERSTANDING have all
they that do His Commandments!"

Also it is the basic key to the identity
of the true God—the Creator of all
(Ex 31:12-17) and the key to the identity
of ISRAEL. The House of Israel
threw away this key to their identity—
and thereby became the "lost Ten
Tribes!" The great majority of the House
of Judah likewise threw it away, and
lost their identity—not known even to-
today! The Jews who returned to Palestine
under Ezra and Nehemiah became strict
Sabbatarians, and have remained so to
this day—and therefore the world looks
upon them as ISRAEL (because they
carry Israel's identifying sign) although
they are not Israel, but only a small
portion of JUDAH!

This completes the KEYS TO UN-
DERSTANDING—the KEYS TO THE KING-
DOM OF GOD!
The church has lost these KEYS! No
wonder they are all mixed up, in
confusion, each claiming the Bible says
something different, none understanding
its true message!